INTRODUCTION TO ETHNIC STUDIES

Kay Fischer, Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick, Ulysses Acevedo, Teresa Hodges, Melissa Leal, and Tamara Cheshire

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Introduction to Ethnic Studies

Kay Fischer, Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick, Ulysses Acevedo, Dr. Teresa Hodges, Dr. Melissa Leal, and Dr. Tamara Cheshire

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About the Authors

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Kay Fischer is an instructor of Ethnic Studies at Chabot College in Hayward, CA, where 100% of Ethnic Studies courses are proudly zero or low textbook cost. She is also an advisor to the Stay Woke Collective club and part of Chabot's Movement learning community, focused on Asian American and Pacific Islander culture and experiences. As a former community college student, Kay transferred from De Anza College to UC Berkeley and majored in Ethnic Studies, where she found her voice and roots in student organizing. She has an MA in Teaching from USF and an MA in Asian American Studies from SF State. Besides teaching, Kay organizes around issues of decolonization, peace and reunification in the Korean peninsula, and justice for so-called "Comfort Women."

Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick, M.A., Ph.D. (he/él)

Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick is an Instructor of Ethnic Studies at Cuesta College, Mellon/American Council of Learned Societies Community College Faculty Fellow, poet, scholar, and author. He earned a BA in Ethnic Studies with a minor in Indigenous Studies in Natural Resources and the Environment from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. His MA and PhD in Sociology were achieved at the University of California, Santa Barbara, as a Health Policy Research Scholar funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. His work with and for Chicanx and Latinx communities is rooted in a commitment to family and community on California's Central Coast and in Michoacán, Mexico (Purépecha). Dr. Espinoza-Kulick shares stories about culture, health equity, and community leadership as a host of Central Coast Voices on the National Public Radio (NPR) station *KCBX*. His work has been published in *Oxford University Press*, the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *Health Promotion Practice*, and regional news outlets like *El Latino*, *Santa Maria Times*, and the *Santa Barbara Independent*.

Ulysses Acevedo, M.A. (he/him)

Ulysses Acevedo is an instructor of Ethnic Studies at Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, CA. After transferring from community college, Ulysses attended San Francisco State University, earning a B.A. in Latina/o Studies and an M.A. in Ethnic Studies. Informed by his own experience as the first person in his family to attend college, the focus of his research has been the role of identity-based student group participation on retention and completion rates for Chicano men at community colleges. In the past he has taught courses have included traditional face-to-face on-campus classes; both asynchronous and synchronous online classes; and dual-enrollment community college classes taught off-campus, including at middle, high, adult and continuation schools.

Teresa Hodges, Ph.D. (she/her/hers/siya)

Teresa Hodges is an instructor of Ethnic Studies at Cuyamaca College in El Cajon, CA. She was a California State University Chancellor's Doctoral Incentive Program Scholar (2018-2019). She has her Ph.D. in Education from the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, an M.A. in Asian American Studies from San Francisco State University, and a B.A. in Ethnic Studies from UC San Diego. Her work centers Critical Mixed Race Studies, Asian American Studies, Black Studies, Feminist Studies, and Comparative Ethnic Studies. She aims to cultivate transformative educational experiences that help others to heighten their consciousness, develop deeper connections to community, and inspire action that promotes change in the world around them.

Melissa Leal, Ph.D. (she/her/hers)

Dr. Melissa Leal is an enrolled member of the Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation. She earned her Ph.D. In Native American Studies from the University of California, Davis and currently teaches and serves as the Ethnic Studies Department Chair and Tribal Liaison at Sierra College. Her research focuses on contemporary film, music, dance and other performance arts in indigenous communities. She has worked with tribes and tribal youth for more than 20 years focusing on education, language revitalization, and California Indian Studies.

Tamara Cheshire, Ed.D. (she/her/they/them)

Pictured left to right Dr. Tamara Cheshire and Jordan Burkart

Dr. Tamara Cheshire (Lakota) is a Native American Scholar and the Chair of the Ethnic Studies Department at Folsom Lake College. She is the Co-Chair of the Los Rios District Ethnic Studies Faculty Council, a member of the California Community College Ethnic Studies Faculty Council and is serving on the California Community College Chancellor's Office/ASCCC Ethnic Studies Taskforce. She has her doctorate in Educational Leadership from Sacramento State, her MA in Interdisciplinary Studies and BS degree in American Studies with Ethnic Studies emphasis and discipline focus in Native American Studies from Oregon State. She has published several articles, chapters, and a book about the barriers faced by and the resiliency of Native American students in higher education.

Jordan Burkart is a Native American student at Sacramento State majoring in Photography.

Licensing

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About the Book

This Open Educational Resource (OER) is written by six Ethnic Studies faculty across six California Community College districts. It is organized around key learning objectives that help introduce learners to the disciplines of Ethnic Studies. This includes chapters highlighting key theories and concepts from the four core disciplines of Ethnic Studies: Africana/African American/Black Studies; American Indian/Native American Studies; Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies; and Chicanx and Latinx Studies. In addition, several chapters review fundamental frameworks and topics in Ethnic Studies including: how Ethnic Studies came to be; white supremacy and racisms; intersectionality; the racial wealth gap; mass incarceration and policing; and resistance and solidarity movements. Since its inception in 1968, students have demanded relevant curriculum that centers on their experiences and struggles as racialized communities of color. This OER textbook will focus on examples of self-determination, liberation struggles, decolonialism, sovereignty, dismantling oppressive power structures, and anti-racism in a collective effort toward building a just and equitable society.

Authors by Chapter

- Chapter 1: Introduction - By Kay Fischer
- Chapter 2: The Ongoing Struggle for Ethnic Studies - By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick
- Chapter 3: Africana/African American/Black Studies - By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick and Dr. Teresa Hodges
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- Chapter 11: Social Movements: Resistance and Solidarity - By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick and Kay Fischer

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

1: Introduction

By Kay Fischer

1.1: Ethnic Studies is Home
1.2: Our Narratives
1.3: Chapter Summaries
1.4: Takeaway

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1.1: Ethnic Studies is Home

Why Ethnic Studies

As Ethnic Studies has recently become a requirement for the California State University (CSU) system, and soon the University of California (UC) system, California Community Colleges (CCC), and California high schools, more attention has been placed on Ethnic Studies. I find that most of my community college students don't know what Ethnic Studies is and may have misconceptions about this discipline that's over 50 years old. We hope that this Open Educational Resource (OER) put together by six Ethnic Studies instructors will illuminate some of the misunderstandings and mischaracterizations of our beloved discipline. We also hope that this resource will contribute to a new generation of students who will be inspired by the histories, cultures, philosophies, and stories represented in this resource.

Perhaps due to fear or ignorance, or sometimes straight up racism, for as long as Ethnic Studies has existed, there have been efforts to ban, diminish, criticize or censure our programs and curriculum. We've been accused of being "Mickey Mouse" or told that Ethnic Studies is not a serious or viable discipline. We've also been accused of indoctrinating our students and of spreading hate, or that we are anti-white.

Such attacks on Ethnic Studies teachers, students, classrooms, and curricula are usually baseless, rooted in the very systems of oppression we teach our students about: white supremacy, settler colonialism, and the intersections of racial capitalism, imperialism, and patriarchy. For practitioners and students who've actually taken an Ethnic Studies class, such allegations are confusing, because many of us have found Ethnic Studies to be sites of empowerment, love, joy, and discovery, having made life-changing impacts for generations of students. That's why it's no accident that Ethnic Studies became the first and only legislatively backed general education requirement in California. As a result, Ethnic Studies courses will be taught in high schools, community colleges, and the 4-year university systems in this "minority-majority" state.

