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## Never Again is Now: A Study into Intergenerational Trauma

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# **Never Again is Now: A Study into Intergenerational Trauma**



**Fig. 1. Over 1,000 people gathered at the federal court to protest Trump's Immigration Ban, Eugene, Oregon, from David Geitgey Sierralupe, *Rally Against the Immigration Ban*, Flickr; 29 Jan. 2017; Web; 14 April 2020.**

**Madeline Boettcher**

**HCOM 475: Love and Justice**

**Peace Studies**

**Research Essay**

**Professor Busman**

**Human Communication**

**Spring 2020**

**Never Again is Now: A Study into  
Intergenerational Trauma**

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## Project proposal

1. My name is Madeline Boettcher and my area of concentration is Peace studies. My research paper will focus on intergenerational trauma. I will discuss how we can use the history of past atrocities to influence our social action against current problems. I will acknowledge the psychological impact that these injustices have caused not just to victims but also to future generations. I will compare the similarities in past camps to the detention centers at the US border, in order to analyze how the trauma being created currently will affect generations to come. Furthermore, I plan to examine how we can use historical knowledge as a platform for resistance against current injustices.

2. How can history be used as an educational tool to prevent and resist current injustices? What psychological impact does trauma impose on future generations? How do we as a community use history to break the cycle of trauma? I chose this area of focus because I believe history is repetitive. If more people had educational access, or applied critical thinking skills to the past, I believe current injustices may have stronger resistance. I want to acknowledge that history is an important tool to inform our current and future actions as a society.

3. Love and Justice are intertwined in historical memory. Justice will be a theme that I will discuss when comparing historical camps to the current problems at the border detention centers. The theme will play a large role as I acknowledge the psychological effects of trauma on current and future generations. The theme of love will be used when I discuss historical knowledge as a platform for resistance. Furthermore, love will inform how we can prevent future problems and create social change.

4. My projects primary purpose is to educate as well as inspire activism. I hope this project will shift perspectives on how we view history as strictly a past occurrence. By applying history to a

current issue, I want this to inspire social resistance towards the injustices we face today. I hope that this project will be moving and insight understanding for people who have never heard of generational trauma. I wish to achieve a better understanding of trauma and apply my knowledge in a way that could enlighten the community on the systemic injustices that have perpetuated the scenarios that cause trauma in the first place. Through my project I want others to recognize the traumas that are currently being created at our border and empower individuals to feel as though they can create change in their community. I intend to acknowledge the history that is at the foundation of many instances of trauma, trauma that we as a collective need to work through.

5. The title will be Never Again is Now: A Study into Generational Trauma.

6. Our history is filled with atrocities, oppression, and genocide, all of which have caused trauma. These traumas are passed on to future generations and provide yet another obstacle for marginalized communities. The Japanese Internment, the holocaust and the Indian boarding schools are just some examples of these past injustices. They have brought light to the hypocrisy and discrimination within the United States. Unfortunately, these past occurrences are not applied to current policies, therefore leaving room for history to repeat itself. Currently, the border is inhumanely housing immigrants and refugees, many of whom have already experienced trauma on their journey to the US. History is repeating itself again, and the trauma created now will affect future generations on cultural and psychological levels. Change needs to occur, historical knowledge needs to inform our current policies, to inspire our current activism and to prevent future abominations. Using the past as a platform for resistance can address the structural problems that allow for trauma to be inflicted in the first place. Furthermore, it can serve as the framework for healing as a collective and breaking the cycle of trauma.

7. Additional knowledge I will need to attain will come from books, peer reviewed journals, sources on the library database and government statistics. I will be using mainly secondary sources for this project but if I find some newspapers or oral histories within the database then I will include those primary sources. I currently have one book on generational trauma called *The Legacy of Trauma*. Other sources to get me started are...

-Japanese Relocation During World War 2 (National Archives)

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation>

-Jap Ban to Force Farm Adjustments (Primary Source from SF News 1942)

[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active\\_learning/explorations/japanese\\_internment/newspaper\\_articles.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/japanese_internment/newspaper_articles.cfm)

- Indian Boarding Schools (Background)

[http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer/PageServer?pagename=airc\\_hist\\_boardingschools](http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer/PageServer?pagename=airc_hist_boardingschools)

- Death by Civilization (Indian Boarding Schools)

<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/03/traumatic-legacy-indian-boarding-schools/584293/>

-Crowded border facilities where detainees are forced to sleep in toilet stalls violate the Constitution, judge rules <https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/19/politics/arizona-holding-cells-ruling-constitution/index.html>

-The horrifying conditions facing kids in border detention, explained

<https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/6/25/18715725/children-border-detention-kids-cages-immigration>

-Children at the Border: Layers of Trauma Compounded By Detention (trauma before border crossing) <https://www.migrantclinician.org/blog/2018/jun/children-border-layers-trauma-compounded-detention.html>

-The impact of immigration detention on mental health: a systematic review (Study on impact of detention around the world 2018)

<https://bmcp psychiatry.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12888-018-1945-y>

-The Social Effects of Detention on Undocumented Children

<https://lawblogs.uc.edu/ihr/r/2019/02/25/the-social-effects-of-detention-on-undocumented-children/>

-Immigrant children forcibly injected with drugs, lawsuit claims

<https://www.revealnews.org/blog/immigrant-children-forcibly-injected-with-drugs-lawsuit-claims/>

-Holocaust Exposure Induced Intergenerational Effects on *FKBP5* Methylation (Study 2016)

[https://www.biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com/article/S0006-3223\(15\)00652-6/fulltext#s0045](https://www.biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com/article/S0006-3223(15)00652-6/fulltext#s0045)

- Study of Holocaust survivors finds trauma passed on to children's genes (simpler understanding of Rachel Yehuda's study in 2016) <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2015/aug/21/study-of-holocaust-survivors-finds-trauma-passed-on-to-childrens-genes>

8. For the first step I will need to create both the draft and final draft of this proposal. After that I will start collecting data and taking notes. These notes will be used to create my mini summaries for the 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the annotated bibliography. After turning in my 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the annotated bibliography I will start applying my notes into a short outline. The outline will be used to create a 1<sup>st</sup> draft of the essay. After editing the 1<sup>st</sup> draft for grammar and spelling I will add more information to the areas that need work. This will be my 2<sup>nd</sup> essay draft that I want to be peer reviewed by the teacher for insight on how to bring the piece to its full potential. These insights will be used to create and edit the final draft of the essay. I will finish up my final draft of the annotated bibliography and then will finish my final draft of the essay. After these crucial steps are done, I will create and edit my synthesis essay. I will put together my portfolio in proper order. Then I will get in touch with the company that prints the posters and have that ready for the festival. Finally, I will practice my oral presentation and tie up any loose ends with the project in order to be prepared at the capstone festival.

