In Solidarity

While political sentiments rarely die completely, it is the symbol of an empire, authority, or ideology that lives on. Recognizable regardless of word or doctrine, they can be appropriated by new regimes, migrate from the sacred to secular, and connect factions divided by country and era. Through symbols, both persecutors and the persecuted distinguish themselves in history. The Women's Studio Workshop invited twelve artists working in the social terrains of California, Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee to consider the safety pin's rise as the symbol of contemporary protest.

In the weeks following the 2016 national election, those who did not support the impending administration began visibly wearing safety pins. These small, commonplace objects were declarations of allyship with populations subject to discrimination, sanctioned, if not incited, by political rhetoric and promised legislation. First a sign of protection, the pin was adopted as the face of national dissent in the months to follow.

The second, almost immediate response to the safety pin was a reminder of the difference between symbol and action. The presidential race echoed a country battling with its own populist dissonance and the deeply wrought xenophobia, ableism, homophobia, racism, and misogyny masquerading as civil responsibility. Over twenty-three decades after the Revolution, Americans still fight for rights and representation—not only permission to exist, but to one day see America's diversity reflected in its leadership. This vision gains nothing if the only action taken is the embracement of a logo.

While the safety pin became a symbol of defiant compassion in the wake of a catastrophic political transition, many know the meaning extends before and beyond this era of political fallacy. The pin is not mending a broken seam of society, as the stitching was never quite there. The movement stands for more than one reaction, one election, and one inauguration. It stands against the daily inequalities and systemic discrimination.

The ubiquitous presence of the safety pin is not a resurgence of opposition, but a rally for unity in a threatening time of emboldened oppression. Together, the artists of *In Solidarity* have marked a place and time where the population, despite today's oligarchy, has overwhelmingly decided to move forward.

THE SAFETY PIN

Trump comes to power as right-wing movements are in ascendancy around the world.

HATE FUELED

Racism, misogyny, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, anti-Semitism and anti-immigrant attacks and acts of intimidation spread.

Meanwhile... In England after Brexit

safety-pin to show solidarity

Anti-Trumpers quickly picked up the safety-pin gesture and it spread across social media.

IN SOLIDARITY

But the safety pin gesture was shouted down, mostly by people from those vulnerable demographics who think it's a hollow gesture.

So people have to give time and money to MAKE the safe spaces.

