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Diaspora: Bay Area Edition

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Diaspora: Bay Area Edition



(Fig. 1 Image of San Francisco and Oakland connected by Bay Bridge) source: Mansion Global

Alexander Zarate

Literary & Film Studies

HCOM 475: Diaspora

Research Essay

Umi Vaughan

School of Humanities & Communication

Spring 2019

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HCOM 475: SENIOR CAPSTONE
PROJECT PROPOSAL
ESSAY OPTION

Prepare a (typed) document responding fully to all of the prompts below. Be sure to use numbers to indicate which prompt you are addressing in each of your responses.

1. Provide your name and identify your area of concentration

Alexander Zarate, Literary and Film Studies

2. Focus: Identify the *specific* issue, problem, or question addressed in your essay. Be sure to frame as a question. Briefly explain why you chose this focus area.

The main idea that will be addressed in my essay is the relationship of diaspora surrounding the Bay Area. This is relating to our main theme of the class.

3. Alignment with Common Theme: Provide a *concise overview* of your project's *direct alignment* with this semester's shared theme of inquiry.

Diaspora is our main theme in this capstone. This essay will be providing evidence into modern day diaspora as well as historical diaspora from the area.

4. Purpose: What is your project's primary purpose? What do you hope to accomplish through this project?

My project's primary purpose is to inform an audience about the current relevance of diaspora in everyday lives, not just history.

5. Capstone Title: What is your project's working title?

Diaspora: Bay Area Edition

6. Working Summary: Provide a one-paragraph working summary of your project...

This research essay will be using examples of how people became attracted to the Bay Area before it became popular. I will also be explaining how so many individuals commute from miles away where their job is just because of their diaspora forcing them further away.

7. Sources: Address each of the following:

➤ In order to complete your project, what additional knowledge, insights, skills, understanding, and/or other resources and tools do you anticipate needing?

I anticipate that I will need knowledge on when the Bay Area started booming in the economy and when people also began leaving from there. I will be practicing my research skills to find quality evidence that can support each claim I make.

➤ Describe the kinds of primary and/or secondary sources you intend to use for your inquiry. This could include collecting original oral histories, analyzing government statistics, consulting scholarly peer-reviewed articles, books, and websites, among others. If you have consulted sources to get started, list them here.

I will be finding primary sources through interviews with news channels or articles that provide the same information. I will be sure to cite scholarly articles dealing with the same area. There is not any books about the area, but I will be providing information from books assigned in class to connect definitions of diaspora and examples of it.

8. **Next Steps:** What steps will you need to take to meet your project's expectations, including preparation of all required deliverables? (be as specific as possible)

I will need to be on time for all draft deadlines and ahead of schedule on the final product to allow a cushion for editing and provisions. I need to make a checklist for the portfolio and research paper to be sure I have each aspect required for the assignments.

9. **Timeline:** Provide a detailed (and realistic) timeline for completion of each step required to meet the project's expectations.

After writing this, I hope to be more than 50% done with the project by the first draft deadline, then completely done by the next draft. This timeline would be around 12 weeks at this point. I'd like for all my reviews to be done a whole week before the final deadline.

Diaspora: Bay Area Edition

By: Alexander Zarate

Defining Diaspora

It is welded to thousands that departed from their host land and the arrival of many to another. Diaspora is attached to much of humanity. Signs of a rise in diaspora are not revealed until families find themselves fleeing their homes in search of more suitable environments. The main region of interest that will be the focus of diasporic research is the Bay Area and the effect of diaspora on it's current and former residents. Diaspora is defined through the characteristics of a culture that are brought over and taught in a newer location. Great deals of change are involved with groups of people and their new host land. In the article "Transnationalism: Diaspora Homeland Development," by Rubin Patterson, the traits of diaspora involve a group of people dispersing from their home land. With the dispersal, their arrival involves creating a passion for fitting in. This passion overlaps with different cultures arriving in new areas that spread the traditions to each one of them. The causes of diaspora could include the economy. Living can have conflicts. Crime rates, economy, and environment can all have role in diaspora. Food will begin to slowly impact the desired locations for diaspora. Music will find ears that were unsure they wanted to listen. Style has a part in people assimilating to their new or old areas whether they want to fit in or stay comfortable in their own traditional clothes to prevent homesickness. With positive aspects, comes the negatives as well dealing with culture that is unprepared for change.

Silicon Valley Effect

The Bay Area was not always the large technology giant that it is today. When the computer processor was created by William Shockley in Mountain View, CA, there was a “spark of interest” for technology in the region according to Business Insider. This region in the hole of California became a destination for many looking for work. An increase of workers is a quality of diaspora in a positive perspective. Many have moved from their homeland to the Bay Area for more suitable payrolls and opportunities without knowing where this stronghold would lead. The fleeing to the valley or other states for more affordable lives.