The advocacy for the Ethnic Studies requirement spans decades of organizing by students, teachers and professors who set up meetings, conversations, wrote letters, developed curriculum, and more, on top of having full-time positions or working multiple part-time jobs, caring for their families, writing books and articles, and/or organizing in various communities. Legislation such as AB 1460 and AB 101 establishing the Ethnic Studies requirement in the CSUs and high schools finally passed because we had multiple studies and data to prove the efficacy of our curricula: raising student attendance, graduation, and success rates, including in classes other than Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies has been a proven strategy to tackle racial inequity in schools. More importantly, studies expressed the personal impact of Ethnic Studies on our students' sense of identity and belonging, highlighting the lasting impression of seeing oneself in the curriculum.

Ethnic Studies came out of struggle and for the past five decades our discipline has *always* been in a place of contention, so whatever iteration of hate or misjudgement is not new. For those familiar with Ethnic Studies, we know the powerful impact our classroom and curricula have and we have influenced both personal and larger societal, cultural, and political transformations. Obviously, this scares people who have invested in the status quo and internalized ideologies based on hierarchical structures of social status, and access to power and resources.

For many of us, Ethnic Studies is our lifeline. Ethnic Studies saved us. Ethnic Studies is home. And we are not scared easily. We know too well how precious our curricula and classrooms can be and we will not be intimidated nor silenced. We understand that too much is at stake.

Ethnic Studies classrooms, and often our offices after class, have been small spaces of sanctuary, exploration of emotions, rediscoveries of memories we've suppressed, for both the instructors and our students. A class like "Intro to Ethnic Studies" can be a site of acknowledgement for the denigrating treatment students receive at work, or they are finally given space to reflect on the internalized effects of colorism on their self-esteem, or students may express cathartic anger that the racially segregated neighborhoods they grew up in have been designed with purpose and targeted for police surveillance and violence.

I value the discussions in class and with students one-on-one within the small quarters of my office or classroom, where they express and address challenges that come with being undocumented, for example, or being mixed race, experiencing abuse, or navigating their mental health. I am especially inspired when witnessing each student's process of uncovering the personal right along with the political.

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1.2: Our Narratives

The Authors' Personal Connections to Ethnic Studies

Just as some students express being saved by Ethnic Studies, I too have been saved many times by my students. There have been instances when burnout would start to creep into my brain and heart, or I would begin to doubt my ability to teach relevant curriculum, fearful that I've failed my students. Somehow right at that moment, a student would send me an email sharing how rewarding or life-changing Ethnic Studies has been for them or a group of students would travel to San Francisco or Oakland to join a protest, influenced by examples of resistance and solidarity struggles we learned in class.

Such experiences or moments bring me back to my own introduction to Ethnic Studies as a community college student. Discussions and assignments in Ethnic Studies classes allowed me to explore my mixed *zainichi* Korean and Russian-Jewish heritage, bring to light the ways that my gender and class intersected with my race and ethnicity, and for the first time in my life, how I felt that I had a voice. Upon seeing students at UC Berkeley going on a hunger strike for Ethnic Studies in 1999, I knew that this was the discipline for me. Once I transferred, Ethnic Studies nurtured my passion for social change, as I was exposed to and especially energized by the written work of women of color like Alice Walker, Gloria Anzaldúa, Audre Lorde, Leslie Marmon Silko, Chandra Mohanty, Leny Mendoza Strobel, and bell hooks. I began my own journey toward decolonization as a *zainichi* Korean who grew up in Japan and continued my student activism as one of the coordinators of Berkeley's new third world Liberation Front center (aka Cross Cultural Center), which was one of the demands granted from the hunger strike.

Ethnic Studies exposes us to larger historical issues, broad socio-cultural topics, philosophies both inherited from our ancestors and rooted in our daily experiences, and the discipline helps us analyze and break down systems of power. But for many, the "magic" of Ethnic Studies is that it can help us process and understand internalized violence, trauma, and pain into love and introduce methods of transformation. Such methods can be applied in our hearts and souls, and also within our families, neighborhoods, communities, and workplaces. Ethnic Studies can also include celebrating moments of resistance, joy, and winning back the power that's been taken from us.

My own experience as a student and my relationships with students have shown that Ethnic Studies is more than about what we learn in our textbooks, on Canvas, or within the walls of a typical classroom. Ethnic Studies is about what we do with that information. How do we translate what we read into the relationships we form? How might we take inspiration from historical moments of resistance and apply that to changes we want to see for our generation and within our own communities?

For all of us who contributed to this Open Educational Resource, this has been a labor of love. Teaching Ethnic Studies is not just a job to us, but ultimately a lifeline. Because it wasn't long ago when we were students too, sitting in the classroom or talking to our teachers during office hours, starting to envision a future of possibilities for ourselves, our families and communities. In this section, the authors I collaborated with on this project will share their personal experiences around the impact Ethnic Studies has made on their lives.

Melissa Leal

I remember being an undergraduate student at a CSU and I was sitting in an Anthropology of California Indians Course. The instructor said that "Esselen" people and language were extinct. This was what most non-indigenous Anthropologists believed because a prominent scholar claimed this to be true a long time ago. However, I sat there as an Esselen student for a whole semester feeling invisible and in fact "extinct." I hadn't found my voice yet, but after that I took a course titled Native American Spirituality and Religion and the Professor of that course was familiar with my people. She acknowledged who I was. She was also a California Indian and because of those two experiences happening in my life at that time, I am who I am today. Ethnic Studies, and the presence of another California Indian, made me visible. Even more than that, it made me understand how important it is to have a voice in a system that systematically attempts to destroy us. I not only found my voice but I learned why I had lost it in the first place.

Tamara Cheshire

Oregon State University (OSU) didn't have an 'official' Ethnic Studies department when I arrived, but they had one when I left. We also had a Native American Longhouse/cultural center which was why I went to OSU in the first place. You could major in American Studies with an Ethnic Studies emphasis in a specific core discipline area. Native American Studies chose me. I wanted to be a tribal lawyer, specializing in Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) cases because I had nieces and nephews that were taken away by the state and placed in foster care when they should have been placed by law with my mom and our family. There were no

tribal law classes being taught, so I took as many Native Studies focussed classes as there were to take. It was the first time in my life that I had Native teachers (3 of them) and I finally understood that I could be a Native professor teaching Native American Studies.

But the courses I was taking were in danger of being canceled by the administration, so we organized and demanded the establishment of an Ethnic Studies department. We the students advocated for and rallied, non-violently protested, organized, facilitated a sit-in in the President's office and adjoining hallway, marched around campus carrying signs and banners demanding 'Ethnic Studies NOW!' For two years we protested and employed similar strategies used in San Francisco during the Third World Liberation Front Strikes of 1968. They had succeeded, so we knew we would too. It was just a matter of time. We took action that faculty and staff could not because they did not have the power we did as students. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* taught us that the faculty and staff were vested in the organization for their livelihood, so we had to organize if we wanted to make change. I did research, met with Ethnic Studies scholars and activists in San Francisco, strategically created a plan to alert the media, wrote curriculum for Ethnic Studies courses, advocated for the hiring of full time Ethnic Studies faculty and for the creation of an Ethnic Studies department.