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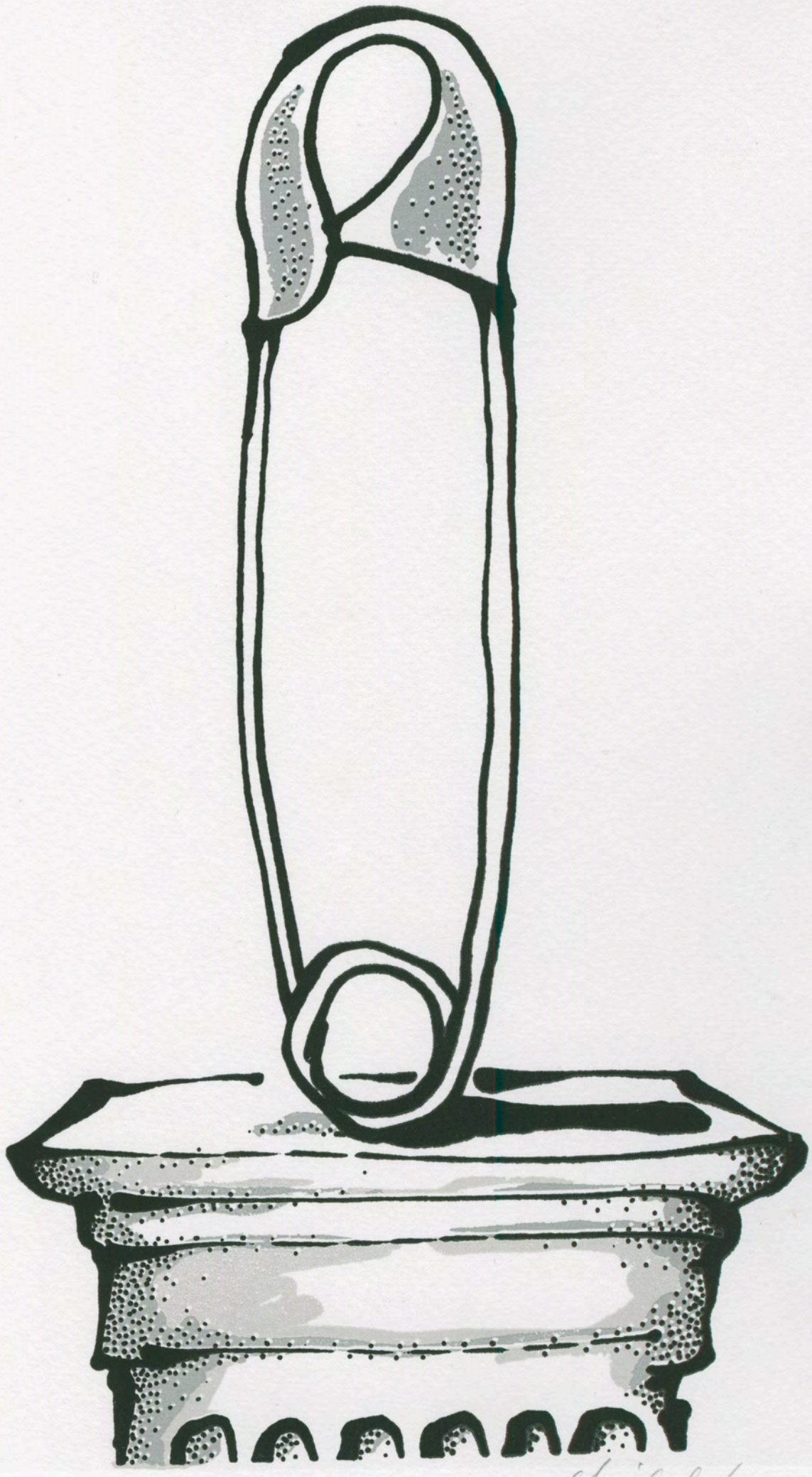
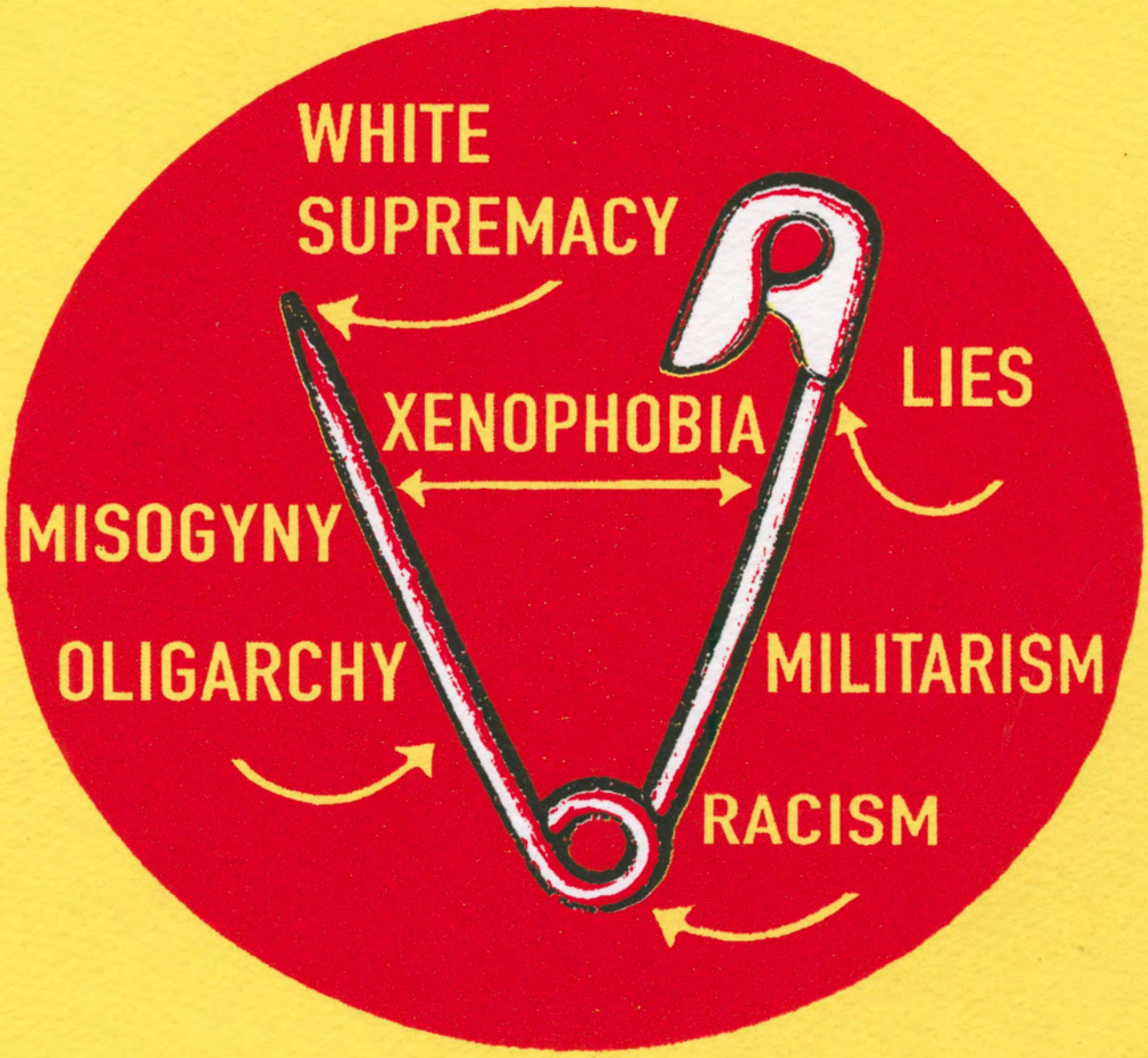