The Silicon Valley began its incline in the Bay Area around 1900. Apple, Google, and Facebook were nowhere near to playing a role in the economy yet, but there was one of the first radio stations that had gained interest according to Business Insider. Moffett field was soon turned into a military base when it was purchased by the Navy in 1933 between Sunnyvale and Mountain View, two very wealthy areas that are now known for Google and Levi’s Stadium (Santa Clara). Gordon Moore and Robert Noyce were workers of Shockley and by 1968 they founded the company Intel, which is still very useful in tech today. This was the first major tech company that has survived the modern times. A major part of our world today started in the, not yet named, Silicon Valley. “In 1969, the Stanford Research Institute became one of the four nodes of ARPANET. A government research project that would go on to become the internet. . .In 1971, journalist Don Hoefler titled a 3-part report on the semiconductor industry ‘SILICON VALLEY USA.’ The name stuck.” (Weinburger). A decade later the arrival of the juggernaut,

Apple, was founded in the same area along with Oracle and the historical gaming industry, Atari. Within a whole decade after those major corporation arose, came the email companies Google and Yahoo. The creation of the computer processor was the guide this economy needed for the following decades. The social media companies made their mark into relevance in the Silicon Valley as a new source of staying connected with family, friends, and society. This was the cause of an economical rise for housing when thousands of tech employees flooded into California. These jobs began paying very well and the housing market rose with their payrolls.

(Table 1: Income from tech companies as they arrived and progressed).



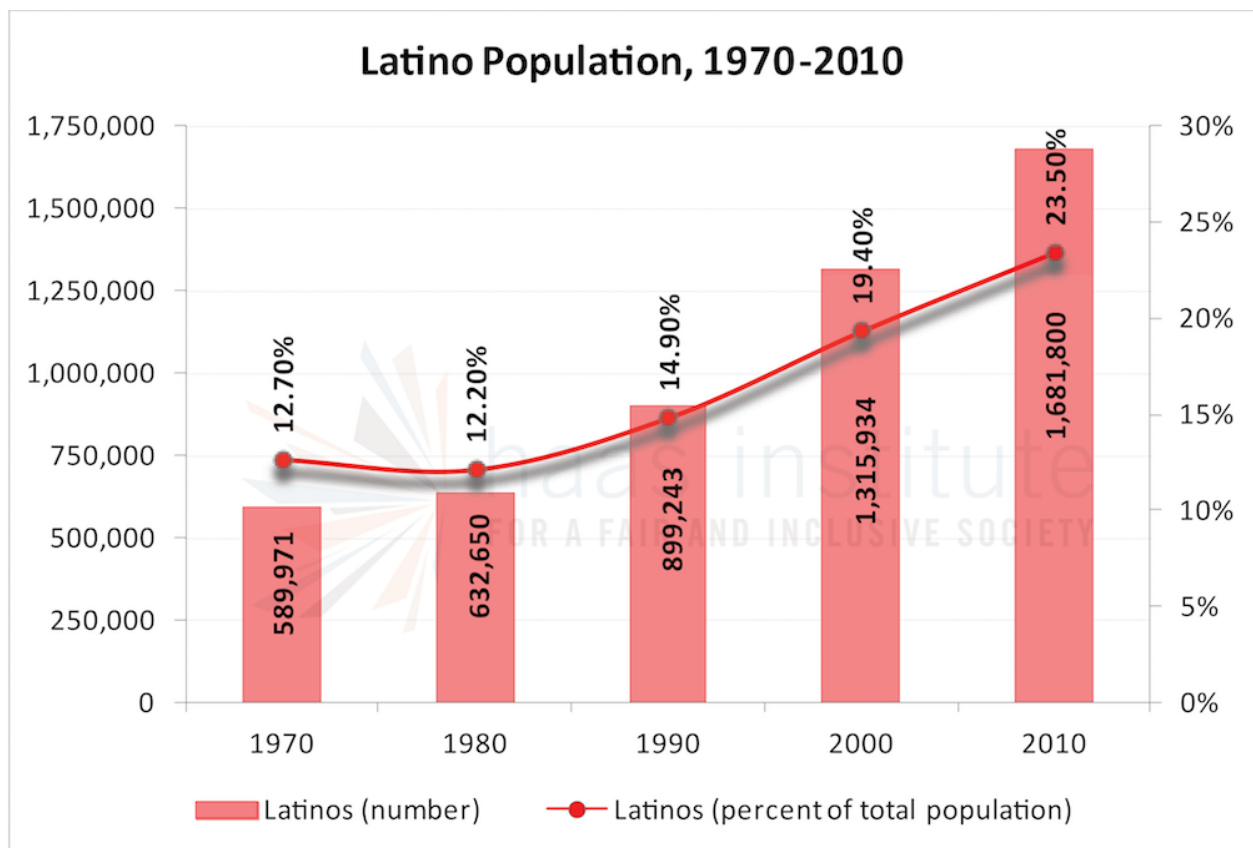
This image is an exact timeline of the Silicon Valley peaking. As you can see on the left at 1997, there was the search engine much of humankind uses today, Google. With the introduction to

Home & Excite, at the time the stock company NASDAQ was at a peak. When the bubble is popped there is a dramatic downfall of stock until the founding of Facebook in 2004. This social media company expanded the horizon of what the internet could bring. There was an abundant of advertisements on the screens while allowing civilians to stay in touch with people and eventually opened the door for businesses to reach out to consumers in a more casual manner. When Google made its Initial Public Offering, there was not much of an impact on the economy. Uber was a great way to bounce back from a loss in the market with providing an opportunity for unemployed workers to drive for the people who were able to keep their jobs and make money. When Steve Jobs died, there was a general assumption that Apple was going to fall apart. The consistent incline came along with Facebook and Twitter going public in the market. NASDAQ is still peaking, but will be expecting this bubble to pop as well which could result in a possible drop in the housing market, saving many individuals from being forced out by rent prices.