## 9. Timeline

1. Create project proposal draft by February 3<sup>rd</sup>
2. Edit final project proposal between February 3<sup>rd</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>
3. Create 1<sup>st</sup> draft of annotated bibliography February 27<sup>th</sup>-March 3<sup>rd</sup>
4. Data Collection and analysis of essay edits February 27<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup>
5. 1<sup>st</sup> Draft of essay due March 24<sup>th</sup>
6. Edit annotated bibliography create annotated final draft March 24<sup>th</sup>- April 14<sup>th</sup>
7. Edit 1<sup>st</sup> draft of essay create 2<sup>nd</sup> draft March 24<sup>th</sup>- April 14<sup>th</sup>



8. Edit 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of essay creates final draft April 14<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup>
9. Create and edit portfolio April 14<sup>th</sup>- May 5<sup>th</sup>
10. Create and edit synthesis essay due May5th
11. Create poster May 5<sup>th</sup>- capstone festival
12. Practice oral presentation May 5th- capstone festival

## Never Again is Now: A Study into Intergenerational Trauma

A Japanese Internment survivor stands in front of a detention facility holding a sign that says “Never Again is Now.” Since history has always been a concept associated with the past, we forget that current events will soon become part of this historical framework. American’s dissociation with our history is damaging to the current injustices we are facing today. The atrocities that have plagued our past, could be redeveloped under new names. The Japanese Internment, Indian Boarding Schools and the Holocaust are all brutalities that have caused collective trauma within society. If we fail to apply this history to our current policies and our resistance, then the past will become the present. If we continue to view our lives outside of a historical background, then we leave room for trauma to corrupt generations to come. Since trauma is cyclical, we must come together to counteract the effects that it has on people who experience it firsthand and on their kin. Our interconnected nature as a species allows us to be resilient in the face of trauma, but this resilience does not justify the inaction of bystanders. It is our calling to ensure that all people are treated with respect and dignity, even in the face of difference. By acknowledging our nation’s history of colonization, assimilation, and genocide we are honoring the people who have been traumatized in the process. This creates a platform for people to call out current systems of oppression and find liberation and healing with-in the course of their activism.

### **US Border Camps**

For a nation that preaches family values we have done quite the opposite. The hypocrisy that has been exposed through the actions of the government; must provide context for the issues we face now. Specifically, the detention facilities at the US border, which are housing thousands of immigrants and refugees, most of them are families fleeing war torn areas. These refugees

have already lived through traumatic events, yet they are deemed as dangerous criminals as soon as they step foot within the US border. Donald Trump has said many questionable statements about refugees that have dehumanized them as a community. “These aren’t people. These are animals!” he announced (Korte,1). Our president has perpetuated this narrative that seeking asylum is a criminal activity when it is not illegal. Rhetoric like this works to justify the mistreatment of whole communities while making them feel unable to escape the dangerous circumstances that they were fleeing. If immigrant families traveling to the border have not endured enough trauma already, our barbaric immigration system exacerbates their pain. Unfortunately, this trauma has everlasting negative effects on the mental wellness of those who experience it firsthand and generations thereafter. Since historical evidence has made us aware of the cultural, physiological, and emotional impact of trauma, we must apply this to the issues today.

In 2018 attorney general Jeff Sessions announced the trump administrations zero tolerance policy that called for families who were crossing illegally to be separated (Caty,1). Parents were placed in jail while displaced children were sent to detention facilities. Federal guidelines stated that children could only remain in detention for a maximum of seventy-two hours.

Unfortunately, this guideline was often ignored for several reasons. Corruption, overpacked facilities, lack of enforcement and changes in policies, all led to roadblocks that allowed for mistreatment and abuse. One of the main roadblocks was Trump’s 2017 executive order on Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States (Immigration Enforcement, 1). This order called for policies that broadened the criteria for who could be removed or enforced. Many of the children in detention had family in the United States who faced deportation if they attempted to sponsor them. The new policy required families to submit fingerprints of everyone

in their household, in order to become a sponsor. (Coty, 2). Since families were afraid of facing deportation, many did not come forward to sponsor. The process was yet another way to separate families as they attempted to reconnect with loved ones. Its sadly ironic how our country holds its pride in our 'family' values but then continues to undermine family connections based on race, citizenship, class, sexual orientation, gender and mental or physical ability. These policies continue to undermine our values as a community and are used to justify child separation and dehumanization.

Separation was just part of the traumatic process and children experienced far worse treatment once they were placed in these facilities. Sexual, physical and mental abuse took place in many centers, often going unreported. One of the most well-known controversial facilities was Shiloh Treatment Center, near Houston. Lawsuits found that children were held down and injected with psychotropic drugs, one incident claimed a child was forced to take eighteen pills a day (Smith,4). In another case a young girl was left in a wheelchair after the strength of her medication made her repeatedly fall and hit her head. These claims were not new, the center was known for its overuse of physical restraint, violence, and its failure to notify government authorities about administering medication (Coty,4). Shiloh was just one of over seventy-one companies that received federal funding for housing unaccompanied minors. Many of these companies continued to be in service after they faced similar allegations because of the lack of federal enforcement. An investigation found that nearly half of the \$3.4 billion in funding went to homes facing allegations of abuse and mistreatment (Coty,3). In nearly all the cases the federal government continued contracts with these companies. The lack of enforcement shown at the hands of the government is just another injustice to these children. When a child's claims are not prosecuted, their safety can be in jeopardy. Retaliation is often the result when the oppressor is

not punished. Yet, most of these cases continue to be dismissed, creating repeated trauma that has no room for healing.

In cases when allegations were not dismissed, investigation only took place after conditions had gotten too deplorable to ignore. In 2015 a lawsuit was filed against the Tuscan sector of the US Customs and Border Protection facility. Judge David C. Bury found the center to be “unsanitary and degrading” after people were forced to sleep next to toilets from the dangerous overcrowding (Shoichet,1). The Tuscan sector had denied basic resources for detainees such as food, a bed, a shower and water. Since the center had held people longer than federally approved under inadequate conditions; the state could no longer ignore their claims. Although the case was acknowledged by the government the response fell short of justice. The punishment would be a temporary regulation barring the CBP from holding migrants longer than forty-eight hours without food, water, a shower or proper medical evaluation (Shoichet,3). The regulation left space for the facility to continue its mistreatment if it fell within the scope of forty-eight hours. Placing a regulation as a punishment on a facility that has previously abused regulations expresses the injustice taking place. These resources are crucial to the health and safety of those who are detained, especially when there is hazardous overcrowding.