17/35

Gail Schneider

DEFENDER

to combat Trumpism



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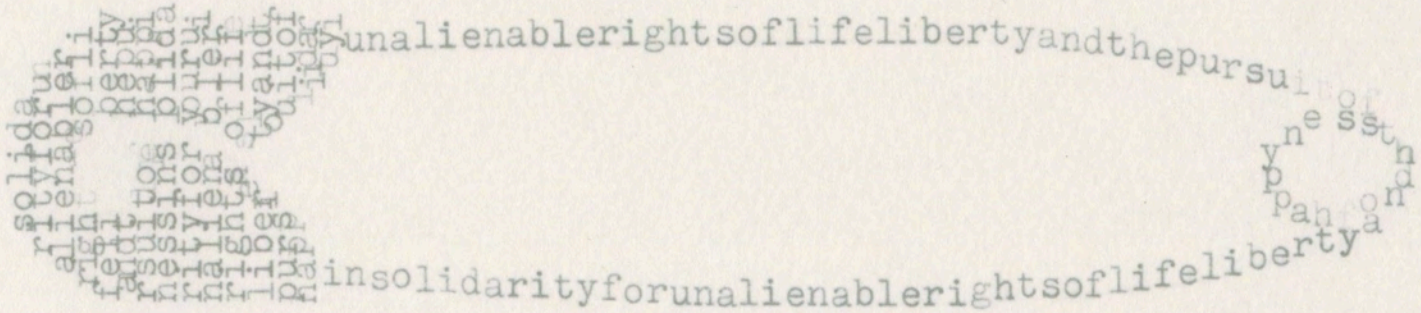
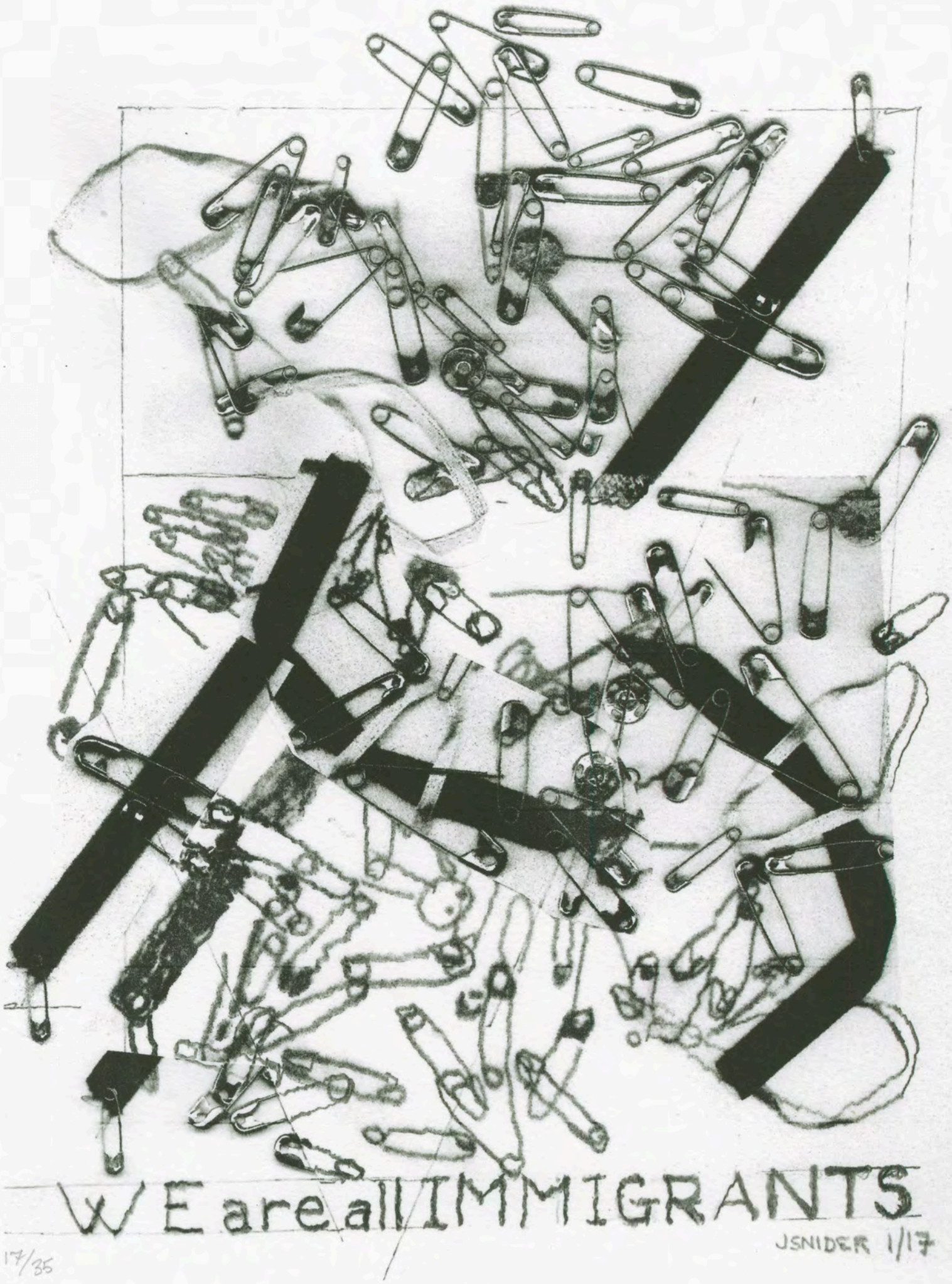