Bay Area Demographics

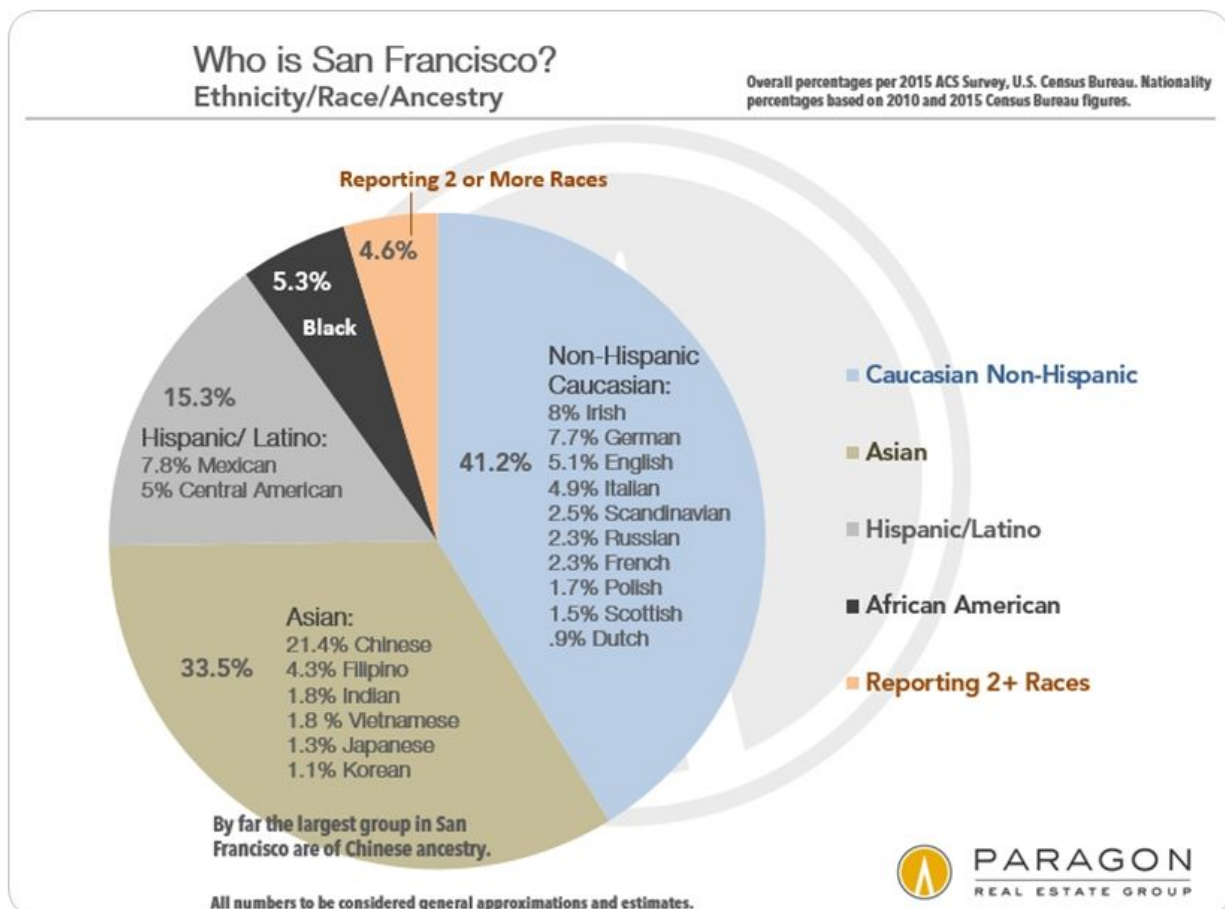
The demographics in the Bay have increased in diversity. According to the Bay Area Census, there was a large dispersal of numbers from White dominating the demographic to being more spread out from 1980 through 2010. From 1980 to 2010 there was a 600,000 population decrease in white people. During that same time, the population of blacks had also decreased after 2010 resulting in the original amount in 1980 of 460,000. There was not sufficient evidence to support the decreasing numbers of both races, but it is a reasonable assumption that it was due to gentrification for both parties. However, Islander and Hispanic ethnicities increased by more than a million since 1980.

(Table 2: Latin Population in Bay Area from 1970-2010. Population (Left) Year (bottom) Percentage (right).



