



## Binary Converginary: Front Lines, a World Apart Collide

Allison Graham

This was written as beat poetry to be performed as spoken word by two people. The voice of Person 1 is represented in non-italics. Person 2 is represented in italics. The centered text is spoken in tandem. Red words interjected in the column in the opposite format (e.g., a red italicized word in the middle of a non-italicized section) represent an interjection from the other speaker. It is to be read left column until the centered text, right column until the centered text, then center column.

As a kid I was TOLD  
I could BE anything,  
BE whatever I want,  
DREAM

*Dream*

*I was left at a gate,  
five-months did I wait,  
isolated*

*Alone*

BIG!  
Reverie in rainbows,  
late night shows,  
unicorns,  
endless possibilities,  
opportunities,  
probabilities,  
capabilities

*Endless*

*insulated,  
prohibt-tat-ed,  
left behind,  
my life to be defined.  
I was adopted by whites,  
given rights,  
Parents for scary nights,  
inc-u-bated*

*Gestated*

Encouragement,  
confidence.  
I was essentially loved,  
family tensions,  
nuclear detonations.  
Optimism,  
affirmations, aspirations,  
college degrees.

*Possibilities*

*indoctrinated,  
cerebral-lated,  
intelligence,  
expectations,  
postulations,  
demonstrations,  
aspirations*

*Identity*

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Conceptualize,  
revolutionize,  
opportun-alize.

college degrees,  
privilege-izations.

That's how we got our start.  
I went to a private Catholic School Growing Up.

*Discipline,  
religion.*

*Take your catholic medicine,*

In Nomine

*Don't be late,*

*Christ can hate,*

*Priests can speak the word of God,  
no one thinks that's kinda odd?*

Pater

*Nuns stay on bridal knees,  
God Herself does not need,  
Repeat exactly what is said,  
or you'll meet the Devil's end,  
He will take your soul away.  
Just be good.*

Sanctus

*Do as told*

Et spiritus

*Please do TRY and fit this mold.*

Filius.

Nuns beat,

*Ductus*

knuckles red,  
put religion in my head,

*Exemplo*

white Shirts,  
plaid Skirts,  
penny loafers,  
pink and green,  
popular girls

*WE ARE MEAN!*

Corporal punish principals,  
wooden paddles,  
spank bad apples,

I'd misbehave until last bell,  
mother never took it well,  
Fulminate and criticize,  
Please go out and proselytize.

Daily religious classes,  
for the Lord to feed Her masses,

*Volente*

beatings,  
lashes,

*Deo*

acolyte smashes.

We do appreciate,  
Godliness to subjugate,

*SILENCE!*

is a golden rule,  
for the church to be so cruel,  
bad things happen under stairs  
behind closed doors  
no one cares.

I am now a recovering Catholic.

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*I remember where I was when Gay  
Marriage was announced.*

I remember where I was when Gay Marriage  
was announced.

June 26th, two-thousand fifteen.

*Much of my life was lived in the dark,  
A red scarlet mark,*

Much of my life was lived in the light,  
Front-line was my fight,

Marry

Fight?

*On love's societal fringe,  
on a binge,  
overdoing,*

with impertinence,  
insolence,  
brazenness.

Whomever

*slightly abusing,  
having a blast,*

Stigmatized,  
classified,  
marginalized,  
discrimi-nal-lized,  
characterized.

You LOVE!

*will always last,  
teachings from my past.  
I was taught this way.*

When growing up gay,  
without marriage why stay?  
I was taught this way.

Rights?

Love is Love

*Salt Lake City one day,  
the worst place to be gay.  
Fighting haters,  
discrimanators,  
chased down dark alleyways,  
beer bottles thrown my way.  
Fighting back  
on the attack.  
please don't speak that way,  
it's hard enough to be gay.*

*Pasadena one day,  
the best place to downplay.  
Deceiving investigators,  
bypassing interrogators,  
performing as straight,  
How long should I wait?  
Morally complicit,  
led by the elicited,  
fit to the mold,  
expectation,  
anticipation  
knowing my fate,  
Will it be too late?  
To be authentically me  
in this city I see?*

Never give up; always tits up!

What the hell are you talking about?

Progress brings change.

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Reclaiming, renaming, reframing, re-appropriating,

*White privilege*

separating  
fragmentating,  
Have many people heard?

*Bi-an-ary,*

*cis-patriarchy  
equity, multiplicity,  
reciprocity, diversity,  
social constructivity,  
heteronormativity,  
non-conformity  
Yes, I've heard.  
I teach these words.*

**Conversionary**

I get more words to use now.  
Am I alone?

*She gets a bit of it now.  
She's not alone.*

New identifiers?  
Modifications,  
trans-dictionaries

*self*

alterations  
revis-o-nations  
individual flags?  
one rainbow incorporated

*Associations,  
Interpretations,  
Privilege-i-zations  
Insert-ation  
Maintaining rights,*

*Court fights*

**For**

**All**

amalgamation  
integration

*Identification*

*Marching in the street,*

*Fighting defeat*

**Fights**

We keep the beat.

Now today,  
we teach-preach  
a whole new way.  
Excitement to feel free  
something denied to me

*Finally, we have the right,  
To love with all our might*

Our people died for WE.

Conquering,  
Vanquishing,  
Overpowering!

You're not going to make the jump if you don't take the leap.

## About the Author

Allison L. Graham is a global learning technologist, an immersive storyteller, and a social media historian.

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