Leslie Madsen

17/33


WE are all IMMIGRANTS
JSNIDER 1/17
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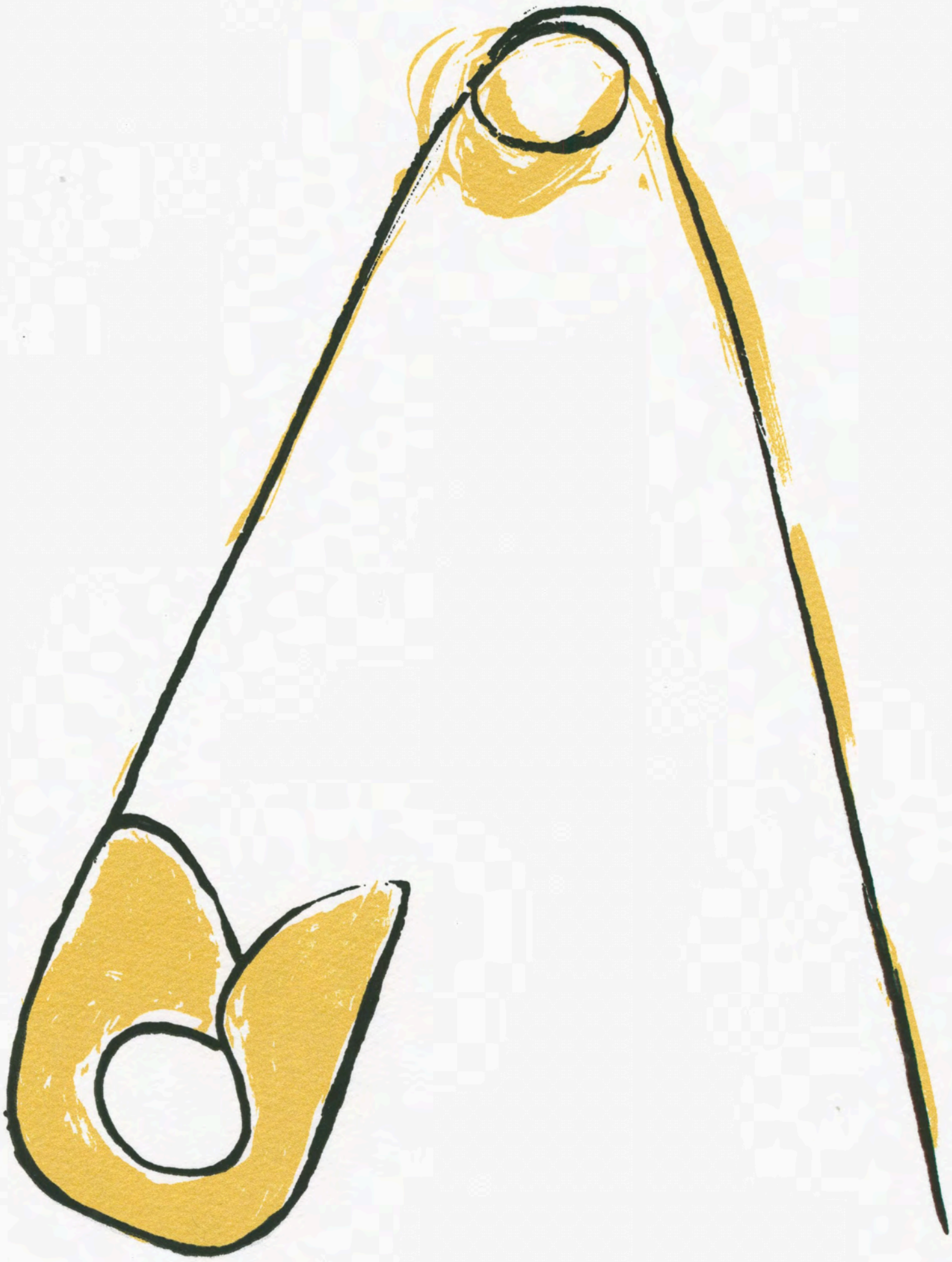