There was a dramatic increase in Latinos population from 1980 through 2010 that is in support of immigration problems and solutions. The diaspora for the hispanic population was due to the poor conditions of economy and safety that Central and Southern America is known for. There was a need for workers in every field and these civilians were looking for an escape to a better life. Looking through the Bay Area Census for the City of Oakland, there is a decrease in the African American population from 2000 to 2010. The white population consists of above 30% of Oakland while the African Americans are decreasing from 28% in 201

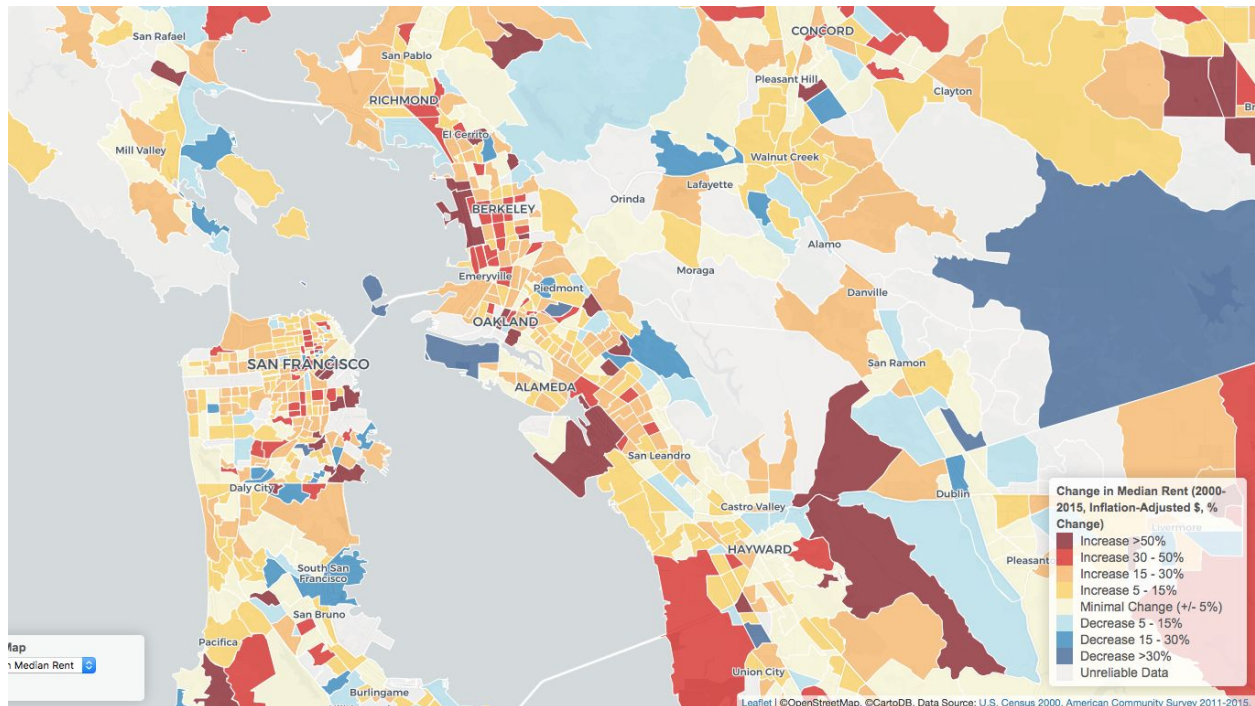
(Table 3: Pie chart of ethnicity percentage in San Francisco).



Financial Diaspora

There is a correlation between the decrease of population and increasing of prices. This adds on to the gentrification trait of diaspora. These residents are being forced out by late bills and increased rent.

(Fig. 1: Rent increase areas identified by red and orange).



The image above is a perfect explanation of how the rent increase is affecting the East Bay more than San Francisco. Dark red regions near Berkeley are showing a >50% increase in rent payments. The next color lighter than that is showing a 30-50% increase. Peach, the color covering most of San Francisco and Oakland is a 15-30% in rent. This is the result of landlords having the power to force people out of their homes leading to being incapable of paying rent settled at \$3000-3500 minimum for a one bedroom apartment at 500 square feet. One of the dark red spots in San Francisco had a raised rent price of 98% which is a change from \$2600 to

around \$5000. That large leap of payments is enough to target any new tech employees who still cannot afford the price. It would be a fair assumption that the blue areas would be the new desire for migration, but are full because of their decline in areas that have a negative appearance. The valley has a median rent value of \$1800-2100 which is much more attractive to a decent payroll. This is when the talks of commuting becomes relevant to civilians in the valley.

Educational Segregation

San Francisco is a major city known for its diversity, but not as ideal as one would believe. White is dominant at 48.5% in reference to Bay Area Census. Asian is second at 33% of the population while Hispanic is only at 15%. African American is only 6% of the San Francisco population. The main concern with these numbers is that the youth is affected in their course studies. With the segment of income forcing people of color out of the Bay Area is in correlation to educational systems. Schools are beginning to resegregate due to the desire to pay for private schooling for better education. Families with financial struggles cannot afford the private school tuition that will result in sending their children to a school with lower standards of education. Referring to the San Francisco Public Press article on how parents with more choices will resegregate the educational system, the more choices they have, the more segregated children will be. Now, this is one factor of segregation that could only be affected by money, but it's not the only factor. Although San Francisco is known for the diverse foods and people, the truth of resegregating schools unintentionally seems to be a more important matter. In the San Francisco press they state, Jeremy Adam Smith states, "Why does it matter whether schools are diverse? One reason is academic performance. Recent studies from Stanford and the University of California, Berkeley, show that many students do much better on tests when placed in integrated classrooms, and that all kids are much less likely to grow up with racial stereotypes and prejudices. Far from being opposed to each other, excellence and diversity go hand in hand" (Smith). The way children are raised is the way they develop. This can assist each of the children's diaspora with their way of knowing. When a child is raised through a community that