I did all of this while taking Difference, Power and Discrimination (DPD) courses. These courses were Ethnic Studies courses but because there was a resistance by the administration to have Ethnic Studies on campus, faculty allies had devised alternative names. I read books by Freire (as mentioned before) about liberation; Audre Lorde's *Sister Outsider*, Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands*, Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*, many publications by Paula Gunn Allen and Rayna Green, and *From Margin to Center* by bell hooks. My Professor Annie Popkin, a long-time social justice and women's movement activist, helped me process my own experiences with systemic racial oppression. In the 1960's she traveled to Mississippi to participate in Freedom Summer and shared that personal experience with us, her students.

Ultimately, we were victorious in our demands and the Ethnic Studies department was formed in 1996, a year before I graduated with my Masters of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies. My thesis was on Cultural Transmission in Urban American Indian Families, focusing on cultural resiliency and the mother and child relationship; supporting the importance of keeping Native children with their families. My thesis was dedicated to my Mom who passed away while I was at college. We held ceremony for my Mom a year after her passing. The experience and knowledge learned from forming an Ethnic Studies department at OSU has been useful in the establishment of an Ethnic Studies Department at Folsom Lake College.

Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick

My experience in Ethnic Studies started as an undergraduate at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo (Cal Poly). Working with community members, students, and faculty in Ethnic Studies offered opportunities to connect with my Purépecha heritage and pride in being a queer, mixed-race Chicanx person who is a product of African and Mexican migration. For my senior project, I founded a program dubbed Know Your Status to alleviate the stigma experienced within HIV-positive communities by hosting professionals to speak about HIV education and provide access to free on-site testing for college students. The project created a lasting partnership between our campus and the local non-profit, Access Support Network. The program continued for multiple years and pushed the institution to provide access to HIV testing and relevant educational resources.

Our work in the classroom inspired my peers and myself to advocate for justice and equity for our communities, including creating the group SLO Solidarity to demand recognition of the racism on campus and that administrators develop policies, resources, and services to address the needs of historically underrepresented groups. This led to the creation of new initiatives for transfer students, undocumented students, students of color, and first-generation college students, which continue to this day.

After completing my BA in Comparative Ethnic Studies at Cal Poly with a minor in Indigenous Studies in Natural Resources and the Environment, I earned my MA and PhD in Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara as a Health Policy Research Scholar with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to return to San Luis Obispo, California as an Ethnic Studies instructor. I now work as a full-time faculty member at Cuesta College, where I earned my first two AA degrees and became the first in my family to graduate from college. As the inaugural Ethnic Studies faculty at Cuesta, I helped to create the new Ethnic Studies department and curriculum, and now get to co-create the same types of spaces for students that nurtured my development and growth as an advocate for racial justice, decolonization, and liberation for all.

Ulysses Acevedo

I'm lucky to say that I'm a community college (CC) transfer student. Without CC I don't think that I would have had access to higher education. I did most of my undergraduate general education at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC). It was there where I

experimented with pursuing different majors, such as a path towards civil engineering, then architecture, then computer-aided drafting. I was pursuing these fields for the wrong reasons: because these careers promised good salaries and because my father pushed the idea that a career in these fields would help advance my career in the construction company where I was working. But I quickly realized that I did not have a passion for any of these fields.

A friend suggested that I take a Mexico History course with professor Laura Larqué. I was fascinated to learn from my professor, devoured the books, and engaged with my assignments. I was hungry for the knowledge about my people that I was not offered in my K-12 education. I was a CC student during the height of the war in Afghanistan. At the same time, there were many attempts by army recruiters to enlist me to the war and my community faced the backlash as a result of the rise in nativism. I chose to stay in college. Soon after, I became deeply involved on campus (and off campus) in a student group called Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (M.E.Ch.A.). During this time I witnessed how my Ethnic Studies professors and counselors were active in supporting student groups on-campus and simultaneously involved in community organizing work off-campus. The reason I pursued being an Ethnic Studies instructor at the community college level is to hopefully be an example of community-engaged scholarship for future generations.

Teresa Hodges

I was first exposed to learning about race and ethnicity in a high school sociology class. Upon entering college, I went to Summer Bridge, a program that helped students from underrepresented backgrounds transition into college, and we took a course on Contemporary Issues in education. We learned a lot about racism in schooling and society. It was taught by Ethnic Studies graduate students. It was the first time I felt like it was ok to think about race in public. After that, I thought I would major in sociology but the coursework taught nothing about people of color so I took Ethnic Studies. Ethnic Studies helped me, a mixed Black and Filipina girl, as one of 200 Black students on a campus of 16,000+ and one of 33 first year incoming Black students. This matters because I felt so isolated in my classes sometimes when I wasn't taking Ethnic Studies. I spent so much time in student organizations because I felt sanctuary and community. A lot of my friends were Ethnic Studies majors or took courses. Ethnic Studies validated me and made me feel valued. It taught me that you can do something when something isn't right. Because of Ethnic Studies, I am able to help promote critical consciousness, action and change that not only serves my students but also our communities. I think it's important that students feel the change within themselves too because they're a part of the liberation too and it helps give them agency in their pursuits.

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1.3: Chapter Summaries

How We've Organized the Chapters

In this resource, we've organized learning objectives typically addressed in an "Intro to Ethnic Studies" class or courses similar to this, and considered the CSU Ethnic Studies core competencies within the following ten chapters:

Chapter 2: "The Ongoing Struggle for Ethnic Studies"

In Chapter 2: "The Ongoing Struggle for Ethnic Studies," Espinoza-Kulick examines how Ethnic Studies was birthed out of struggle, which helps to define this unique discipline. Students will uncover the basic frameworks used in Ethnic Studies such as Indigeneity and Transformative Resistance. Starting with examples of counter-hegemonic knowledge production outside academia, Espinoza-Kulick writes about the ways our communities have sustained our heritage in the face of genocide, settler-colonialism, slavery, and other systems of oppression that attempted to strip communities of their languages, cultures, spiritual practices, and ancestral connections. This chapter also explores the ways people of color have resisted educational oppression including leading the longest student strike in the United States, which was for a Third World College at San Francisco State in 1968. Espinoza-Kulick emphasizes how this discipline moved students beyond examination of oppression into resistance and social change work. Readers will also understand how the discipline has grown and evolved over the past five decades, while countering threats against Ethnic Studies.

Chapter 3: "Africana/African American/Black Studies"

In Chapter 3: "Africana/African American/Black Studies," Espinoza-Kulick and Hodges review various political, historical, cultural, and theoretical perspectives and struggles related to Black communities in the U.S. through a Black Studies framing. Starting with examining ideologies and movements related to civil rights and liberation, Chapter 3 also digs into some pre-colonial African history, the impacts of slavery, resistance and abolition, the Reconstruction Era, and Jim Crow policies. It moves on to various examples of how structural and systemic racism continue to impact Black Americans today, such as mass incarceration and educational inequity. Finally, this chapter considers cultural and media representations of Black women in racialized and gendered ways and makes connections to liberation movements of today including Black Lives Matter and Black Feminism.

Chapter 4: "American Indian/Native American Studies"

Cheshire and Leal present Chapter 4: "American Indian/Native American Studies," in which they discuss how American Indian Studies and Native American Studies were advocated by Indigenous leaders, along with various movements of Native rights during the 1960s. The authors also identify exactly how American Indian Studies and Native American Studies are distinct from other academic disciplines that "study" Native Americans. Starting with "Indigenous Ways of Knowing," Cheshire and Leal review various Native creation stories that have been passed down and inform how to live and how Native peoples are rooted in this land. This chapter describes specific ways that California Native women have resisted colonization and missionization and how their experiences and identities are "place-based." Further, Chapter 4 introduces students to key concepts and theories in this discipline such as sovereignty and settler colonialism, while also explaining the impact of colonialism on Native American communities, such as mass removal from their lands and forced assimilation policies. Lastly, the authors review various contemporary directions for resistance and self-determination led by Native Americans, such as the LandBack movement and sustaining the land through traditional ecological knowledge.