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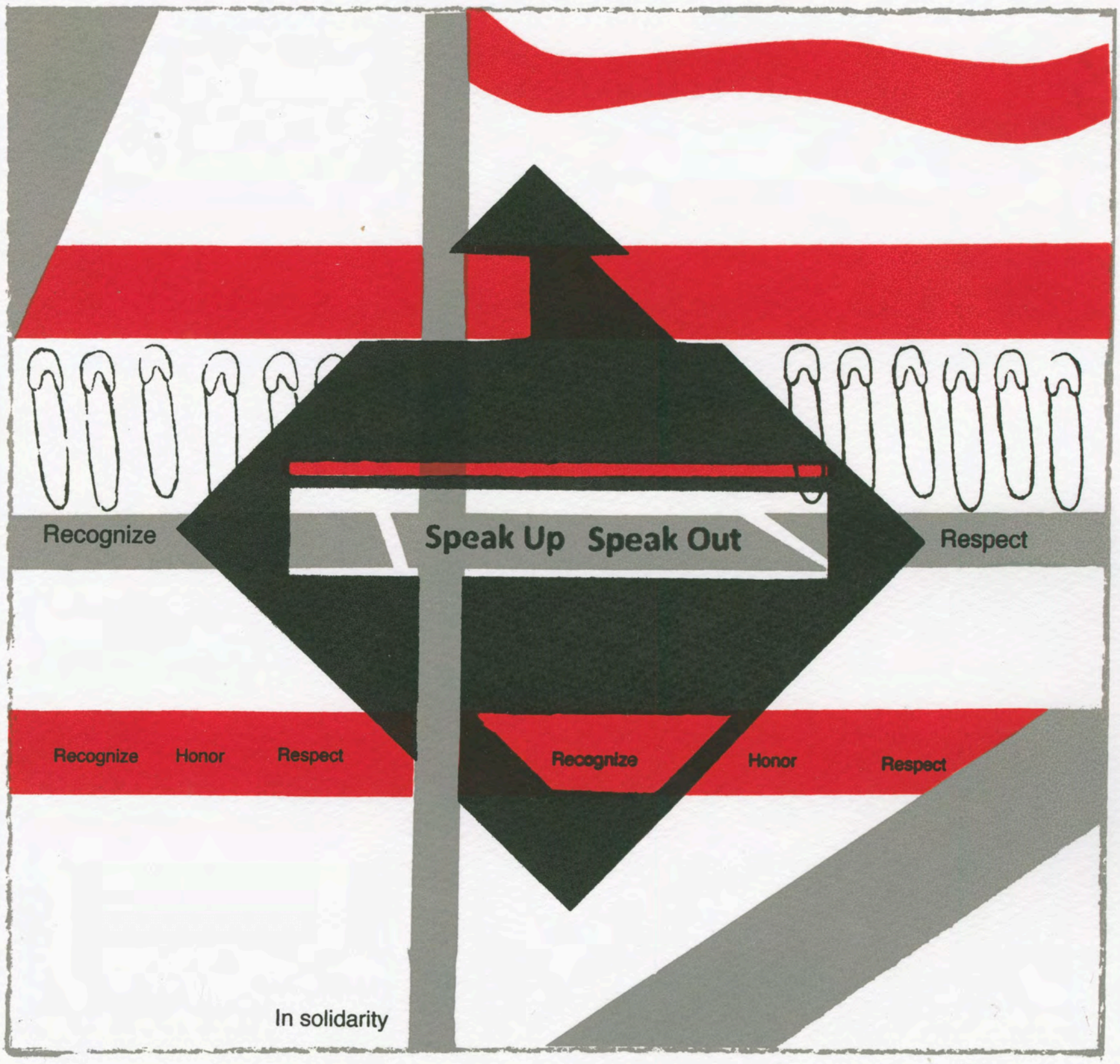
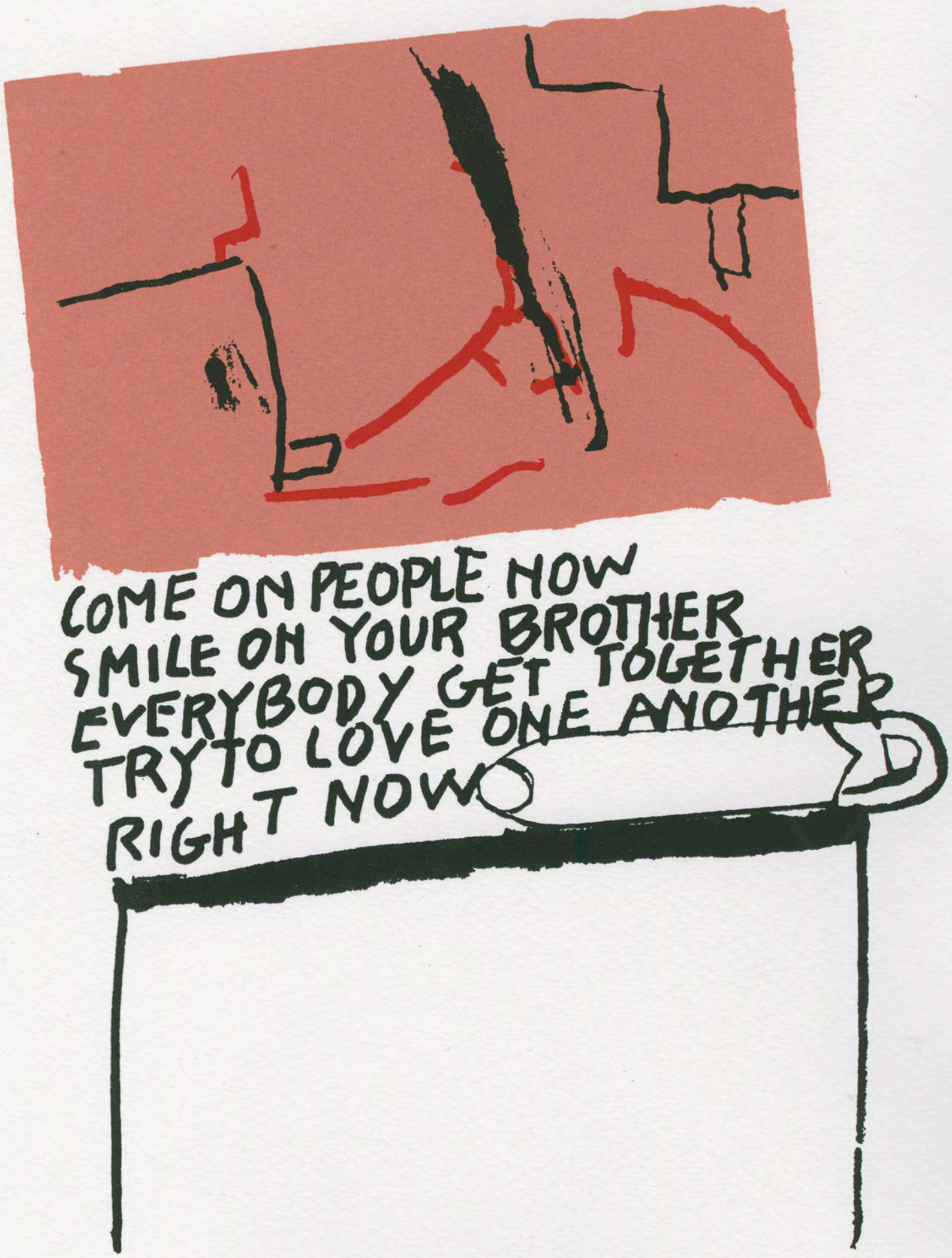
N. Yamaoji