appears to be similar from themselves, there is an awareness of difference when confronted with a child or adult of another color. For the long term thought of the Bay Area, this could easily alter the future of diversity as a step backwards from the progress made through desegregation.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, the article, “California’s Central Valley”(2006), there was a large flow of residents. There was an increase of over one million civilians from 1970 through 2006. The PPIC stated, “In the 2000s, migration has been even more important, accounting for two-thirds of population growth in the valley. Most of the migrants are from other parts of California. Jobs, housing, and family are the primary reasons for migrating to the valley”(PPIC). The PPIC predicts through statistical surveys that the population in the Central Valley will rise to 8 million in 2020 and 11 million by 2040. The evidence provided relating to the movement of Californians to the Valley instead of immigrants or out of state citizens, there could only be the majority of reason for dispersal to be the result in a rising economy that cannot be kept up with by the working class and soon to be, middle class as well. An article by the California Hospital Association by Gail Blanchard-Saiger explains how the California wage was \$11 and is now currently sitting at only \$12 after the start of 2019. San Jose has minimum wage of \$15 an hour and is considered uninhabitable in the Silicon Valley. My family were victims of the low wages with high rise economy. We resided in San Jose for 20 years until the move to Los Banos, Western San Joaquin Valley. Our house of 5 years old was sold to us for \$290,000 while an old house in San Jose had a minimum of \$800,000 value. The Silicon Valley forced my family, as well as many others, out of the area into the valley. The Mercury News did a story on Super Commuters, which are considered as people driving for a 90 minute commute one way. There was an example of a couple that had moved to Stockton with a

house price median of \$287,000 while San Jose and San Francisco are around \$1-1.3 million.

The Bay Area diaspora is toxic to commuters since that is what the economy revolves around and many of them cannot settle in there. The norm of working in the Bay Area is to do what is necessary to shorten the commute.

Traditional Diversity

Different styles of food from diverse groups of culture have flooded the Bay Area. The original locations for eating in the Bay Area are what tourists and new residents travel for. In San Francisco there is an abundant of food choices just in the 7 miles by 7 miles of city. A famous mexican restaurant that was televised on the Food Network, La Taqueria- Mission Street. This is a significant example of cultural food from immigrants that has become a trend in the Bay Area. Mexican restaurants are in each town along with Korean, Japanese, Indian, Mediterranean, and many more cultures. Without each group's diaspora, these chains would not exists in California. If home land was sufficient for either ethnicity, they would have continued their lives instead of doing what they could in order to step foot in the Golden State. To the ethnic groups that decided to influence restaurants to continue traditional meals from their country in America, they were not afraid of assimilation. With these traditional dishes come the festivals and holidays.

In the Bay Area alone, there are a significant amount of festivities for each ethnic holiday. During October, ironically there are numerous amounts of celebrations for the German tradition of Oktoberfest. This holiday is to pay respects to the large celebration of King Ludwig I in 1811(Muenchen). The festival is filled with traditional foods, music, and drinks, mostly beer. Another holiday well known by the children in elementary schools and adults at Irish Pubs is St. Patrick's Day. St. Patrick was a patron saint from Ireland, according to timeanddate.com. March 17th is to celebrate his death date. America celebrates these holidays because it is a considerate gesture to our immigrants and their traditions. Each Californian gets the chance to see a sample of what a tradition could look like in another country. If Americans were to have our own

traditions, there would be a festival with baseball, football, and fireworks on top of fireworks. Without the need to move from the homeland of these two countries there would be an empty space of tradition in California. This example relates to the story of *Carlos Aldama's Life in Bata*. In the book mentions Carlos's thoughts throughout the book, ". . .the difficulties of teaching, learning, and remembering the bata liturgy outside the context of dense communal networks of practice. He repeatedly complains about how there are not enough opportunities to play in the Bay Area"(Aldama, pg. 114). Cultural traditions in the Bay Area are followed by restrictions. A tradition in the original homeland could not be compared to how it is organized in California. This aspect of diaspora is what has supported the growth of diversity in the Bay Area. Without the migration of foreign traditional music there would be a dependence on rap music being the only core of musicians to identify the Bay.

The Bay Area and its surrounding towns like Campbell, which is at the south west of San Jose, participates in hosting foreign traditions as well. The major tourist cities of San Jose and San Francisco are an attraction for many travelers to take part in each unique portrayal of these traditions without the need to spend the money on the precise location of a core celebration.

Criminal Activity

Crime in the bay is filled with a couple of towns with higher rates than others. However, there are two towns that are not known for their crime per capita, but are contenders for being underrated. In reference to the *SF Gate* article, “But when it comes to per capita rates, Colma and Emeryville sit at the top of violent and property crime in the Bay Area, according to 2016 Department of Justice data” (Anderson). Colma and Emeryville have low numbers in population which is the cause of their “per capita” numbers at 47 violent crimes/369 property crimes (Colma) and 132 violent/1721 property (Emeryville). The spike in property crime for these leading areas that have less than 20,000 residents each is reasonable. There is a motivation for the lack of fear in the criminals. In this article, there was a comment from the Chief of police of Colma. Proposition 47 passed in 2018 and according to Chief Kirk Stratton, “. . . a contributing factor has been the voter-approved Proposition 47, a 2014 state law that recategorized some nonviolent offenses as misdemeanors rather than felonies”(Anderson). The convicts are no longer worried about taking the risk due to the attempt at lowering jail and prison populations with misdemeanors meaning its a possible fine or only a year in jail maximum. These towns are an example of characteristics of diaspora that could develop or decrease with the need to leave homelands. The new host could unfortunately be made aware of increased crime within the different waves of migration with former Bay Area residents.