When we respond to injustice in a way that does not attempt to disrupt corruption then we are doing a disservice to everyone involved. The inaction by the government in response to abuse, child separation and denial of necessities preserves the trauma that is being created at the border. It also sends the message that this kind of dehumanization and abuse is okay if it takes place on a group who is oppressed. When we yield to this false ideology, we continue to create a similar environment in which past injustices have been able to take place. For this reason, we can

learn through historical mistakes in order to re-humanize communities who have been oppressed and come together to rehabilitate the traumas created by these false ideologies.

In order to understand the current situation at the border we must understand its history. The injustices taking place within the immigration system stems from policies that were administered during the Reagan era. In 1981 Reagan directed a detention policy in response to the influx of Haitian and Cuban refugees fleeing political uproar (Ghosh,1). Since Reagan feared the policy would be controversial, he presented it to the nation in a way that made the policy seem in line with prior immigration standards. Prior to the change migrants weren't detained if they were thought to be illegal, instead they were released on parole or bond (Ghosh,4).His presentation allowed him to produce an inhumane policy while maintaining that it was in the best interest of the nation's safety. This approach eliminated the controversy and backlash that Reagan had feared and led many citizens to believe the policy was fair. The change completely uprooted the way immigration had previously been handled and allowed for abuse and dehumanization to take place.

Reagan is also responsible for the introduction of private prisons into the immigration system. As detention centers were being built in the 1980's the federal government created an administrative collaboration with private prison contractors (Ghosh,5). That allowed private prisons to make money off housing detainees. This transformation drastically changed the way the federal government could monitor immigration and illegal border crossing, leaving room for corruption within the system. Reagan's policies set a precedent that detention is constitutional and justified and paved a foundation for the current issues at the border.

The trauma of immigration does not just start at the border though. Even before migrant children step foot into our immigration system they have already experienced some form of

trauma. A social worker at the University of Houston conducted a study which found children will experience on average eight traumatic events before they reach detention (Coty,2). These traumatic events include sexual assault, witnessing violent crimes, and kidnapping. As a result of both their time before and after detention, children come out of the system traumatized. Since trauma can affect the brains development many children develop learning difficulties and an array of mental health problems. When families are reunified, they notice these changes in the form of withdrawal or an inability to self sooth (Coty,3). With little access to resources for coping, families are left alone to deal with the aftermath of detention.

In a series of twenty-six studies done around the world on the effects of detention in immigrants, the results indicated that detention itself can be viewed as a traumatic experience. Furthermore, it found that detention compromises childhood development, psychological health and leads to a breakdown in the family unit (Von Werthern,9). The studies cited child separation and parental loss as potentially traumatic events, which could lead to adverse effects such as PTSD symptoms. (Von Werthern,10). The children who experience detention have already experienced extreme adversity; our immigration system further traumatizes this vulnerable community.

These traumas are not just affecting the children they hit firsthand either. As these individuals grow and create their own families, their trauma will be passed on, whether its physiologically or environmentally. This trauma has intergenerational effects that will be everlasting and change the opportunities these people will have. For example, changes in mental ability due to abuse in detention could determine a person's capacity to live a fulfilling and successful life. Understanding how this issue affects us as a collective is crucial to our values as

a community. It is our responsibility to strive for liberation of all, because our liberations are interconnected.

The issue is not just overcrowding, abuse or neglect of proper human necessities, it's also the policies that have created a scenario where these events can take place. These policies are the starting point that allowed for the government to implement an immigration system that traumatizes those who dare to face it. As our government continues to make investments into unsustainable systems of violence we must do our part to counteract this (Haga,159) There must be a movement of resistance against these issues in order to prevent and reduce the amount of trauma we are creating for society in general. We need to apply historical knowledge and learn from our past, in order to fight back against the policies that generate and maintain oppression. Seeking out historical knowledge is a great way to understand current issues better. Since history has been written by the most powerful, it is our civic duty as advocates for justice, to seek out the truth. Doing so provides us the knowledge and empathy to prevent and counteract current problems. When discussing the detention at the border, historical references such as the Japanese Internment, the Holocaust and the Indian Boarding Schools can all be used to inform our current policies. These are all historical references we can honor by applying the lessons learned from these events to current platforms. Seeking out these histories reestablishes our connection with past generations and provides context for us to advocate against injustices like detention.

### **The Indian Boarding Schools**

The Indian Boarding Schools were one of the oldest recorded cases of a detention system in the United States history. They were used to assimilate Native American children into Catholicism while stripping them of their heritage and history. In 1860 the Bureau of Indian Affairs established the first Indian Boarding school on the Yakima Indian reservation; by the



1880's the US operated sixty schools for 6,200 Native American students (History and Culture, 1). Since the Native American community had already been struck by genocide and disease, they were even more vulnerable to the injustices of Puritan America. Native families were often coerced by church and government officials to have their children placed in Boarding schools. Upon arrival their hair would be cut, clothes and belongings burned, and they would be forced to give up their language and culture (History and Culture,2).The boarding schools made it easy for the United States government and Catholic officials to regain power over the Native community. Separating families was the simplest way to assimilate the next generation while preventing resistance by leaving families traumatized and passive.

The assimilation process included teaching children the morals and values of Puritan America while punishing and shaming their family customs. Native kids were taught vocational skills, the importance of private property, Christianity, monogamy, reading, writing, language, and history. These topics had a racial bias that failed to inform students of their ancestor's experiences. The education was both one-sided and inaccurate and often depicted Puritans as the hero's. Children would participate in field trips and other activities that were culturally insensitive. One of these activities took place at Carlisle, one of the most well-known Indian Boarding Schools. On Memorial Day the kids were sent to decorate the graves of soldiers who killed their ancestors (History and Culture,2). Rather than teaching children that their ancestors had been murdered by Puritan America they were taught to believe that they had been saved by their own evil ways. This kind of mistreatment was justified by the belief that Native American's spirituality was immoral. Naming the Native communities, the enemy made it easier to dissolve their culture and reestablish a new one. Unfortunately, this new culture would force children to assimilate through parental separation, cultural oppression, forced labor, abuse and disease.

As if assimilation was not traumatizing enough many children became ill due to the deplorable conditions within the schools. Children were left in unsanitary conditions without proper nutritious food, or medical care. This worsened when illness broke out. Tuberculosis, trachoma, measles, and pneumonia ravaged many of the facilities leaving children ill or dead, oftentimes parents weren't notified (History and Culture,3). Disease and assimilation weren't the only issues either. The schools were known for their pattern of sexual and physical abuse. Mary Pember recalled her mother's experience, she described how the nuns would withhold food, shame and beat children (Pember,2). Officials attempted to hide these mistreatments by refusing to send the children back to their homes for the summer. Instead they were handed to primarily white wealthy Christian families who would use them for domestic labor (History and Culture, 3). It was an inhumane trade off, government officials could rest assured that the Native children would not return to their old culture during the summer, while privileged families could receive free labor. The family separation both prevented children from exposing the boarding schools abuse, while also preventing children from having contact with their family and cultural background. The oppressors could continue to withhold power over Native children without the backlash and resistance of their true families.