Recognize
Speak Up Speak Out
Respect
Recognize Honor Respect
Recognize
Honor
Respect
In solidarity

17/35

AW '17



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Barbara Leib Berge

AM I SAFE? AM I SAFE? AM I SAFE? AM I SAFE? AM I SAFE?

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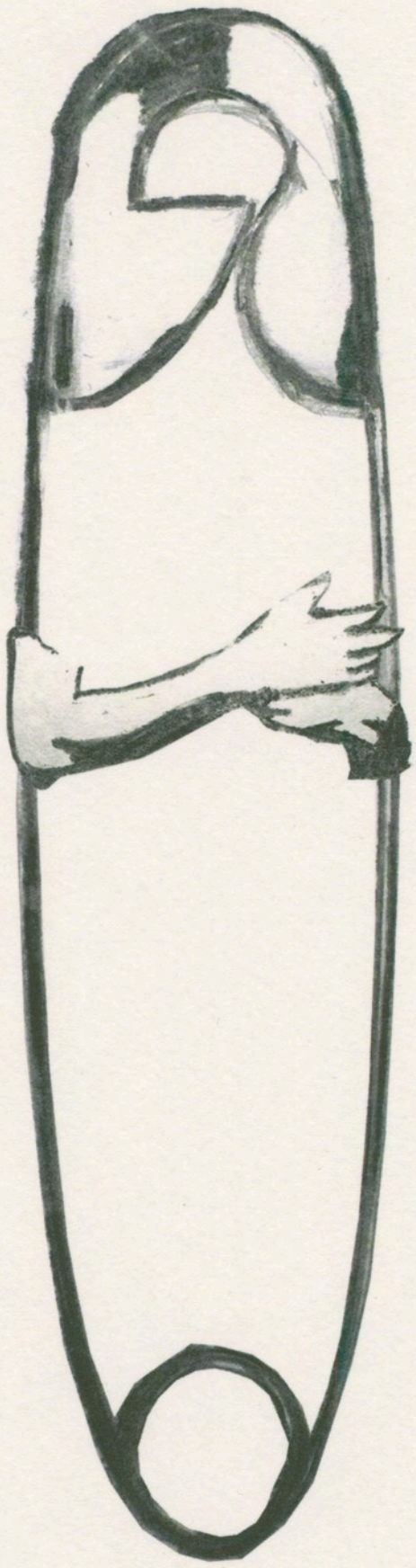
CLARISSA SLIGH
2017