Since there is a majority of civilians dispersing from the Bay Area, there was a need for statistics with poverty crime. The Bureau of Justice Statistics highlighted, “The overall pattern of poor persons having the highest rates of violent victimization was consistent for both whites and blacks, however, the rate of violent victimization for Hispanics did not vary across poverty

levels” (BJS). Since there are people moving due to financial issues with housing, this is similar to gentrification. There are poor people being placed in the same regions to suit their income, but are fueling the criminals with more opportunities. This is where diaspora can be welded to a group of people if they have diaspora from their home land and face it at their host land. At this point, there is a limited amount of options. The movement of Californians to the Valley, the conflict of facing areas with increased crime rates. San Joaquin County has a crime rate of 25% for violence and 43% for property crime according to bestplaces.net. These statistics could force people to move again or unwillingly live through the dangerous environment.

Violent and property crime numbers up in largest Bay Area cities

Reported violent and property crimes in 2011 and 2012 for selected Bay Area cities:

	Population (2012 est.)	Violent crimes			Property crimes		
		2011	2012	Year-over-year change	2011	2012	Year-over-year change
Berkeley	114,961	482	500	3.7%	5,064	5,689	18.3%
Concord	125,205	430	402	-6.5%	3,803	4,182	10.0%
Fremont	218,927	384	306	-20.3%	3,952	4,259	7.8%
Oakland	399,487	6,652	7,962	19.7%	20,904	26,342	26.0%
Richmond	106,357	1,035	1,162	12.3%	4,546	5,018	10.4%
San Francisco	820,363	5,374	5,779	7.5%	32,886	38,898	18.3%
San Jose	976,459	3,206	3,547	10.6%	21,972	28,463	29.5%
Vallejo	117,912	903	878	-2.8%	5,244	5,844	11.4%

Source: FBI Preliminary Annual Uniform Crime Report

Todd Trumbull / The Chronicle

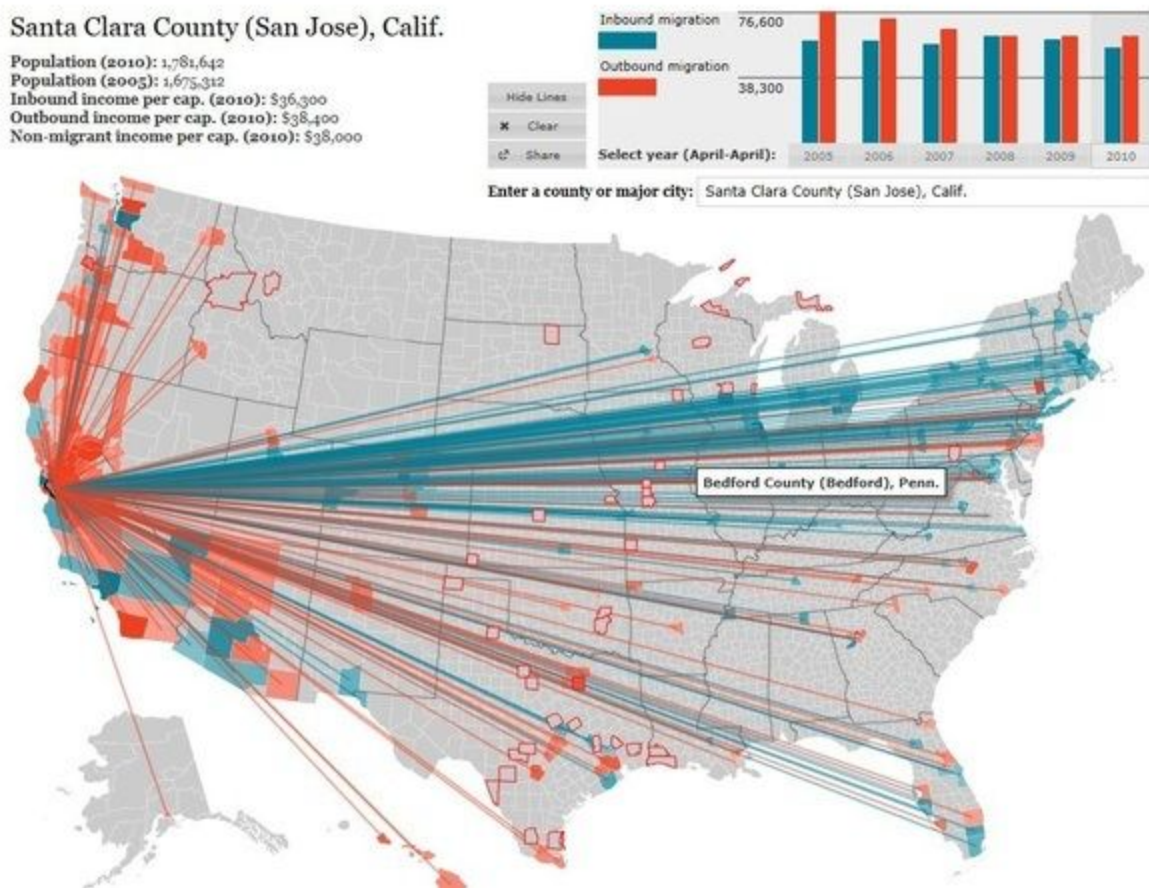
The image above is a broad amount of information on the comparison between Bay Area cities and their property versus crime rates. This is a very important set of information as it consists of demographics and financial medians. These measurements are only shown in a years worth of change. Violent crimes in Oakland from 2011 to 2012 is impossible to ignore. This amount of violent crime could lead to much more diaspora in the result of more citizens leaving for a safer

environment. Viewing property crimes, Oakland also was the second largest increase in convictions and reports with San Jose on a 3% margin in front of it.