The grotesque ideology that led to this racist outcome came from Richard Henry Pratt. He founded Carlisle a well-known Boarding school for Native kids. He also coined the term "Kill the Indian Save the Man" (History and Culture,3). His binary thinking process helped to establish a scenario where Puritan American's felt as though they were the hero saving the villain from their own inhumanity. This idea of us vs them fueled the already racist foundation left by the genocide of Native Americans. The Indian Boarding Schools became a second genocide except this kind, was a genocide of identity. Ironically, the same people who wanted to

instill family values, ended up tearing apart families and causing immense trauma for the Native community.

Unfortunately, the response to these crimes has not been an honest one. Church and government denials have not only hindered the ability of victims to heal but it has also left a foundation where the same actions can take place. In 2009 Canada acknowledged the trauma of its Indian Boarding Schools by passing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission which collected firsthand accounts of historical evidence of victims while providing a platform for families to be reunited (Pember,2). Their government opened residential school records to ensure the legacy was not forgotten. Even with this small step forward there are still injustices facing these communities especially at state levels. The statute of limitations continues to prevent victims of sexual and physical abuse from being able to prosecute the churches and government that mistreated them. Since there is no ability to hold the government accountable for its crimes, the mistreatment of minority groups will continue to occur. What is even scarier is that it will continue to do so in less overt ways that make it harder to call out the injustice.

It is sadly ironic that the Native community continues to experience family separation far after the boarding schools have been eradicated. The lesson of child separation has not been learned and native children continue to be placed into foster care at rates 2.7 times higher than other groups (Guha,2). According to the National Indian Child Welfare Association about 25-35% of native children had been taken from their families before the 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act (Guha,2). Today native communities have some of the highest statistics for missing children. In 2016 the federal bureau of investigation counted more than 7,700 native children missing (Guha,2). These statistics are a tragic depiction of the injustices that continue to afflict trauma within the Native community. History continues to repeat itself in many ways when we fail to

apply its lessons and the repercussions reach further than one group of people. The same racist ideology can be placed on any group that is deemed 'dangerous', even when the threat is in no way justified. It sets a precedent that certain lives matter more than others and this in turn dehumanizes all of us as a collective.

This same racist ideology can also be applied to the US border detention facilities. Child separation plagues the immigration system just as it did during the Boarding school era and as it continues to do in the foster care system. Family separation is a traumatic event that should not be taking place in a country that preaches liberty and justice for ALL. Especially when our country's foundation relies on 'family values'. We are creating a disservice to our own liberation every time we choose to ignore the lack of someone else's. As an interconnected community we should strive to call out instances that mimic our broken past, in order to liberate each other and indirectly ourselves.

### **The Holocaust**

The Holocaust is one of world history's greatest atrocities, yet much of its history has been lost due to the suppression of information and the aging population it affected firsthand. Their accounts of the genocide are essential to understanding that horrible things can take place at the hands of the government when bystanders remain silent to injustice. Most narratives of the genocide focus on the staggering seventeen million death toll without simultaneously acknowledging the steps taken prior to the extermination. These are the building blocks that allowed for a genocide to take place. One of the first steps in this journey was the Nuremberg laws issued on September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1935. The laws stripped German Jews of their citizenship and prohibited them from marriage or extramarital sex with non- Jewish people (Rosenberg,2). Not long after, new laws followed that banned the Jewish community from public parks, fired them

from civil service jobs, placed travel restrictions on them, and expelled Jewish children from schools (Rosenberg,3). These changing laws were the very beginning of the racist dogma being perpetrated at the hands of the Nazi party and they paved the way for the eventual genocide.

Another event that laid the foundation for the mistreatment of the Jewish community was Kristallnacht which took place in November of 1938. Also known as the Night of Broken Glass, Kristallnacht was a massacre led by the Nazi party. They targeted and beat several German Jews, then looted, burned and broke the windows of several Jewish owned businesses and synagogues (Rosenberg,4). That night many Jewish people died from beatings, while approximately 30,000 others were arrested and sent to concentration camps (Rosenberg,4). The pogrom set a precedent that it was okay to abuse and slaughter people based solely on their identity. It also obliterated the livelihoods and careers of the Jewish community, leaving them vulnerable with no way to make money.

After their businesses had been ravished the Nazi party toiled to separate neighborhoods even further. Jewish communities were evacuated into segregated ghettos where there was extensive overcrowding and unsanitary conditions (Rosenberg,5). The ghettos provided two functions, Nazi's could easily order deportations to concentration camps, while keeping the public ignorant to believe they would be working for a labor force (Rosenberg,5). Forcing the Jewish community into these ghettos further dehumanized and alienated them. While it allowed the Nazi party to interject even further into their lives and eradicate their culture and identity. Unfortunately, many of the ghettos were liquidated through mass murder or evacuation to death camps. For this reason, much of the history has been lost that is why its so important to seek it out. We must understand this history so that we do not repeat it in the future. In order to do this properly we must obtain the full picture not just seeing the most eye-catching portions.

Often when discussing the Holocaust most stories elaborate on these eye-catching details without simultaneously including the less overt and problematic structures that allow for atrocities to take place. Instances such as physical labor, sexual abuse, starvation, experimentation, and murder are all atrocities that are overt enough to create a collective response of disgust. Since these are easy to call out, most people recognize them as wrong and shocking. Although these instances are important to analyze we must also understand the hidden structures that create the foundations that these injustices work through. We must reach for the details that are obscured by larger explicit problems. The ones that you really have to dig deep for. Recognizing the Nuremberg laws, Kristallnacht and the evacuation of Jewish people into segregated ghettos are part of the process of understanding the full scope of the Holocaust. They were the starting point that eventually led to a genocide. These events allowed for the Nazi party to assimilate a racist philosophy into society while remaining concealed enough to prevent resistance from Jewish people. The same tactics are used today within the immigration system, but these depictions are not overt enough for citizens to recognize on the surface. This corrupt thinking has continued to justify the mistreatment of certain groups, just as it did many years ago. We only understand this hard truth through our ability to pursue historical knowledge that does not justify the narrative of oppression we have been taught to believe.

