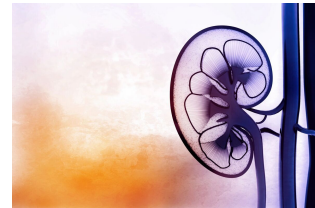




I dedicate this quarterly to my line sister, Carmen. She was #9 on the Kappa Rho Chapter (UVA) Charter Line of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. We were 15 in number; being the shortest, I was #1. I regret never telling her how much I admired the way she could turn a phrase with her command of words, written and spoken. We shall miss your mischievous smile and speaking the unexpected through poetry and prose as well as audibly. Until we stomp the yard again ...



Rest in Peace & Power Carmen (1953-2023)

-- Yogi


GRAB YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGE; THIS IS LONG!

Again, Not Burying the Lead ...

In celebration of DREF's 55-years, yours truly was commissioned by the Delta Research and Educational Foundation (**DREF**) to write a poem. The request was to create an original piece as a memorial tribute for the 2023 Roses and Violets Charitable Campaign, which was a Mother's Day fundraiser.

First, allow me to be clear -- when offered this opportunity, I had to make certain I could get myself into the proper mindset. *My mother is doing quite well and is healthier than many half her age.*

Having a few days to ponder before committing, I wrote, rewrote, scratched out, edited, edited, and edited some more. Finally, after channeling emotions of family and friends whose mothers had transitioned, I composed a poem containing elements and sentiment I thought appropriate for submission.



Memories of You

I tighten my grip on my memories of you
Treasured memories of love and grace
The comfort of your arms is missed
Their warmth and consoling embrace
I think of you each and every day
Your fragrance, your natural scent
Your laugh, like wind chimes that gently sway
Your quiet hum when content
We did not always see eye to eye
But, with age, we became friends
Laughing and making more memories
Memories now held deep within
Looking towards the heavenly sky
I imagine you with angel wings
Mother, you are missed, I shall not lie,
You were my everything!

Y.B. Taylor@2023

www.deltafoundation.net

Instagram.com/DREF_1967 Twitter.com/DREF_1967 Facebook.com/DREFPage



May flowers and Springtime herald the time of year when we pay tribute to mothers. Mother's Day is a special time to honor and remember women who have raised, shaped, mentored, loved and influenced us. Whether biological, adopted, or surrogate, we salute them.

The Delta Research and Educational Foundation (DREF) presents the **2023 Roses and Violets Charitable Campaign**. The campaign was named after two very beautiful flowers. Roses symbolize love, admiration and friendship. The violets, which is rare and dear to Delta, symbolize loyalty, faith and inspiration. These flowers represent the attributes of mothers and mother figures.

DREF is celebrating 55 years of creating possibilities and improving lives. We invite you to honor and remember mothers, who have also created possibilities and given life by donating. For a DREF \$50 anniversary donation of \$55 or more, you will receive three very special gifts to share: a spoken word tribute, memorial poem and musical selection.

DONATIONS MAY BE MADE THROUGH MAY 10TH.
Visit ign.us/form/Z9Vchw to make your donation.

Y.B. TAYLOR, POET
Y.B. Taylor, a native of Richmond, Virginia, has published several books of poetry. She is a graduate of the University of Virginia, where she was a charter member of the Kappa Kappa Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. She is currently a member of the Richmond Alumnae Chapter.

IMOGEN, VOCALIST
Imogen is a talented and multi-dimensional singer, pianist, and actress who has been recognized for embracing various musical styles and staying true to her energetic image. The Washington, DC-based artist is a graduate of Hampton University.