Outward Migration

The migration of Bay Area workers does not stop at the heat of the valley. Many of former Bay Area employees have been following the trail of tech companies establishing new territory. Seattle has acquired tech businesses to benefit the economy much more. The Silicon Valley powerhouse has also added business in Austin, Texas. Three of the major Bay Area techs; Google, Facebook, and Apple are impacting the southern state. Workers are traveling to both cities for cheaper housing with the same great benefits of tech jobs. The issue that arises is that those cities will soon be compared to the increased prices of current Bay Area inflation. The diaspora of former Bay Area residents is seen as positive, but with this positivity of incomers to new states leads to the concern for culture change. The Bay Area is known for its diversity and consideration with its civilians. According to the official website of Austin, Texas, the demographics have changed drastically from majority of white civilians to a dominance of hispanics with an increasing amount of Asian and Black. Austin still is known for its lack of cultural acceptance to people of color, but with the former Bay Area employees diaspora, there is expected change. Seattle is similar to Austin in demographics. In the official government site for Seattle, Washington there is a statistic that shows from 2010 through 2016 the demographics of white dominance decreased from 66% to 65.7%.

(Fig. 2: Blue, inbound migration/Red outbound migration of Santa Clara County).



Santa Clara County is a large part of the Silicon Valley. This map shows where those with Bay Area diaspora have chose to migrate to in order to find more suitable living. To compare the two cities mentioned above, Seattle has around a \$400,000 difference in housing median with Austin settling around \$350,000. From 2005 through 2007 there was a consistent distance between inbound migration and outbound. Many individuals desired the Silicon Valley payroll, but were unaware of the costs for living. By 2008 the inbound migration almost overpowered the outbound and then decreased more and more from 2009 through 2010.

Conclusion

The evidence is here to prove that Bay Area diaspora is a real topic that is overseen. With the lack of articles being written about it, there is a concern of who is paying attention to the arrival and dispersal of residents. Diaspora had been the cause that started the famous Silicon Valley that is the tech giant it is today. The people's diaspora sent them here from wherever they came from to support themselves and their families. With time, the migration of thousands of individuals provided a great amount of value to the region. The value led to increased housing, crime rates, and super commuters. Each civilian has their reasons for moving to a new hostland and each reason is part of their story. Diaspora is the causes of which a group of people leave their homeland to settle at an environment they feel they could adapt to and arrive to others who have a cultural connection with them. They bring their traditions to express themselves and stay in touch with their roots. With these traditions comes the diversity that has allowed the Bay Area and California to benefit in all areas of music, food, and business for this economy. Without the people's diaspora this portion of American could be significantly different and insufficient for businesses and consumers.

Annotated Bibliography

Andersen, Ted. "These Towns Have the Highest per Capita Crime Rates in the Bay Area."

SFGate, San Francisco Chronicle, 22 June 2018,

www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/These-Bay-Area-suburbs-have-the-highest-per-12998648.php.

This source provided quality information on crime rates in the Bay Area that support my claim of crime being an aspect of diaspora.

"As Parents Get More Choice, S.F. Schools Resegregate." *As Parents Get More Choice, S.F.*

Schools Resegregate | *San Francisco Public Press*,

sfpublicpress.org/news/2015-02/as-parents-get-more-choice-sf-schools-resegregate.

Public Press allowed me to refer to the educational segregation dealing with financial stability between groups of people, causing segregation.

Butler, Kim D. "Defining Diaspora, Refining a Discourse." *Diaspora: A Journal of*

Transnational Studies, University of Toronto Press, 6 July 2011,

muse.jhu.edu/article/388942/pdf.

This journal provided a scholarly article to reference in any personal questioning of my information gained. This journal also helped support my knowledge of the educational system.

Corey Protin, Matthew Stuart. “Animated Timeline Shows How Silicon Valley Became a \$2.8 Trillion Neighborhood.” *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 30 May 2017, www.businessinsider.com/silicon-valley-history-technology-industry-animated-timeline-video-2017-5.

This article was very useful in supplying a very accurate timeline of the Silicon Valley to support my claims of why people began arriving.

Davis, Bernadette Adams. “Signs of Diaspora, Diaspora of Signs: Literacies, Creolization, and Vernacular Practice in African America (Review).” *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1 June 2000, muse.jhu.edu/article/21476.

This read contributed to my understanding and defining of diaspora in the first portion of my research essay.

“Household Poverty and Nonfatal Violent Victimization, 2008-2012.” *Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)*, www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5137.

These statistics gave a great example of poverty due to increased housing prices in the Bay Area.