Chapter 5: "Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies"

Fischer and Hodges introduce readers to Chapter 5: "Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies." This chapter dives into various themes related to the diverse Asian American and Pacific Islander communities. Starting with data displaying the broad representation of the political-racial category of "Asian American," the authors review the impact of Orientalism and other racialized perspectives of Asian Americans. They discuss connections to the legacy of western imperialism and wars, as well as instances when Asian Americans came together under a pan-ethnic banner and worked in solidarity with other minoritized groups. Readers will grasp the impact of anti-Asian immigration policies, the exploitation of Asian immigrant labor, and the politics of Asian American ethnic enclaves on the development of the Asian American community. Finally, the authors center Pacific Islander voices while addressing the importance of distinguishing Pacific Islander history, culture, and experiences from Asian Americans, such as Pacific Islander experiences in education, with militarization, and climate change.

Chapter 6: “Chicanx and Latinx Studies”

In Chapter 6: “Chicanx and Latinx Studies” Espinoza-Kulick and Acevedo break down various terminology used in this ever-expanding discipline, while introducing readers to the development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies in higher education. They continue by analyzing autonomous education for Latinx children, examples of student-led resistance such as the East LA Blowouts of 1968, and student-centered organizing and organizations that formed in this era, such as M.E.Ch.A. The authors review the impact of Chicana feminism and the roles that racialization and identity play in diverse Chicanx/Latinx communities, such as Indigenismo, Mestizaje, and Afro-Latinidad. Chapter 6 also examines the impact of migration and immigration policies, emphasizing both exclusionary laws and practices and how communities advocate for immigrant justice. Lastly, the authors highlight current topics in this discipline including health equity and struggles over political representation.

Chapter 7: “White Supremacy, Racisms, and Racial Formation”

For Chapter 7, “White Supremacy, Racisms, and Racial Formation,” Hodges begins by explaining how the concept of dehumanization is centered in white supremacy and whiteness. Upon “contact” with Native Americans and people from Africa, European colonizers began constructing false ideas about socially constructed categories of “race” that “othered” non-Europeans, helping to justify colonization, genocide, slavery, wars, and land dispossession. Hodges further connects these ideologies to the theory of racial formation and explains how racism functions structurally and institutionally in connection to the possessive investment in whiteness, hegemony, and oppression. Readers are also introduced to the lasting impacts of these ideologies such as how whiteness is normalized in institutions and fields like education, technology and health. Lastly, readers explore how whiteness is normalized even among children, and how normalization of whiteness and extensions of whiteness onto nationality continues to harm and divide people living in the U.S.

Chapter 8: “Intersectionality: Centering Women of Color”

In Chapter 8, “Intersectionality: Centering Women of Color,” Fischer unfolds the importance of intersectionality as one of the core frameworks in Ethnic Studies, while centering writings, theories, and experiences of women of color. Starting by breaking down the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, and class, readers will be exposed to theories presented by Black feminists and other women of color as they (re)define feminism for themselves. Chapter 8 also applies this framework to the reproductive justice movement, starting with historical examples of people resisting attempted controls of their bodies, including forced sterilization, eugenics, and how leaders have advocated for full access to reproductive care, including abortion. Finally, the framework of intersectionality is also applied to love, radical self-love, and self-care as forms of resistance, particularly for women of color and Queer, Trans, and Non Binary people of color.

Chapter 9: “The Racial Wealth Gap”

Acevedo introduces the concept of wealth inequality and how it intersects with race in Chapter 9: “The Racial Wealth Gap.” He explains how in a capitalist nation like the U.S., wealth is connected to access to or lack of access to basic necessities such as housing, medicine, food, and education. He complicates our understanding of wealth inequality by introducing the concept of decolonization and the importance of centering *testimonios* when focusing on the impact of wealth inequality for Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The chapter begins with how there are disparities along race when it comes to access to wealth and barriers against communities of color when it comes to housing and jobs. Even perceptions of who has access to wealth are influenced by one’s race, with most people in the U.S. falsely believing that Black Americans have similar access to wealth as whites. Further, the chapter analyzes the ways in which the racial wealth gap originated in colonization and slavery and makes comparisons to the board game Monopoly, albeit rigged against people of color. Connections are made to how financial systems today help to reinforce these inequities such as practices that allow employers to not hire system-impacted people or policies that enforced racial segregation in housing. The chapter concludes by providing examples of counter narratives such as the movement for reparations.

Chapter 10: “The State of Human Caging: Incarceration, Policing, and State-Sanctioned Violence”

Chapter 10: “The State of Human Caging: Incarceration, Policing, and State-Sanctioned Violence,” authored by Acevedo and Fischer, begins by defining the prison industrial complex. The authors make a connection to the role of privatization of prisons, and how BIPOC are disproportionately represented in imprisonment rates. They also break down how prison labor is exploited as a loophole in the 13th amendment which was supposed to abolish slavery, but allowed slave-labor “as punishment for crime.” Prison abolitionist Angela Davis even calls the prison labor or chain gang system a reincarnation of slavery. This is connected to the use of criminalizing and caging immigrants, a practice named crimmigration. In the following section, the authors explain the War on

Drugs and how it was used as a “colorblind” vehicle to drive millions of mostly poor people of color into prisons, and legalize discrimination in housing and employment. Part of the success of the carceral system involves the internalization of the myth that Black people are criminal and that “bad” people are behind bars and deserve to be there. The authors move on to examine the history of policing, dispelling the myth that police are here to “protect” average citizens. Upon further examination, it’s revealed that policing has a history of suppressing certain populations with roots in capitalism, white supremacy, imperialism, settler-colonialism, and slavery, with specific analysis of how gender, race, and class intersect with policing and police violence. In relation, the chapter considers the impact of racial profiling by police, including the post-9/11 detention, deportation, and surveillance of South Asian, Arab and Muslim communities. Next, the authors review the school-to-prison pipeline and the militarization of our schools, and finally, uncover various alternatives to policing and imprisonment, such as the prison abolition movement and restorative justice programs in schools.

Chapter 11: “Social Movements: Resistance and Solidarity”

Finally, the authors of this OER close with Chapter 11: “Social Movements: Resistance and Solidarity,” written by Espinoza-Kulick and Fischer. As a field that came out of student protest, Ethnic Studies emphasizes the importance of struggle and resistance in order to build a just society. This chapter begins with exposure to various frameworks for action that will help readers gain an understanding of the theories applied to dismantle oppressive systems like white supremacy and capitalism. Frameworks include Indigenous Sovereignty, art as resistance, Queer/Trans critiques, Disability Justice, and more. The authors then examine various applications of activist frameworks on influential resistance movements starting with some based in the U.S., such as the Civil Rights Movement, Asian American Movement, and other liberatory movements centered on race and culture from the 1960s and 70s. Labor movements are given significant attention in Chapter 11 with a focus on domestic workers and agricultural laborers, particularly the Delano Grape Strike and the Filipinx and Chicanx collaboration. The next section focuses on transnational organizing work with a lens on the justice for “comfort women” campaign. And finally, Chapter 11 ends by examining more recent struggles around environmental justice, racial justice, and gender justice.

