7. *Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.* [New]

Yellow Bordered World

Each month, there is one day that I come home and am greeted by a yellow bordered magazine. Every month for 6 whole years I have been greeted by *the* yellow bordered magazine. It waits on the dining room table ever so impatiently calling my name. It calls me to open its pages and begin.

In the sixth grade I read an edition of National Geographic about twins that I found in the magazine box at my grandpa’s house. In a single hour I learned about nature versus nurture, genetics and epigenetics, and the fundamental controversies these topics bring about in American society. In a single hour my world was broadened in every direction.

That day, my grandpa decided to get me a subscription to the magazine. Within a year I was entering the worlds of CRISPR (genetic engineering) and potential projects to save extinct species. Sitting in my room, I examined fossils and took photos of people from around the world as I found cures for diseases and uncovered ancient ruins. By the age of eleven I was an aspiring photojournalist, archeologist, and engineer(yes, all three). I turned page after page, living in a yellow bordered world, and I can tell you that I wanted nothing more than to see my world come to life.

But there is this inevitable point, where childhood worlds fall away, when you have to start forging your own path, and when passion has to replace imagination as your fuel.

My adventures in National Geographic had prepared me for this challenge, and I was determined to cut a trail for myself with my unbounded curiosity. Maps began to cover my walls, books on bioethics piled up, and National Geographic became a stepping stool of knowledge that propelled me into the real world of discovery.

When opportunities arose, I found myself across the country running genetic tests in a laboratory where the twins edition of the magazine came to life as I looked at fluorescent images of brains that would have fit perfectly into a yellow border. I ran materials tests down the hall from an astronaut and learned about leading climate technology while staring discovery straight in the eye, but I always understood there was more to discovery than the science, and my love of philosophy and culture ran parallel to what I learned.

I have realized that my reading has given me a broad understanding of the scientific process and societal progress. The idea that discovery is never simply scientific or social is inherent to the magazine, and it is now intrinsic to my comprehension of the world around me.

I thrive in the overlap of the Venn Diagram between science and anthropology, and I learn in their unified process: discovery.

By nature I am unrelentingly curious and through nurture I have learned to write down all of my questions in a Moleskine. In its pages I have everything that I want to bring out of the yellow borders and into my own world, inked in imagination. Fueled by passion and cutting my own trail, I am using the building blocks of my once imaginary world to step into life-long discovery.

I still read my heap of different magazines every month, but I am learning in so many new and different ways--whether it be through other people or through experience.

Falling in love with the process of discovery is so easy, and it happens over and over. It is challenging and gratifying, but maybe the best part of it is that I am doing exactly my eleven year old self would have wanted me to be doing. The yellow border has come to life in front of my eyes, and it calls me to open its pages and discover.