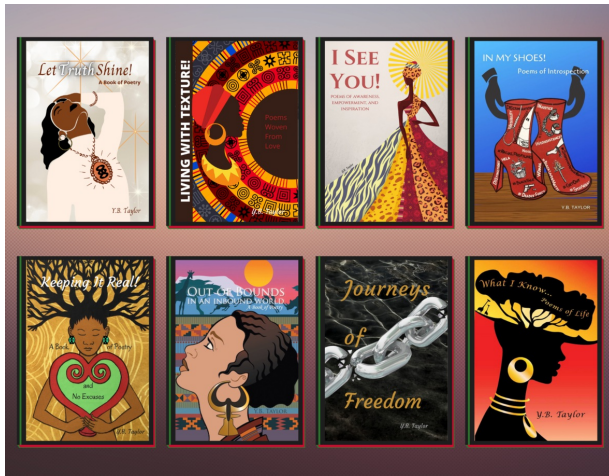
DR. AYO M. MORTON, SPOKEN WORD ARTIST
Poet, professor, professor, and abolitionist are just a few words to describe Dr. Ayo Matiana Morton. She is a member of Henrico Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated and described being able to give her gifts back to God.

On May 8, DREF released "Memories of You" to contributors of the 2023 Roses and Violets campaign. An original spoken word presentation by Dr. Ayo M. Morton, and a visual vocal rendition of Boyz to Men's "Momma," by Imogen, were also provided to campaign donors.

Thank you DREF for the challenge and opportunity to share my written words.

APRIL was National Poetry Month

I challenged myself to post a poem, mine of course, on my **Facebook** page and on my **Instagram** account each day of April. It was a daunting task because I wanted to do more than simply provide words. Being a bit of an overachiever (when it comes to some things),



I added graphics and music to the daily postings.

Selecting poems was another matter but I made a plan and stuck with it. In March, members of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. were spotlighted for Sisterhood Month / Women's History Month. In April, for National Poetry Month, I decided the first group of

poems, April 1 - 8, would also be female-focused; the next set posted April 9 - 14, were title poems from six of my eight literary children; the third set, April 15 - 19, were poems inspired by our travels. Lastly, I rounded out April with non-themed poems ending with "sweet" *White Chocolate*, which was written for our granddaughter.

ALSO, this happened! I was tagged twice by VMFA Gift Shop, that's Virginia Museum of Fine Arts for those residing outside of Richmond. LET TRUTH SHINE was showcased beside Amanda Gorman's "Call Us What We Carry" ... OMG! Thank you Dan Ludwig, Gift Shop Manager / Head Buyer!



Back to back daily postings for two months was exhausting. At the end of April, I took a long break, perhaps not well-deserved, but definitely needed! Taking a break from daily postings did not mean I did not post at all. If I happened upon moments of inspiration, I posted.

A Little Child Shall Lead The Way!

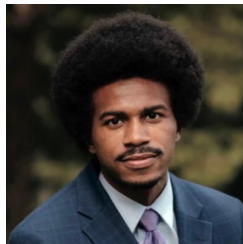
Brooklyn daughter and son-in-law moved into a brownstone and had a housewarming. One of her partners, Tinsel "daughter" Adette, was present with her family. Adette's three-year old meandered over to the "library" (Erica and Keith have lots of books) to make a selection. Of all the possible books JuJu could have chosen, she selected my first literary child. I know some will think it was the bright colors and silhouette which attracted her attention. Regardless, JuJu has excellent taste!



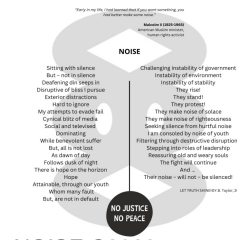
When Things Happen ...



REP. JUSTIN JONES



REP. JUSTIN PEARSON



NOISE ©2023



GOOD TROUBLE ©2021

It seems absurdities are bombarding us more frequently than in the past and the crazies are constantly trying to out crazy themselves.

BOTH freshmen Tennessee representatives, Justin Jones and Justin Pearson, were ousted by their Republican majority-held House because they demonstrated with constituents in support of gun control. They were joined by Rep. Gloria Johnson, a sixty-year old white woman; she was not ousted. **BOTH** young Justins, ages 27 and 29, were reinstated by their respective council votes within a week of being ousted. I was compelled to post two of my poems in support of them prior to their reinstatements. **BOTH** Justins exemplify the youth of *NOISE*, from "Let Truth Shine!" ©2023 and *GOOD TROUBLE*, a la John Lewis, from "Living With Texture!" ©2021.