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1.4: Takeaway

Concluding Thoughts

We hope that this OER titled “Introduction to Ethnic Studies” will be the first of many in our disciplines, including the four traditional disciplines of Africana/African American/Black Studies, American Indian/Native American Studies, Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies, and Chicanx/Latinx Studies, as we continue to develop and expand learning materials that are free and more accessible to our students and instructors. We hope that instructors and students alike will find in this text something similar to what one of my former students shared in a letter to the California Department of Education in support of the original Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum draft in 2019:

> Ethnic Studies is literally my life. It’s helped me understand my life. Seeing that my challenges and my mother’s challenges were mirrored in the classroom, I began to understand that the hardships I’ve endured as a woman of color is not mythical (it can feel that way when it’s not legitimized, because our society acts like we’re past issues of racism, sexism, and so forth). In navigating my own life, Ethnic Studies taught me how to decide for myself. As an ally and a person of color, I’ve learned how I could create change for myself and my community. I wouldn’t survive in our society if it weren't for ethnic studies.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2: The Ongoing Struggle for Ethnic Studies

By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick

Learning Objectives

- Describe the fundamental values, concepts, and historical context of Ethnic Studies scholarship;
- Identify various ongoing activities in the field of Ethnic Studies, including scholarship, activism, and policy advocacy;
- Discuss the role of student activists in leading Ethnic Studies as a discipline.

2.1: Introduction
2.2: Ethnic Studies Frameworks
2.3: Historical Roots of Ethnic Studies
2.4: The Beginning of Ethnic Studies
2.5: Growth and Expansion of Ethnic Studies
2.6: Summary/Review
2.7: References

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2.1: Introduction

Introducing the Struggle for Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies is the critical and interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, and Indigeneity, focusing on the experiences and perspectives of diverse Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. The field of Ethnic Studies and the various disciplines like Black Studies/Africana Studies, Asian American Studies, Pacific Islander Studies, Arab American Studies, American Indian/Native American Studies, and Chicanx/Latinx and Latinx Indigenous Studies all work to center the knowledge and expertise of historically minoritized groups. Ethnic Studies has always been interdisciplinary in nature, meaning that it combines the strengths and perspectives of multiple disciplines. Scholars in the field of Ethnic Studies have also maintained a critique of the ways in which other disciplines have been associated with systems of power and domination. This has led to a critique of disciplines themselves, including the idea of a “canon” that many disciplines use to define a core set of authors, perspectives, and works that make up the foundation of the field.

There is no singular beginning to Ethnic Studies or a set of scholars who wrote the field into existence. It emerged out of struggles and the long histories of communities of color and Indigenous peoples who value education for its potential to transform lives, inspire change, raise awareness, and disrupt systems of power and exploitation. In this chapter, you will learn a bit about those traditions and the way that various movements, students, and activists came together to form what we now call Ethnic Studies.

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2.2: Ethnic Studies Frameworks

Geohistorical Macroscales of Ethnic Studies

While there is no fixed canon to Ethnic Studies, some scholars have offered frameworks that can be used to describe the scope and significance of the field. Tolteka Cuahutin (2019) offers us the idea of four **geohistorical macroscales of Ethnic Studies**:

1. Indigeneity and Active Roots
2. Coloniality, Dehumanization, and Genocide
3. Hegemony and Normalization; and
4. **Decoloniality, Regeneration, and Transformational Resistance.**

Indigeneity and Active Roots mean beginning with and centering the sovereignty and self-determination of Indigenous peoples. It also means providing students and educators with the tools to critically understand the relationships we have as people in this world with our ancestors, the land, and the historical realities that come to bear on our lives. Second, **coloniality, dehumanization, and genocide** is the first component of actively recognizing those historical and current-day political realities. In Figure 2.2.1, the image shows an activist sign with the phrase, "No History, No Self," written in red and black. This sign was used at a protest in support of students on a hunger strike for Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University in 2016. The message emphasizes the way that Ethnic Studies as a discipline benefits students by connecting to the true and authentic histories of race, Indigeneity, and culture.

Figure 2.2.1: Ethnic Studies Hunger Strike at San Francisco State. (CC BY 2.0; Melissa Minton via Wikimedia)

Ethnic Studies is critical because it opens the door to recognizing and understanding these aspects of society and culture that are often diminished or hidden. This brings us to the third geohistorical macroscale of Ethnic Studies, which is hegemony and normalization. **Hegemony** refers to the systems by which violence and exploitation are maintained in regular patterns to advantage socially dominant groups and maintain the oppression of Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, including women and non-binary people, as well as people of diverse faiths, abilities, and immigration statuses. Finally, Ethnic Studies goes beyond revealing and examining violence and pain to bring students and education into the work of transformation, resistance, and social change. This means that Ethnic Studies is always political, always evolving, and intimately connected to social movements, grassroots activism, and advocacy for change.

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2.3: Historical Roots of Ethnic Studies

Native and Indigenous Pedagogies

Native and Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island (a name for North and Central America used by various Indigenous peoples of the western hemisphere) have practiced educational pedagogies that center resistance, justice, and equity long before the introduction of Ethnic Studies as a phrase or academic field. Traditional knowledge that has been sustained and carried forward in the face of settler-colonialism provides key insight into the importance of activism and strategies of resistance against oppressive systems (Jacob et al., 2018). **Native and Indigenous Pedagogies** are as diverse as the peoples who practice them. However, there are some common values and tools that have contributed to current-day Ethnic Studies. Native and Indigenous pedagogies are place-based and incorporate the cultural, historical, environmental, economic, and literary context of students (Johnson, 2012). This means learning with and from the local context, highlighting the importance of contributing directly to local communities through educational projects, and it emphasizes reciprocity and relationality.

Traditions of Education and Resistance

The introduction of **colonial educational** and epistemological frameworks led to the attempted erasure and genocide of Indigenous lifeways. Building on centuries of colonization, in 1869, the U.S. government and Christian churches began systematically kidnapping Native American children and trafficking students into government and church-run Boarding Schools, which were designed to forcefully strip students of their Native American heritage and impose the use of English, Christian religious customs, and colonized modes of dress. These norms enforced colonial gender binaries, conditioning girls to do housework with boys focused on outside labor. Speaking Native languages and practicing religious or familial customs were violently punished in these Boarding Schools (Lomawaima 2018). This is just one example of instances where educational institutions have functioned to support systems of violence, exploitation, and forced assimilation.

The roots of current-day Ethnic Studies are also present in the ongoing resistance to oppressive educational systems. Throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries, the United States greatly expanded the role of public education. This infrastructure was built up unequally, with schools actively segregated by race. The separation of students by race helped to reinforce the existing racial hierarchy. This also has major implications for the wealth disparities between racial and ethnic groups. For a more in-depth exploration of this topic, please review Chapter 9: The Racial Wealth Gap.

Challenges to Legal Segregation

In 1884, Mary and Joseph Tape, a Chinese American couple living in San Francisco, California, sought to enroll their daughter in the primary school in their neighborhood, which was an all-white school. The administration blocked their enrollment, and the Tapes sued. Their case made it to the California Supreme Court in 1885, which affirmed that public schools must be open to all children. California legislators and federal policy moved quickly to affirm segregation, which would remain the law of the land for nearly another 70 years. The San Francisco School Board created a separate Chinese primary school in Chinatown. However, the racial status quo was not without challenge. In the 1947 case *Mendez v. Westminster*, Sylvia Mendez, and her family brought a federal case against the Westminster School District of Orange County, California, to challenge the exclusion of Mexican American students from white schools. While Mexican Americans were considered legally white, they were excluded on the basis of Spanish-speaking children. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed in their decision that equality in education means opening schools to all children, in defiance of the presiding "separate but equal" doctrine. In Figure 2.3.1, there is a video that describes in more detail the story of *Mendez vs. Westminster* and its significance in addressing discrimination in California. The video is nine minutes and 45 seconds.

