

Andy Yates is a Senior English major with an emphasis in creative writing at Northwest Missouri State. As a sophomore in Brenda Ryan's Composition class, Yates wrote the essay "Tolerating Society." The paper shows how he matured in high school and learned to accept all people that he will encounter during his walks through life.

Yates hopes that his essay will be able to open up others' eyes and not be so judgmental, "Tolerance is something that many have in short supply, and telling stories like this can maybe help shed some light on the kinds of tolerance that are normally overlooked."

The St. Charles County native knows that people can be cruel. "It's easy to make fun and ostracize people based on different tastes in looks or music or whatever, but it's not right."

At the beginning of "Tolerating Society," Yates mentions how one of his first experiences that opened up his eyes to people that were different than him was in his confirmation class at the Catholic church that he attended. While religion can be a touchy subject for some, Yates did not seek to offend anybody, but actually just relating his past experiences to address a subject. "There are certain moments like this that kind of stuck with me...I'm not ragging on all religion; I'm merely relating my views and observations in the medium that works best for me: my writing."

Yates says he was happy to have his essay published on the Northwest Student Writing Anthology's Website, "It's always a pleasure to have your work open to be read by the public, especially work like this where I am promoting an idea."

While he does not anticipate "Tolerating Society" skyrocketing him into the public eye, Yates does believe it can help him learn about himself. "The only way I hope to profit from my writing is through learning more about my own voice, beliefs, and experiences as I flesh them out on the page."