Another reason we must acknowledge history, is for our understanding of mental health and the implications that mass trauma can have on a population. Psychologist and Neuroscientist Rachel Yehuda studied a group of thirty-two holocaust survivors and their offspring. She found correspondences of PTSD “inexplicable” by any other means than generational transmission (Rosner,7). Furthermore, she found that the children of holocaust survivors produced less cortisol than the control groups (Rosner,7). This means their brains were affected by trauma they

did not experience firsthand, which likely was transmuted through utero. This discovery allows us to understand the physiological changes that take place in the brain after trauma has been inflicted. These hormonal changes do not just impact the victim though, they affect their gene activity creating a basis for intergenerational inheritance. In the same study she discovered that children with parents who had PTSD, were three to four times more likely to experience depression, anxiety, and substance abuse, compared to control groups (Rosner,7). These implications express that mass genocides and detention of human beings reach far beyond environmental changes; it affects physiology. Since these events are traumatic, they leave a biological mark on those who experience it. That biological mark can create changes in the way genes are processed, leaving room for the same changes to be seen in their children. We are already aware of the environmental transmission of trauma, but this is the first study that implicates a physiological one. Therefore, injustices that create trauma today can permanently change the health of the entire population, leaving future generations with trauma they did not experience first-hand.

### **The Japanese Internment**

Ironically when the Holocaust was taking place, the United States was committing their own crimes. In 1942 President Franklin Roosevelt launched executive order 9066 which called for all people of Japanese descent to relocate outside of the military zone along the western coast of the United States (Japanese Relocation,1). This relocation was said to prevent espionage in response to the growing national security threat after Pearl harbor. The order displaced over 117,000 people of Japanese descent, two thirds of which were US citizens (Japanese Relocation,2). The relocation centers were overcrowded, with sanitary issues and sparse collections of clothing. Most families had limited to no access for work opportunities and their

social and cultural patterns were disrupted. This kind of treatment follows a similar pattern to detention facilities at the US border. Overcrowding, unsanitary conditions, changes in cultural patterns, lack of resources and opportunities for work are all experiences that involve the immigration system too. Even with these similarities there are many differences as well.

A lot of what history forgets to display about the Internment was the stealing of property, and jobs. At that time people of Japanese descent were dominating the agricultural industry. They had a monopoly over strawberry, celery, tomato and pepper sales (Jap Ban,1). Other American farmers saw Japanese immigrants as a threat, because they were so efficient at the tedious work required for farming. It makes sense that a large majority of the United States crops were coming from the same coastal regions that called on Japanese descendants to evacuate. The relocation order had many implications of fear regarding capitalism rather than actual security measures. The Japanese community were coerced into giving up their land for far less than what it was worth. Since many people were only given sixty days to sell their property, they lost copious amounts of land (Jap Ban,2). The relocation left the Japanese poor after their family owned businesses went vacant and farmland became claimed by new owners.

A local example of the effects of relocation is shown through Gary Tanimura's family. They were among 3,500 Japanese Americans living in the Monterey county. Prior to the Internment they were running a successful ag- business, they lost all their property and possessions when they were relocated to an internment camp in Arizona (Johnson,1). Since the Tanimura family feared animosity and discrimination from citizens and the County's Board of Supervisors they did not return for many years. Luckily their story ended in success, they were able to revive their company upon returning to Salinas. George Tanimura's family and Bob Antle's family co-founded the Tanimura and Antle produce company (Johnson,1). During their



successful enterprise, the Board of Supervisors in Monterey County formally apologized for their part in the Japanese Internment. They stated that they would always regret how “it’s residents of Japanese ancestry were treated with the loss of their rights, property and civic standing” (Johnson,1). The apology falls short if the same racist thought process is repeated in a separate instance. That is why it is not enough to simply acknowledge wrongdoing; it must be followed by actions to prevent and resist the same struggles today.

Another apology that fell short was administered during the Bush and Reagan era. Public Law 100-383 apologized for the injustices of the Internment and provided \$20,000 compensation for every member affected by relocation (Japanese Relocation,3). The government administered a quick apology and chose to slap down a small sum of money to quiet victims. Compensation in the form of money is just not enough for the mental, and physical influence the Internment had on these families. It also doesn’t account for the trauma that will be passed down for generations to come. Instead, there should have been an agreement that this same kind of treatment would not be repeated. An agreement that promised the prevention of future injustices would provide some form of healing for victims and hold the government accountable later down the line.

### **Resistance**

Victims and ancestors of the Holocaust, Internment, and Boarding Schools make up a large portion of the resistance against the detention centers at the US and Mexican border. One of these centers called Fort Sill was proposed to house immigrant children. At this time there was an influx of 600,000 migrants at the southern border, which left facilities overwhelmed, leading the federal government to open emergency detention centers (Hennessy-Fiske, 2). Since Fort Sill had plans to take in 1,400 migrant children, protesters began to form outside the facility. (Hennessy- Fiske,1). Many protesters were ancestors and victims of Fort Sill’s dark history. It

had previously been used as an Indian Boarding School and as an Internment Camp for over 700 Japanese American men in 1942 (Hennessey-Flaske,4). Ancestors of Holocaust survivors joined the protest as well. Ikeda Oshima advocated for his fathers' story; his dad was shot by a guard after scaling a fence to escape Internment. Ikeda stated, "We need to be the allies for vulnerable communities today that Japanese Americans didn't have in 1942" (Hennessey-Fiske,4). Ikeda's philosophy is informed by his acknowledgement and tie to his family history. Those who have ancestors who have experienced atrocities are forced to face history every day. This tie to history, allows for an atmosphere of interconnectivity to form. Understanding that our traumas and our liberation is tied to every other individual can bring about new perspectives that inspire activism like this.

The Jewish community are also very involved in activism against unjust immigration policies. Serena Adlerstein an immigrant activist, mobilized a movement after her Facebook post went viral. She called for all Jewish people to protest outside of detention centers, her plea was heard. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019 over 100 people came to protest outside the, Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility after reports of maggots in food, dirty drinking water and bad medical care surfaced (González-Ramírez,2). They stood behind a banner presenting their message "Never Again is Now", thirty-six people were arrested, but it sparked a larger movement. The group which started in 2019, soon became known as Never Again Action. With a goal to dismantle unjust immigration customs and enforcement the group soon expanded across the country and held several successful protests. By the fall it became a religious non-profit and a social welfare group (González-Ramírez ,8). On December 10<sup>th</sup> the group held a double protest, which took place at the UMB Bank and the Wyatt Detention Center. UMB Bank had sued the city of Central Falls in order to force the detention center to keep its contract with ICE (González-Ramírez,9).

The protest was to expose the corruption within the private sector of the issue. In another protest on January twenty third Never Again Action joined several other groups to protest at an Amazon bookstore in response to Amazon web services facilitating the tracking of undocumented immigrants (González-Ramírez,9).