MAY Happenings

Disclaimer: *I was a skeptic!*

THINGS OUTSIDE THE REALM OF BELIEVABILITY!

I was gifted with a "reading" for Mother's Day. After the virtual reading, I confirmed with first born she had not divulged anything about me to the young man. The only information I provided to him was my full name and I do mean my full name -- first, middle, maiden and last. *"Google that!"* LOL!

The experience was eerily on point as he stated I should be writing because I had things to say which people needed to hear. *Well, alright now!* He also alluded to a connection to lapis lazuli, which I possess and love, and a connection to a few countries including Egypt. He stated Egypt held hidden "treasures" for me and I would benefit from a visit. Here is the truly eerie part, I am currently paying on a trip to Egypt for April 2024. There is no way he could have known that. *Mind blown!*



It looked like May was going to roll in and out without much happening. Some may remember my mention of a 50th high school class reunion in the fourth quarter 2022 newsletter. Huguenot's Class of '72 collected funds to purchase band equipment as well as present students with scholarships at the Senior Awards Assembly. After the presentation of scholarships, I presented each student recipient

of the Class of '72 scholarship with a signed copy of **LET TRUTH SHINE!** For those who are unaware, I am part of Huguenot's history -- I was the school's first Black cheerleader and first Black homecoming queen. When I shared that bit of information, there was an audible gasp!

Regarding the senseless killings which occurred at my alma mater's graduation ceremony on June 6 -- GUN VIOLENCE MUST STOP! The intent of the Second Amendment was not to arm citizens so they could randomly shoot and kill! This country is headed to hell in a hand basket if gun control is not taken seriously and acted upon.

At the end of May, Nat and I took a trip to Athens and the Greek islands of Santorini and Mykonos. A 'Greek' poem has not been

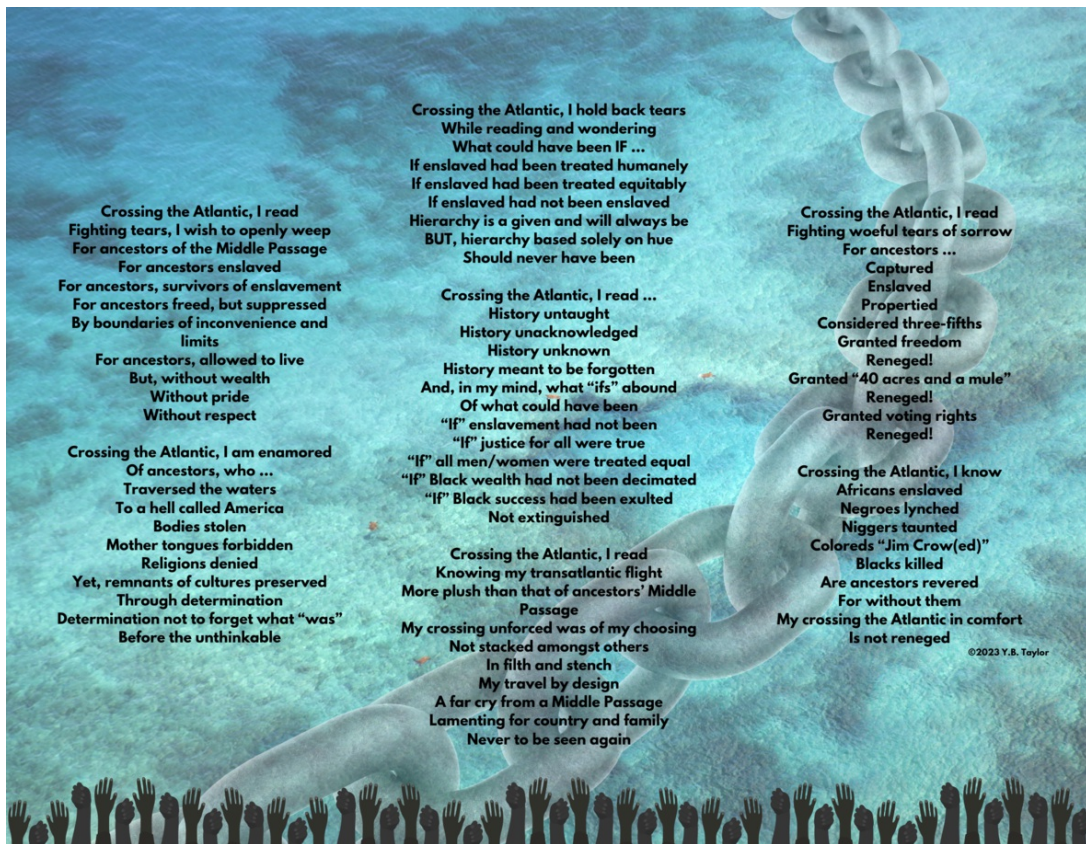
written YET but I assure all there was much inspiration from the crystal blue waters, red and blue domed venues of worship, narrow maze-like streets (thank goodness for Google maps), excavation sites, Mediterranean cuisine which is so much healthier than ours, evil eyes, circular grape vines, beautiful sunsets and acquaintances made within our tour group of 17!