Sidebar: *Mendez vs. Westminster* and Discrimination in California's Public Schools

Figure 2.3.1: "Mendez v. Westminster Case: Discrimination in California's Public Schools" (CC-BY 3.0; Anu Mande via YouTube)

It was not until the U.S. Supreme Court decided in 1954 in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case that racial segregation in public schools was outlawed nationwide. In this case, Linda Brown's family sued the Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, because their daughter was denied entrance to their local school because of her race. This landmark decision invalidated the idea that separate facilities, services, and institutions based on race can be equal and affirmed that segregation itself is a form of racial discrimination.

The Court instructed segregated schools across the country to implement desegregation "with all deliberate speed." However, white supremacist groups emerged to resist these changes, including in Little Rock, Arkansas. Despite vocal and public bigotry and hatred directed at them, nine Black students registered to attend the formerly all-white Central High School: Minnijean Brown, Elizabeth Eckford, Ernest Green, Thelma Mothershed, Melba Patillo, Gloria Ray, Terrence Roberts, Jefferson Thomas, and Carlotta Walls. With support from the Arkansas NAACP, this group, the "Little Rock Nine," courageously faced racial violence and adult protestors who attempted to prevent them from going to school. The Governor of Arkansas called in the Arkansas National Guard to prevent students from entering the campus, which eventually prompted President Eisenhower to send National Guard troops to escort the students to school. In Figure 2.3.2, Elizabeth Eckford is shown walking to school in sunglasses while she is surrounded by an angry white mob, with Hazel Bryan Massery behind her, shouting hateful comments.

Figure 2.3.2: Elizabeth Eckford being verbally assaulted by Hazel Bryan Massery for exercising her right to pursue an education. (Public Domain; Will Counts via Wikimedia Commons)

Generations of students and activists have had to fight for the rights of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities to receive an education at all. Beyond this struggle, the schools and instructional methods that were created by and for white people to maintain white supremacist culture and class superiority are not designed to support BIPOC students. While advocates have worked to open access to these spaces and transform them to better serve the needs of all students, others have focused on creating alternative educational spaces that directly serve the needs of students through culturally and politically relevant pedagogy. This sentiment is captured in the phrase, "Education Justice is Racial Justice," which is represented through an artistic poster of an activist and social movement in Figure 2.3.3.

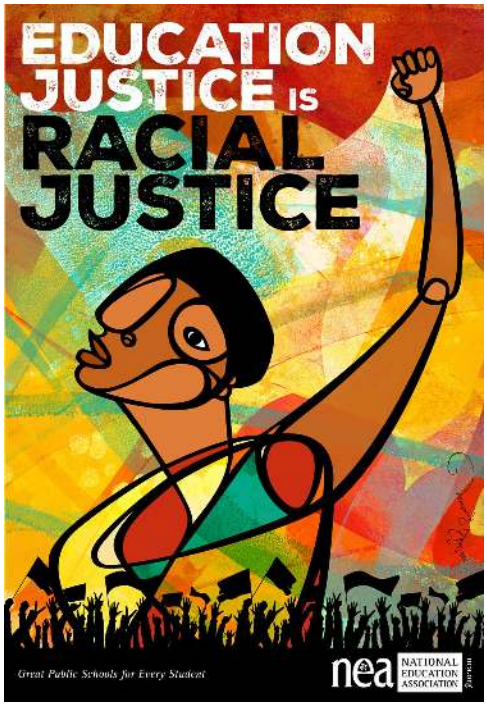

Figure 2.3.3: Education Justice is Racial Justice. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Favianna Rodriguez via Justseeds)

Formation of Autonomous Schools

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) began organizing Freedom Schools in 1963. Civil rights leaders like Fannie Lou Hamer, Bob Moses, and Stokely Carmichael had begun organizing voter education initiatives to offer vital education to Black communities. SNCC sought to expand these efforts and work against the pervasive educational disadvantages faced by Black communities in the Jim Crow South. The Freedom Schools provided students of all ages with an opportunity to learn vital

information about history, mathematics, culture, and other topics. This offered personal benefits to the participants while also encouraging folx to join a movement of engaged and politically motivated community members. This is just one example of BIPOC communities creating autonomous learning environments that promote cultural pride and relevant knowledge and preserve shared languages. Historically Black Colleges and Universities have been major leaders in this area. You can learn more about these institutions in Chapter 9, section 9.5: "Counternarratives in Racial Wealth Disparities." As well, native Hawaiian communities have been leaders, especially in language preservation, with the Kamehameha Schools opening in 1887 to defend Native traditions and preserve culture for the next generation.

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2.4: The Beginning of Ethnic Studies

Early Days of Ethnic Studies

Throughout the 1960s, colleges and universities were the sites of student-led protests for racial justice, environmental justice, gender liberation, and in opposition to the war in Vietnam. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale met at Merritt College in Oakland, California, where they were inspired by the writings of the Black radical author, Franz Fanon. A sign on the Merritt College campus is shown in Figure 2.4.1. They began a student group called Soul Students Advisory Council and advocated for the first Black Studies program, before going on to found the Black Panther Party (Rojas, 2010). At the same time, similar efforts were underway throughout California and across the country. The Black Student Union at San Francisco State College (SFSC) was started in 1963 by activists who had trained with the Black Panther Party and SNCC (Rojas, 2010). The organization supported the small minority of Black students at SFSC at the time and sought to increase enrollment. In 1966, Jimmy Garret from SNCC arrived on campus to mobilize and organize Black students (Rojas, 2010).

Figure 2.4.1: Merritt College. (CC BY 4.0; Photo by Jordan Burkart)

At SFSC, the administration allowed students to teach each other courses not included in the traditional curriculum through the Experimental College. Students resisted any attempt to control the content of these courses, including invited speakers. The culture and operations of the Experimental College attracted radicalized Black students. Students, especially leaders in the Black Student Union, used the Experimental College to build the Black Studies curriculum. By 1968, the Black Studies curriculum covered history, social sciences, and the humanities, including courses like Sociology of Black Oppression, American Institutions, Culture in Cities, Composition, Modern African Thought and Literature, Recurrent Themes in Twentieth Century Afroamericano Thought, Creative Writing, Avant-Garde Jazz, Play Writing, and Black Improvisation.

The Longest Student Strike

George Murray was a beloved English instructor at SFSC, who was known for his vocal critiques of racism and the Vietnam War. He also served as the Minister of Education for the Black Panther Party. After he was fired on November 1, 1968, student leaders from the BSU and **Third World Liberation Front (TWLF)** started a strike. The TWLF was a multi-ethnic coalition of students that were awoken to the fact that they were being taught in ways that were dominating and irrelevant to themselves (Maeda, 2012), and included a coalition of the Black Student Union (BSU), Latin American Student Organization (LASO), Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action (ICSA), Mexican American Student Confederation, Philippine (now Pilipino) American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE), La Raza, Native American Students Union, and Asian American Political Alliance. These movements built on intergenerational traditions of protest and advocacy that informed the emergent groups that formed, established, and nurtured Ethnic Studies (Delgado, 2016). Penny Nakatsu was one of the strike's leaders, and her speeches emphasized the importance of connecting student oppression with U.S. Imperialism and Militarism that creates adverse conditions throughout Third World countries. Nesbit Crutchfield was also a prominent leader in the organization and the first striker to be arrested. He spent over a year in jail.