Much of the Jewish community's activism is tied to their history of the Holocaust and to their experience as refugees. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries two million people fled religious persecution. Associations such as the Hebrew Immigration Aid had to be established to help Jewish people transition into the United States. Unfortunately, the transitions for immigrants at the boarder are in no way humane and hold many similarities to our past. Never Again Action believes the mistreatment, incarceration and dehumanization of illegal immigrants is like the beginning of the Holocaust (González-Ramírez,1). A beginning that can be disrupted through activism and remaining in touch with our history.

All these atrocities have caused collective trauma, that will forever shape the physiological, cultural, and environmental health of our country and the world. Having a basic understanding of the hate fueled thought process that led to these events can help educate our activism today. When we start to view our lives through a historical context it creates an atmosphere of empathy, where traumas can be processed, and people can come together in their differences. The application of historical lessons can play a part in healing the wounds created currently and in the past. It is an act of love when we resist injustice and fight against powers that undermine other people's liberation. This act of love can overcome unjust policies if we apply it properly, it can also work to reduce the aftermath of intergenerational trauma.

## **Inspirational Quotes**

-“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them”. Ida B Wells (Rosner,236)

-“ Not only do we view our experience as personal and disconnected from others, but we also live as generations disconnected from other generations” (Haga,158)

-“Solidarity isn’t about developing a condescending or patronizing savior complex. It is about being in relationship to people because we understand that our liberation is ultimately dependent on their liberation and vice versa” (Haga,116)

-Judith L. Heman wrote in her book Trauma and Recovery “The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialect of psychological trauma.” (Rosner,97)

-David Lowenthal wrote in his book The Past is a Foreign Country “The psychic cost of repressing traumatic memory can be a crippling for nations as for individuals. History is often hard to digest. But it must be swallowed whole to undeceive the present and inform the future.” (Rosner,138)

-“We are capable even of destroying the aftermath of destruction.” (Rosner,170)

-“ The more we live in isolated silos, hearing and reading only the perspectives that we already agree with, the more homogeneous our views become, and the easier it is to dehumanize people outside of our tribe” (Haga,180)

## **Annotated Bibliography**

Caty, Laura. "The Social Effects of Detention on Undocumented Children." *Immigration and Human Rights Law Review*, 25 Feb. 2019, [lawblogs.uc.edu/ihr/r/2019/02/25/the-social-effects-of-detention-on-undocumented-children/](http://lawblogs.uc.edu/ihr/r/2019/02/25/the-social-effects-of-detention-on-undocumented-children/).

A social worker at Houston University conducted research on migrant children and found that on average they have experienced at least 8 traumatic events leading up to their stay at the detention centers. These events include kidnapping, sexual assault, physical assault, and witnessing violence. Since these children have already experienced such traumatic events in their life prior to their stay at these centers they are more vulnerable to the psychological impacts these camps have. I will use this information to discuss how the camps at the border are making a psychological impact on an already vulnerable community. Furthermore, I want to tie this back to the idea of generational trauma and express that we are creating a generation of traumatized children. As they grow and create their own families this trauma will be passed on and decrease the opportunities for descendants of these people.

Ghosh, Smita. "Perspective | How Migrant Detention Became American Policy." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 19 July 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/07/19/how-migrant-detention-became-american-policy/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/07/19/how-migrant-detention-became-american-policy/).

This source discusses the policies set forth during the Reagan era in response to the influx of Haitian and Cuban refugees. As a result of these policies, our immigration system now includes detention and has merged with the United States private prisons. Therefore, companies are allowed to make a profit off of housing detainees. In my essay I will use this information to explain how these policy changes set the foundation for the current conditions at the border. This will aid in my argument about the mistreatment of refugees and the trauma that detention causes.

González-Ramírez, Andrea. "The Millennial Jews Taking on ICE." *Medium*, GEN, 29 Jan. 2020, [gen.medium.com/the-millennial-jews-taking-on-ice-831accbbee2f](https://gen.medium.com/the-millennial-jews-taking-on-ice-831accbbee2f).

The article presents the group Never Again Action. It is an organization created by Serena Adlerstein an immigrant activist, she called on the Jewish community to come together in protest for the wrongful mistreatment of immigrants by ICE. The group is known for its belief that the dehumanization of immigrants is like the circumstances leading up to the Holocaust. I want to use this reference to depict how the Jewish community are leading activists for other groups who have experienced genocide or detention. This will shape my argument by proving that history continues to repeat itself in different ways. I want to show that communities who have experienced trauma are more in touch with their history and therefore are more empathetic towards current injustices.

Guha, Auditi. "Family Separation Is a US Tradition. Just Ask Native Communities." *Rewire.News*, Rewire.News, 30 Oct. 2018, [rewire.news/article/2018/06/25/family-separation-u-s-tradition-just-ask-native-communities/](https://rewire.news/article/2018/06/25/family-separation-u-s-tradition-just-ask-native-communities/).

Although the Indian Boarding Schools created trauma for the Native community, we continue to back the foster care system which is systemically corrupt. The article presents a study that shows Native children are 2.7 times more likely to be placed into foster care than other groups of children. I would like to use this study in my paper to express that family separation is not just something of the past. It's currently happening through the foster care system and through the detention at the US border. I want to present this information in order for the audience to understand that corruption has been maintained in our society in less overt ways than in the past.

Haga, Kazu, et al. *Healing Resistance: a Radically Different Response to Harm*. Parallax Press, 2020.

This book is filled with information regarding nonviolence during the civil rights movement. Kazu Haga is an activist who worked alongside Martin Luther King Jr. and his work provided me with a great foundation to start this project. He introduced the idea that our government continues to invest in violence through wars, oppression and corruption. I want to use his work to express that these systems of violence are creating an atmosphere where marginalized communities become traumatized. I also want to introduce the idea of the beloved community, that we are connected as a collective. Therefore, our traumas and liberation are connected too.

Hennessy- Fiske, Molly. "Japanese Internment Camp Survivors Protest Ft. Sill Migrant Detention Center." *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 23 June 2019, [www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-japanese-internment-fort-sill-2019-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-japanese-internment-fort-sill-2019-story.html).

The article exposes the horrific history of Fort Sill, which would soon be used to house 1,400 undocumented immigrant children. The facilities used to be both an Indian Boarding School and a Center for Internment of Japanese men. In response to the Trump administrations announcement, protesters started to form outside. Previous boarding school students, Interned Japanese Americans and Holocaust survivors protested against the opening. I would like to use this piece to show how survivors come together in unity. I think this action provides hope that our activism can break down the systems that cause trauma.

"History and Culture Boarding Schools." *Northern Plains Reservation Aid*, [www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=airc\\_hist\\_boardingschools](http://www.nativepartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=airc_hist_boardingschools).