McCambridge, Ruth. “The Bay Area Nonprofit Diaspora.” *Non Profit News | Nonprofit Quarterly*, 25 Apr. 2017, nonprofitquarterly.org/2017/04/25/bay-area-nonprofit-diaspora/.

Muenchen.de. “History of the Oktoberfest.” *Muenchen.de*, www.muenchen.de/int/en/events/oktoberfest/history.html.

This was a useful insight on how non-profit businesses were losing business because they do not receive the income needed to keep up with the tech giants.

Perry, Mark J. “So Many People Are Fleeing the San Francisco Bay Area, It's Hard to Find a U-Haul | Mark J. Perry.” *FEE*, Foundation for Economic Education, 14 Feb. 2018, fee.org/articles/so-many-people-are-fleeing-the-san-francisco-bay-area-its-hard-to-find-a-u-haul/.

This brief article provided simple, yet major evidence of how many people leave the Bay and how many were moving in by explaining the lack of U-Haul trucks in California.

Redfin Real-Time. “People Are Still Leaving the Bay Area-But The Places They're Moving to Have Changed.” *Redfin Real-Time*, 30 Sept. 2016, www.redfin.com/blog/people-are-still-fleeing-the-bay-area-but-the-places-theyre-moving-to-have-changed/.

The article explained in depth how the people of the Bay are changing the culture of their new hostlands.

“Top Ten Demographic Trends in Austin, Texas.” *Home*, www.austintexas.gov/page/top-ten-demographic-trends-austin-texas.

Texas was one of the major states people were moving to from the Bay and explained why that was the case.

Final Synthesis

Throughout the seventeen weeks class has been in session, I have been tested as a student. There have been many struggles with developing quality information, whether for the Capstone project or for each discussion about the readings. Despite these struggles, I was still very capable of contributing to the class.

The Capstone theme was diaspora. In a brief description, diaspora is the reasons of an individual or group of people for abandoning their homeland for a new host land to be more suitable to live in. The major issues brought up with this topic were the experiences shown throughout the books assigned to read for class. Each book had a connection to diaspora to understand the experience in depth. We were required to involve ourselves in conversation about how each reading contributed to the theme of our Capstone.

I was able to provide an average amount of input on how characters of each book; Carlos Aldama, Oscar Wao, and Ifemelu experienced their own diaspora throughout the readings. Each story acknowledged a point of view for me to understand from an immigrant perspective, while I was made to be 2nd Generation. Major issues that I was made aware of throughout the semester consisted of violence, finances, and environment. A lot of the stories we discussed in class had involved either gang related instances or government involving themselves in innocent people's lives. The conditions were very unsafe, creating a desire to find a suitable living environment.

Correlating to my demonstration of identifying issues, points of view, and critical questions in this course is my group presentation. Professor Vaughan asked of us, one presentation for a specific section of chapters from either of the books. My group of three was

assigned the final chapters of *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. We were provided with a perfect amount of time to gather and discuss how to separate the powerpoint in equal parts. There were a total of thirteen chapters, fifteen through twenty eight. There was issues with some chapters being significantly longer in pages than others, but we simply just added or took away chapter(s) from one of my other members. The lack of conflicts between us three allowed for a great example of my ability to work in a group. I would like to thank my fourteen years of baseball for my ability to problem solve with a group of peers. Also, there should always be a leader in a group with flexibility for constructive criticism. I am not one to be fearful of questioning or suggesting ideas from a higher power. However, these traits do not compare to my independent work. I do believe I work more productively on my own due to my constant focus. The times I was working on my portion of the group project, I felt I was working more efficiently.

My Capstone project, research essay option, is a great example of my ability as an independent worker. I was aware of my disgust with my results at draft deadlines and took the time between the drafts and final draft to reassure myself that my paper would be sufficient for a senior project. At first, I had chosen a topic too narrow to find significant evidence. Being able to adapt in that conflict made me stronger as a researcher, forcing my mind to work harder in the case that I needed much more reliable information to be put into the project. I would like to point out the positive traits of my independent work are that each part of the product is strictly from my unique mind and decision making. Relatable to many other students, my chaotic schedule of five total classes with commuting of over an hour every other day would create a major limit to how many times I would be capable of meeting with partners. With positives in being limited to

my own thoughts and decisions, come the negatives. I found it much easier to collaborate for a broad spectrum of ideas for my group presentation than my constant writer's block while typing my research essay. Overall, I do believe both assignments are exceptional for my ability to work as an independent or in a group.

The research essay for my Capstone project was based out of the Bay Area and the diaspora individuals face in my old home area. I begin the essay with the definition of diaspora to support the information following it so that my reader(s) understand the topic before reading a paper blindly. This gives me the chance to also show my understanding of the term to prove my knowledge in order for the audience to trust that the content will correctly correlate with the main idea. I was able to connect a theme that was referred to most of African American history in the beginning of the class, to a modern day tech giant. This comparison was a major realization that it still exists and is just generally themed as "gentrification." Gentrification could easily be confused as diaspora because of its effect on individuals financial situations and reasons to move away. I was sure to explain the possible confusion in a way that actually proves gentrification to be a trait of diaspora. My main goal was to be sure my reader had an understanding of the main theme. The next goal was to make my support and evidence relevant to this same theme without question.