Speaking of new acquaintances ... at the orientation dinner, we set with a couple and the sister of another couple. The husband had a puzzled look on his face each time he looked in my direction. As it turned out, he thought I looked familiar and when he heard my name, he said for certain he had either heard or seen me on a broadcast. *I don't think it was me, but he was certain it was.* Regardless, he and his wife, both Indians born in Kenya and residents of California along with my new Filipino "BFF," (LOL!) also a resident of California, made for a truly enjoyable trip.

While I have not written a Greece-inspired poem, I did pen a poem on the plane home. Inspired by my read of "The 1619 Project," my emotions took over and the result was a lengthy poem about *crossing the Atlantic*. I decided to share my "work in progress" with a couple of my new friends; their unsolicited comments -- *Thank you for sharing this poem. -- You write so well! A true gift!! That ferry crossing makes me think of the whole experience very differently after reading your poem -- Read your poem again & will be reading again & again ... powerful!*

I was not going to showcase the poem until publication of literary child #9, but tomorrow is not promised and #9 is still very much an infant. So, I present my writing from my Atlantic crossing. It is still untitled!



JUNE: What Bring You?



A lunch meeting in May with Gary Flowers, *Jackson Ward Ambassador* and *Political Talk Radio* host of "The Gary Flowers Show" (Rejoice 101.3 FM & 990 AM) and author, Judith Bice ("Hey, White Girl"), resulted in an invitation to talk about our books during the talk show's June Education Week broadcast.

June 9, three days home from Greece, I found my jet lagged self with Judith sitting in the Rejoice studio, miked and discussing our books. Our discussion was lively; Judith's and my portion of the **broadcast** starts about one-hour into the show at the top of the second hour and lasts about 45-minutes.

Book Swap

PLEASE pardon the orientation of the photographs; rotating photographs for my newsletter is something I have yet to master!



I attended a banned book "swap" at the African Burial Ground in Richmond's Shockoe Bottom. The African Burial Ground is part of the Slave Trail and I am ashamed to admit this was my first visit to the area. I plan to return in the near future for a more in depth walk of the property.

The ask for the "swap" was to bring a banned book; I took **LET TRUTH SHINE!** No, LTS has not been banned (yet), but probably will be if it finds its way into the hands of someone who makes that determination. If it does get banned, I will be in the company of Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Jeffrey J. Crow, Zetta Elliott, Matthew F. Delmont, J.K. Rowling, Amanda Gorman and many, many more.

Most of the attendees were educators or had an affiliation with school systems. One educator had traveled to Richmond from Williamsburg to participate. Many plainly stated they currently teach from and will continue to teach from banned

resources. It was an empowering event.

AUTHOR'S READS ...

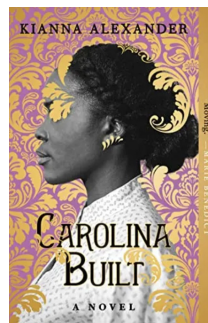
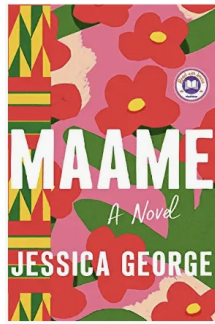


Here's my quick and totally unqualified assessment of books I have completed or am still reading ...