The article gives the full history behind the Indian Boarding Schools. It talks about how children were ripped from their families to be held in facilities with horrible conditions. Children faced abuse, disease and assimilation all while they were separated from their true family. I want to use this history to inform my audience that the trauma they faced through this detention cannot

be healed if there are currently injustices involving similar scenarios today. I also want the audience to notice the similarities in detention to the atrocities that took place in the Boarding schools.

“Jap Ban To Force Farm Adjustments.” *Digital History*, The San Francisco News, [www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active\\_learning/explorations/japanese\\_internment/newspaper\\_articles.cfm](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/active_learning/explorations/japanese_internment/newspaper_articles.cfm).

This primary source is a compilation of several newspaper articles that were distributed by the San Francisco News. In one of the stories titled “Jap Ban to Force Farm Adjustments” it discusses the displacement of property. The newspaper claimed that the Japanese community had a monopoly over the agricultural industry. At the time a large majority of this industry was within the zone that the executive order evacuated. I want to use this source to explain that the government had ulterior motives for the Internment. The national threat was not espionage but the fear that the Japanese community would become too powerful within the agricultural industry. This will show the extent to which the Internment stole from the Japanese community. It will also aid my paper in exposing a scenario where the government used the threat of national security to put forth policies that actively traumatized and marginalized certain groups. This same context can be used to express the threat at the border.

“Japanese Relocation During World War II.” *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, [www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation](http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation).

The article gives a full history of the Internment and reveals a time in when the government assaulted a large community based on their race/ethnicity. It provides a context for the background information I needed to discuss the Japanese Internment. Much like the newspapers, I will use this information to expose how our nation has historically dehumanized and encamped



people based on their heritage. I will say how these historic events have had premises on fears surrounding capitalism. I want to address the similarities of this fear among the Internment and the detention at the border.

Johnson, Jim, and Monterey Herald. "Monterey County Issues Formal Apology to Japanese American Community for Internment." *Bee*, Lake County Record-Bee, 23 Aug. 2018, [www.record-bee.com/2018/02/15/monterey-county-issues-formal-apology-to-japanese-american-community-for-internment/](http://www.record-bee.com/2018/02/15/monterey-county-issues-formal-apology-to-japanese-american-community-for-internment/).

The article discussed the local history of the Tanimura Family and their firsthand experience with the Japanese Internment. In Monterey County there were 3,500 Japanese Americans who had been relocated. The Tanimura family had to give up their property and successful business when they were interned. Many years later when the family had reestablished themselves in Salinas they were able to restart but not without discrimination. The Board of Supervisors sent out an apology acknowledging their part in the Japanese Internment. I want to use this piece to express how personal this is to our community. I hope this story provides a sense of empathy for the readers to understand how this event traumatized the community.

Korte, Gregory, and Alan Gomez. "Trump Ramps up Rhetoric on Undocumented Immigrants: 'These Aren't People. These Are Animals!'" *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 17 May 2018, [www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/05/16/trump-immigrants-animals-mexico-democrats-sanctuary-cities/617252002/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/05/16/trump-immigrants-animals-mexico-democrats-sanctuary-cities/617252002/).

In the article it talks about president Trumps rhetoric surrounding immigrants. He has called them animals and rapists and associated many of them with crime. I would like to use this in my paper to express how our government continues a false narrative surrounding immigrants who are seeking asylum. I want to express how this narrative is damaging and works to justify the dehumanization of the community.

Pember, Mary Annette. "Death by Civilization." *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 8 Mar. 2019, [www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/03/traumatic-legacy-indian-boarding-schools/584293/](http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/03/traumatic-legacy-indian-boarding-schools/584293/).

The author discusses her mother's firsthand experience at an Indian Boarding School. She gives background history surrounding her mother's experience and exposes the abuse, inadequate medical attention and starvation that took place at the facility. The federal government and churches denied these allegations and no reparations or proper acknowledgment has been paid to these people. I want to use this article to express how denial and silence of history are ways in which it can be repeated. Those affected by these traumas have a harder time healing when there is no acknowledgment. I want to use this to express that educating through history can be used to prevent future atrocities and heal past traumas. Furthermore, I'm going to connect this issue to both the Japanese Internment and the detention centers at the border.

Rosenberg, Jennifer. "Essential Facts About the Holocaust." ThoughtCo, Feb. 26, 2020, <https://www.thoughtco.com/holocaust-facts-1779663>

This article talks about all the important facts that are crucial to know about the Holocaust. I want to use this to educate the reader on the events leading up to the Holocaust, specifically the Nuremberg Laws, the Jewish Ghettos and the Night of Broken Glass. These events are important towards my paper's argument because they show how atrocities can start at a much lower scale. When there is not enough resistance by bystanders when a movement is in its beginnings then it can become something much eviler.

Rosner, Elizabeth. *Survivor café: the Legacy of Trauma Labyrinth of Memory*. Counterpoint, 2018.

The book is filled with quotes and stories of the holocaust, the Japanese Internment and discusses the importance of historical memory. The quote from Ida B Wells "The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them" sums up this book well. I will use this source to

discuss how it's important to talk about the past and how we can heal trauma through discussion and prevention of the same historical mistakes.

Shoichet, Catherine E. "Crowded Border Facilities Where Detainees Are Forced to Sleep in Toilet Stalls Violate the Constitution, Judge Rules." *CNN*, Cable News Network, 20 Feb. 2020, [www.cnn.com/2020/02/19/politics/arizona-holding-cells-ruling-constitution/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2020/02/19/politics/arizona-holding-cells-ruling-constitution/index.html).

In Arizona, a federal judge ruled that the conditions in the US Customs and Border Protection facility violated the constitution. Judge David C. Bury responded to the lawsuit filed in 2015 which showed dangerous overcrowding in the facility. "Being forced to sleep in a toilet area due to overcrowding offends the notions of common decency; its unsanitary and degrading..." I want to use this article to express how these facilities degrade peoples human decency in a similar way that has been done in the past. This dehumanizing has a psychological impact that will forever affect these people's lives and their descendants.

Smith, Matt, et al. "Immigrant Children Forcibly Injected with Drugs, Lawsuit Claims." *Reveal*, 20 June 2018, [www.revealnews.org/blog/immigrant-children-forcibly-injected-with-drugs-lawsuit-claims/](http://www.revealnews.org/blog/immigrant-children-forcibly-injected-with-drugs-lawsuit-claims/).