Police officers used militarized tactics on strikers, including directly assaulting students. The College's President at the beginning of the strike, Robert Smith, was initially sympathetic to students and interested in hearing out their demands. However, the administration quickly replaced President Smith with Samuel Ichiyé Hayakawa, who represented the interests of the predominantly

white California State College Board of Trustees and then California Governor Ronald Raegan. The TWLF made a conscious choice in their organizing to center the leadership of students of color. However, the strike also garnered support from white students and community members, as well as the faculty union, a local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers. The strike lasted for nearly five months and at its peak, had halted nearly all classes and college operations. Although the protestors were met with hostility, resistance, arrests, and violence, they countered this with a strategy called the "War of the Flea," which focused on disruptive tactics that would pressure the administration to take action. For example, protestors checked out massive amounts of books from the library, disrupted classes to encourage students to join the strikes, and staged massive public demonstrations with music and chanting (Rojas, 2010).

Outcomes of the Strike

In the end, the strikers won nearly all of their demands, including the creation of a Black Studies Department, the funding of 11.3 new full-time equivalent faculty positions, a new Associate Director of Financial Aid, the creation of an Economic Opportunity Program (EOP) with 108 students admitted for Spring 1969 in this program, as well as 500 seats committed for non-white students in the Fall of 1969 with 400 additional slots for EOP students, and a commitment to creating the School of Ethnic Studies (Rojas, 2010). The School of Ethnic Studies later became San Francisco State University's College of Ethnic Studies, which includes Africana Studies, American Indian Studies, Asian American Studies, Latina/Latino Studies, and Race and Resistance Studies. The strikers' unmet demands included that Dr. Nathan Hare and George Murray were both denied faculty employment in the newly formed Black Studies program. Despite these losses, to this day, the strike remains *the* longest student strike in U.S. history and is a testament to the power of student mobilization (Delgado, 2016; Maeda, 2012; Rojas, 2010).

Sidebar: San Francisco State College Strike Demands

Black Student Union Demands

1. That all Black Studies courses being taught through various departments be immediately part of the Black Studies Department and that all the instructors in this department receive full-time pay.
2. That Dr. Hare, Chairman of the Black Studies Department, receive a full-professorship and a comparable salary according to his qualifications.
3. That there be a Department of Black Studies which will grant a Bachelor's Degree in Black Studies; that the Black Studies Department chairman, faculty and staff have the sole power to hire faculty and control and determine the destiny of its department.
4. That all unused slots for Black Students from Fall 1968 under the Special Admissions program be filled in Spring 1969.
5. That all Black students wishing so, be admitted in Fall 1969.
6. That twenty (20) full-time teaching positions be allocated to the Department of Black Studies.
7. That Dr. Helen Bedesem be replaced from the position of Financial Aid Officer and that a Black person be hired to direct it; that Third World people have the power to determine how it will be administered.
8. That no disciplinary action will be administered in any way to any students, workers, teachers, or administrators during and after the strike as a consequence of their participation in the strike.
9. That the California State College Trustees not be allowed to dissolve any Black programs on or off the San Francisco State College campus.
10. That George Murray maintain his teaching position on campus for the 1968-69 academic year.

Third World Liberation Front Demands

1. That a School of Ethnic Studies for the ethnic groups involved in the Third World be set up with the students in each particular ethnic organization having the authority and control of the hiring and retention of any faculty member, director, or administrator, as well as the curriculum in a specific area study.
2. That 50 faculty positions be appropriated to the School of Ethnic Studies, 20 of which would be for the Black Studies program.
3. That, in the Spring semester, the College fulfill its commitment to the non-white students in admitting those who apply.
4. That, in the fall of 1969, all applications of non-white students be accepted.
5. That George Murray and any other faculty person chosen by non-white people as their teacher be retained in their positions.

The tenacity of the strikers inspired students at the University of California, Berkeley (UCB) to form their own Third World Liberation Front in January 1969, who began a separate strike for Ethnic Studies at UCB (Delgado, 2016). Strikers called for a

Third World College, but the administration ultimately formed a Department of Ethnic Studies. Throughout the country, racial justice and student activism were front and center, leading to a cascade of activism for Ethnic Studies programs, including the core disciplines of Black Studies, Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies, and American Indian Studies. In 1969, Chicana/o/x activists came together at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB) and published El Plan de Santa Barbara, a document that united diverse activists from around the state of California and laid out a roadmap for Chicana/Chicano Studies, as well as programs to increase the retention, engagement, and success of students from minoritized backgrounds (see Chapter 6, section 6.2: "Roots and Resistance- The Development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies"). UCSB created the first Chicano Studies department in the University of California in 1970, now Chicana and Chicano Studies; and eventually formed the first PhD program in the field in 2003. California State University, Los Angeles was also a forerunner in this area and established a Mexican American Studies program, which became the Department of Chicano Studies in 1971, and is now called the Department of Chicana(o) and Latina(o) Studies.

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2.5: Growth and Expansion of Ethnic Studies

Ethnic Studies as a Site of Growth

In the over fifty years since the founding of Ethnic Studies as an academic field, it has grown substantially to include a range of scholarly associations, degree-granting programs at all levels of higher education, growth in the K-12 education system, inclusion within general education curricula, and as a site of struggle and solidarity for racial justice, decolonization, and intersectionality. Subsequent generations of students and scholars have added to the field of Ethnic Studies and expanded its potential for liberatory praxis. As an interdisciplinary field committed to a relevant education, Ethnic Studies has always been a dynamic project that can change and grow.

Scholarly Associations and Degree Programs

Scholarly associations are voluntary organizations of professional researchers who organize the exchange of ideas through activities like conferences where scholars present and share their work, newsletters, peer-reviewed publications, scholarships, and research grants. Within Ethnic Studies fields, many scholarly organizations exist which focus on specific disciplines and populations of scholars. Some of these predate the 1968 protests for Ethnic Studies, like the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, founded in 1915, which is the group responsible for Black History Month. The Association for Ethnic Studies was formed in 1972, just four years after the San Francisco State College strike began. The National Association for Chicano Social Scientists first began in 1972 and later became the National Association for Chicano Studies in 1973. Due to the activist of feminist scholars and their allies, the group changed its name to the National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies in 1995, which remains the name today. However, a single association is often not enough to reflect the diversity and complexity of an academic field. For example, Mujeres Activas en Letras y Cambio Social was founded in 1982, focusing on Chicana/Latina scholarship separately from what was known as the National Association for Chicano Studies at the time.

With respect to the other core disciplines of Ethnic Studies, the National Council for Black Studies began in 1975 to help provide a structure to the growing fields of Africana/Black Studies, bringing together scholars of the African diaspora studying various aspects of the global experience of Blackness. In 1979, the Association for Asian American Studies was formed to organize this discipline. The American Indian Studies Association was formed in 1999 to develop the fields of American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Indigenous Studies. As well, the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association was formed in 2007 and publishes the journal, *Native American and Indigenous Studies* with the University of Minnesota Press. Academic associations typically encourage student participation and have specific opportunities and scholarships available to students in that field. There are also associations within other disciplines that utilize a racial justice or decolonial lens, such as the Association of Black Sociologists, the Black Women's Studies Association, and the Association of Indigenous Anthropologists.