MAAME: A Novel by Jessica George - MAAME, the coming of age story of a young woman in her twenties is an enjoyable read which provided insights to a Ghanaian family residing in London. I discovered, in my reading, cultural nuances, new words -- *I'll bet I am not the only one who does not know what is considered a jumper in the UK* -- and family dynamics, some of which I could identify and others I could not. I think mothers, in many instances, regardless of race, creed, and color, have similar expectations of their daughters worldwide.

Quite frankly, **Hey, White Girl** by Judith Bice would have flown under my radar had Judith not reached out to me after she was gifted a copy of my first literary child, *What I Know ... Poems of Life*. I enjoyed my read of **Hey, White Girl** because much of what Judith wrote about coming of age in Richmond, Virginia, during school integration was identifiable for me, BUT from a Black perspective. Judith expresses the trepidations and encounters of being one of a few through the eyes of Nell, a white teen girl caught up in legislated busing. Nell witnesses first-hand racial inequities and injustices directed at her Black classmates which result in reshaping the thoughts and behaviors of her upbringing.

Upon completing the read, I reached out to Judith and we lunched. Neither of us anticipated shutting down the lunch shop. I am a few years older than Judith, but we enjoyed swapping tales of the good old "70s" with our different perspectives of similar situations. I told her if the title had been mine, it would have been "simply" *Hey, (insert n-word)!* We had an enjoyable, spirited and meaningful discussion.



The 1619 Project is NO joke! I am taking my time with this one because it is rich in history or OURstory! I have digested about 75% of its 590 pages; actually, I have digested about 93% because the last 107 pages contain Acknowledgments, Notes, Contributors, Credits and Index, things I generally do not read or review, but in this instance I shall.

Just as my reading led to emotions which triggered writing of a poem while flying home from Greece, I have found myself remembering and crying about poems I have written and published as I continue my reading. Pages 442 to 444, speak to Hurricane Katrina, which triggered memories of my writing

IMAGES FROM SLAVERY, found in "What I Know... Poems of Life" ©2009. Pages 446 to 448 speak to the 2008 election when I, like millions of Black Americans as well as others, sat glued to my television and watched history unfold. On that night, while crying tears of joy, I wrote *YES, WE CAN!*, also found in "What I Know... Poems of Life" ©2009.

At this point, I am not even certain I should offer a review of "The 1619 Project"; what I should do is simply encourage everyone to take the time to read, ingest, digest and learn. THANK YOU NATHANIEL for this Christmas gift which keeps on giving!



I balanced reading "The 1619 Project" with a historical fiction, **Carolina Built** by Kianna Alexander, which brings to life real estate magnate **Josephine N. Leary**. It is a previously untold story of passion, perseverance, and building of a legacy after emancipation in North Carolina. It is also another testament to ALL that was and could be achieved by people of African descent. It is also further proof of how those in power did not and do not wish these truths to be known.

An impressive triple-story building was erected in 1894 as a rental property owned by Josephine Napoleon Leary, in Edenton, North Carolina. It stands today as a busy commercial property and as a testament to an impressive woman. The name Leary and date 1894 adorn the top of the façade. A Victorian color scheme enhances the design of the façade. The interior spaces remain largely unaltered.

RE: Racial Progress

Theodore Parker, Unitarian minister and abolitionist (1810-1860) spoke, "I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by

the experience of sight I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure its bends towards justice."

Martin Luther King Jr, American Baptist minister and activist (1929-1968) paraphrased Parker's words, "The arc of the moral universe, although long, is bending toward justice."

Barack Hussein Obama, 44th and first Black POTUS (1961-) further paraphrased, "The arc of the universe may bend toward justice, but it doesn't bend on its own."

All three are excerpts from "The 1619 Project." There is still much work to be done!

For those recently added to my mailing list -- by me, you were added because I felt there may be something of interest in this particular issue. Feel free to UNSUBSCRIBE at anytime.

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"Y.B."**



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