The article exposes the abuse happening within one of the 71 facilities that house undocumented children. Mark J. Mills a forensic psychiatrist stated that the facilities were controlling children using injectable psychotropic drugs. It's not just this facility either, an investigation found that nearly half of the \$3.4 billion in funding, paid to companies in the last 4 years went to homes with allegations of abuse. In nearly all cases the federal government continued contracts with these companies. I want to use this information to express the corruption within the system. I also want to express the dangers these children face and how their cries for help go ignored, which further dehumanizes them. I will use this to show how

traumatizing these facilities are for children and how the government is actively allowing abuse to take place.

von Werthern, M., Robjant, K., Chui, Z. *et al.* “The impact of immigration detention on mental health: a systematic review.” *BMC Psychiatry* **18**, Article 382 (2018): Pages 1-35  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-018-1945-y>

This is a collection of studies on the direct psychological impact that detention centers have had to many communities all around the world. There are many adverse psychological reactions that take place for people who have experienced detention. I want to use this information to express how detention in itself is a traumatic event that makes people more vulnerable to psychological changes. I want to tie this back to the detention centers at the border and show that these changes have a generational impact.

“What You Need to Know About Immigration Enforcement in the Interior of the U.S.” *Justice for Immigrants*, 24 Oct. 2018, [justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/immigration-enforcement-in-the-interior-of-the-u-s-background/](https://justiceforimmigrants.org/catholic-accompaniment-and-reflection-experience-care-program/immigration-enforcement-in-the-interior-of-the-u-s-background/).

The article exposes Trump’s 2017 executive order on Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States. In the order it broadens the scope of who can be detained by ICE. Unfortunately, this policy affected the ability of families to come forward and sponsor because of the fear of deportation. I want to use this information to express that current policies are made to further separate families. I’m going to show the hypocrisy of the governments actions and prove that our nation is not taking steps to ensure liberty and justice for all.

Yehuda, Rachel et al. “Holocaust Exposure Induced Intergenerational Effects on *FKBP5* Methylation.” *Biological Psychiatry*, Volume 80, Issue 5, (2016): Pages 372 – 380.  
[https://www.biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com/article/S0006-3223\(15\)00652-6/fulltext](https://www.biologicalpsychiatryjournal.com/article/S0006-3223(15)00652-6/fulltext)

This is the research study that was discussed in the book *The Legacy of Trauma*. I want to use this study for my poster to show the statistical evidence that proves there are epigenetic

effects that trauma has on victims and their offspring. Furthermore, this will provide a background for my argument on generational trauma by showing the physiological affects that take place in the brain in response to traumatic events.

## Final synthesis essay

In this course I have learned so much from my peer's different perspectives and been able to engage in a respectful dialogue about various topics. Some of these issues included discussing mental health, resistance, hierarchy, restorative justice, consent and trauma. One topic that really stood out to me was our group discussion on toxic masculinity. I had heard of this topic prior to the class, but the critique surrounding it never assessed how it affected men too. In our class I felt we did a great job at addressing how it affects all genders. In our book *Healing Resistance* Bell Hooks had been quoted saying that our patriarchal society has taken away the basic skills for mourning and healing while also demanding males to engage in psychic self-mutilation. She said this point brilliantly and it brought a new perspective to our class's discussion of this subject.

Another concept of Haga's that stuck with me was his idea that both the oppressor and the oppressed become victims of violence. This was a very interesting idea that I have never thought to consider because I have always viewed the oppressor as the villain. I have dehumanized the oppressor because of my anger towards their actions against marginalized communities. Haga's perspective helped me realize that hate comes from a place of ignorance. Ignorance can drive people to take actions that they feel are justified based on the small scope of what they know. Learning this made me reflect in my own life the times where I have had no empathy for people, I have deemed immoral because of their hate filled actions. It almost feels wrong to attempt to see the humanity of people who refuse to see it in others. I realized that when I revoke humanity of the oppressor based off their actions to the oppressed, I am becoming just as hateful as they are.

While presenting about Martin Luther King Jr. I wanted to also acknowledge the Civil Rights work of people who were not recognized due to their intersecting marginalized identities.

Part of the discussion included the hypocrisy that many movements seem to have. I raised the idea that the Civil Rights Movement like many other movements has not been inclusive for certain genders, sexual orientations and different classes. In presenting this I wanted to bring in a new perspective that may have not been addressed within the normal educational system. As we discussed the matter of oppression and marginalization, I brought up white privilege because it has been a topic that is taboo. Since privilege allows people to be naïve many people don't think it exists. Our class was able to discuss how intersectional identities affect our perspectives of privilege and oppression. For example, a white person may not acknowledge their racial privileges because they are oppressed by their class identity. We were able to collaboratively recognize that our society is hierarchical in nature and therefore privilege and oppression are part of their foundation. I felt like this discussion allowed everyone to hear different perspectives in a way that inspired revelations within their own opinions.

Another moving issue we examined was restorative justice. There were opposing viewpoints in our group dialogue, some people believed we should ban jails all together while other people thought restorative justice was unattainable. Listening to the different perspectives helped me understand viewpoints I had not considered. For example, if our justice system moved to a solely restorative justice platform there may be people for whom collaborating with their perpetrator would be more damaging than helpful. They may feel threatened that the person who hurt them is not locked up. In another example we discussed keeping the current system we have in place. We talked about how the current system punishes people without allowing them the opportunity to redeem themselves. Furthermore, we recollected that the system is currently corrupted by racism, sexism, and homophobia and therefore does not accurately assess injustice. These viewpoints were well thought out and helped me to form my own ideas surrounding

restorative justice. I think this form of justice creates a dialogue in communities about how we treat each other, specifically people who have offended us. It goes back to my thoughts on creating an atmosphere of empathy for all people even those who have done hateful things.

I think Haga's book really encompassed the theme of love and justice by bringing forth the idea of a beloved community. His notions of nonviolence and restorative justice really provided a foundation for the class. Haga's concept of creating a beloved community stuck with me and provided inspiration for my capstone project. The idea that our liberation is tied to one another helped motivate my discussion on generational trauma and specifically how to prevent and heal through collective resistance. This project has forced me to be diligent in my research and it has helped me evaluate what I have learned throughout my time as a student.

Throughout the creation of my capstone I have acquired a better understanding of the theme of Love and Justice. Generational trauma is created because of injustices such as oppression, genocide, detention, abuse, marginalization, assimilation, colonization etc. Therefore, trauma is instinctively tied to justice, and so is love. It takes compassion and empathy to heal a community who has been traumatized. Love and understanding is what we need to rehumanize communities who have been oppressed. These things work through love and justice, so it was easy for me to recognize this link. I believe my Capstone meets the criteria for the research paper because I followed the theme of love and justice. I also met deadlines as they were due and followed the rubric and guidelines. I spent a long time researching, writing, editing and compiling all this information into a research paper that I hope inspires activism.