

Tanisha Hollis

22 April 2013

Course project

### “Jimmy Hates School”

“I hate school”, thought Jimmy as he sat in front of the computer screen that he had come to detest over the past few months. Though he was only sixteen, he had made some mistakes in life that led him to the very place where he was sitting. Jimmy was grateful to be at Pleasant City High school, it was a welcomed second chance at finishing high school. The work was easy and arbitrary. Jimmy was smart, he knew that. However, as a young Latino kid from the wrong side of the tracks, he often found himself fighting against society’s stereotypes and misconceptions about youths in his current position.

Growing up on the southwest side of Pleasant city, Jimmy was used to being the “poor kid”. His mother went out of her way to ensure that he went to the “white schools” so that he would receive a better education. Instead, Jimmy learned of inequality. He didn’t understand why these “white schools” had so much more to offer than the schools on his side of town. Why did his school have new books and computers while the kids from his neighborhood had to share tattered books and outdated computers at their school? The inequality amongst his school peers wasn’t any different. Ever since he was young, Jimmy knew he did not fit in. No matter how hard he tried, he always seemed to fall short of the carefully constructed social hierarchy. He

began to resent his peers and teachers because they did not understand him, nor did they seem to want to. What benefit could they possibly reap by understanding a boy like him? He knew that nobody from that side of town was going to venture over to southwest Pleasant city for the sake of understanding. It would be like a foreign country to them, and not in a good way.

By the time Jimmy became a teenager, his resentment evolved in to rebellion.

Southwest Pleasant city was no place to become a man, neither was his “white school”. On one hand there was violence and anger, on the other, there was ignorance and disregard. Once Jimmy started high school, he already hated school. An altercation with a teacher caused Jimmy to be expelled from all of the “white schools” in the district, leaving him to attend Pleasant City High school, an alternative school. The work there left him unmotivated. He wanted more out of life; he just didn’t know how to attain it. All he knew was that the computer screen was the only thing in the way. Every day he came in and worked on whatever assignment he was instructed to do. He was so accustomed to the routine that he began to find ways to avoid doing the majority of the work, not that he was lazy, he just didn’t see the point. What good was it to finish all of these lessons if he would still be going out in to a world that rejected him?

Every week, students from neighboring colleges came to visit Pleasant City high school to help the students with their course work. Jimmy liked the visits because they relieved him from the mundane routine that each school day brought. The same tutor came every time to help

him. Jimmy knew he didn't need help with the work, it was simple. He was more intrigued by being around someone who had finished high school and didn't hate it. Not all of them could have had it easy. How could they be so enthusiastic about school? How did they even like school enough to continue going for another four years? The more Jimmy visited with his tutor, the more he realized that they were on different paths in life; they were alike in many ways. He liked that because for once, his race and class did not define him. For once he could make a friend that did not know what it was like to live in southwest Pleasant city, but still understood him somehow. It wasn't a life changing experience, but it gave him a new perspective on how life could be. No longer did he feel a sense of hopelessness about the future nor did he succumb to the usual disdain towards his computer, rather he saw it as a way to improve his life, rather than an obstacle that hindered his progress.

Though he knew that there would always be people that would not understand him or who would define him by his race and economic status, he also knew that there were people who would not. Jimmy's hatred of school turned into motivation to make schools a better place for children of all classes and races to benefit from. Once he graduated from Pleasant City high school, he went to college to become a teacher. He now teaches the teenagers of southwest Pleasant city, so that he can motivate students like himself to feel accepted in school and love learning.