There are a range of degree programs that are offered in Ethnic Studies fields, reflecting the complexity and depth of experiences among people of color and Indigenous peoples in the United States and around the world. Ethnic Studies programs are united in their shared focus on power and domination, as well as a connection to real-world struggles for justice and equity. This is distinguished between traditional fields of regional studies, cultural studies, and American Studies. For example, researchers who study African cultures, traditions, history, and science may offer a program in African Studies or a degree specific to a region or country on the continent. These programs are distinct from a Black Studies program or Africana Studies program, which focuses on the self-determination and struggles of Black communities in the U.S. or in a transnational context. Ethnic Studies programs may offer degrees in Comparative Ethnic Studies, which addresses multiple historically defined racialized groups, or with a specific concentration in disciplines like Black Studies, African American Studies, Africana Studies, Native American Studies, Indigenous Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicanx and Latinx Studies, Asian American Studies, Critical Pacific Islands & Oceania Studies, Arab and Muslim Ethnicities and Diasporas, and Critical Middle East/Southwest and North Africa Studies.

Institutional Growth and Policies

While Ethnic Studies has grown as an academic discipline, it has always maintained its connection to community collaborations and ensuring that scholarship and education are useful to communities affected by historical violence, settler-colonialism, and systems of exploitation. Student activists are a key force in Ethnic Studies, and groups like BSU (Black Student Union) and MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlán or the Chicanx Student Movement of Aztlan) build student leadership, advocate for equity and policy change, and develop relationships with historically underserved communities in higher education. Students have also been a major part of advancing Ethnic Studies programs and speaking out when they face budget cuts and

administrative threats. For instance, in 1999, the Third World Liberation Front at UCB emerged once more and organized hunger strikes to protest the proposed cuts to both funding and faculty support for the Ethnic Studies department. The movement also included rallies, sit-ins, and building occupations, and managed to stop the cuts to the department and generated an administrative commitment to establishing a research center that was eventually called the Center for Race & Gender. In 2016, the TWLF emerged again, this time at San Francisco State University, also staging hunger strikes as part of a strategy to pressure the administration into making investments in the College of Ethnic Studies. The College faced a nearly $250,000 deficit in funding, with the University failing to provide adequate financial resources to cover the salaries of all faculty and permanent staff. The student demonstrations, including a 10-day hunger strike and camping overnight on campus grounds, led to university administrators committing a total of over $650,000 to both address the shortfall and expand the faculty for teaching high-quality and innovative Ethnic Studies courses.

Ethnic Studies classes are a great opportunity for students to deepen their knowledge and passion for these topics. Educators have also shown that these classes have general benefits for all students, as well as campus communities as a whole (Bonilla, Dee, and Penner, 2021). This has led faculty advocates and administrators to establish Ethnic Studies as a **general education graduation requirement**. In 2020, the California state legislature passed Assembly Bill 1460 (authored by Assemblymember Shirley Weber), which changed the general education curriculum to include Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement for all 23 campuses in the California State University (CSU) system. The CSUs enroll nearly half a million students (485,550 in 2022) and are the largest public research university system in the world. The legislative directive in AB 1460 made it so that all students must take an Ethnic Studies class taught in an Ethnic Studies department, separate from any related diversity or multiculturalism requirements. This acknowledged the status of Ethnic Studies as a distinct field of scholarship. The California Community Colleges followed suit by establishing Ethnic Studies as a graduation requirement, while the University of California system Academic Council is considering both an Ethnic Studies graduation requirement and admission requirement for high school students hoping to attend the UC.

Ethnic Studies curriculum has a long history in the K-12 educational context as well. In 1970, the Native American Materials Development Center created a K-6 curriculum for Navajo children that included both historical content and culturally relevant pedagogies. As early as 1993, the Berkeley Unified School District created a 9th grade course in Ethnic Studies and made it a graduation requirement. In 2007, Kailu High School in Hawai'i established Ethnic Studies as a required 9th-grade course for all students. In 2014, El Rancho Unified in Pico Rivera, CA, created a high school requirement for Ethnic Studies. The Ethnic Studies Now Coalition helped to spread the successes of Ethnic Studies to other communities, including through advocacy as well as sharing resources. With more and more districts adopting Ethnic Studies, statewide advocates in California moved to formalize the curriculum and establish a framework for Ethnic Studies teachers. Campus programs like the UCLA Center X / Teacher Education Program, Exito at UCSB, and XITO (Xicanx Institute for Teaching and Organizing) have started to train educators interested in working in this growing field.

Threats Against Ethnic Studies

While Ethnic Studies scholarship and curriculum have seen substantial growth over 50 years, this has always been threatened by counter-movements and institutional resistance. In 1998 in Tucson, Arizona, the school district established a Mexican American Studies program that grew to 48 course offerings and was the largest Ethnic Studies program in any school district nationwide. The department offered student support and facilitated teachers' and parents' involvement in Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x student success, which directly increased graduation rates and grades in all classes (Cabrera, Milem, and Marx, 2012). In 2010, state lawmakers passed Arizona House Bill 2281, which dismantled the program. The ban was overturned in 2017, as it was deemed racist and unconstitutional. The rhetoric from this law, which claimed to restrict teachers from promoting "resentment toward a race or class of people" or advocating "ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals," re-emerged in 2021 as conservative activists passed statewide bans on **Critical Race Theory** to intimidate K-12 educators working to have discussions about race and ethnicity in their classrooms. Despite this political hostility and counter-mobilization, Ethnic Studies educators and others invested in student equity and success continue to work at the front lines to inspire students and ensure that the next generation has access to a relevant education.

As California has continued to formalize and institutionalize Ethnic Studies, scholars and activists have contended over the boundaries of the field and its purpose for higher education and society. In 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 101 (authored by Assemblymember Jose Medina), which established that all high school districts will be required to offer Ethnic Studies by the 2025-2026 school year and require an Ethnic Studies course for graduation by 2029-2030. Prior to establishing an Ethnic Studies requirement, the state Department of Education adopted an Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum in

March 2021. The first draft of the Model Curriculum included lessons on the occupation of Palestine and its connection to Third World solidarity movements in the United States. However, the final draft removed this content and emphasized General Ethnic Studies, along with the four core disciplines centered on historically defined racial groups: African American Studies, Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x Studies, Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies, and Native American Studies, along with sample lessons on Jewish Americans and Arab Americans. The Liberated Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum was created by independent scholars as a guide for K-12 educators that also includes Arab American Studies, along with Intersectional and Comparative Ethnic Studies. This group of educators is working to ensure that diverse perspectives within Ethnic Studies are continuously cultivated and represented.

Sidebar: Contention over the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

In 2019, the California Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum Advisory Committee convened at the California Department of Education in Sacramento. The convening began with a land acknowledgment, showing a commitment to Indigenous peoples. And, the first draft of the high school curriculum incorporated the attempted genocide and resistance of California Natives. In its first version, the model curriculum had a lesson about land acknowledgment as well as protection of sacred sites, but they were removed. By 2022 when the final version was published, the Indigenous (Mayan) inspired poem, In Lak'Ech, was removed from the approved Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum for high schools.

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2.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In summary, the field of Ethnic Studies is a dynamic source of inquiry and action. As we have explored its history, we can see that it joins many roots of resistance with a commitment to a relevant education. It is also particular to the racialized history of higher education in the United States and the resistance and liberation movements of the 1960s. While activist movements respond to the emerging needs brought about in the larger political environment, each generation has invested in Ethnic Studies as a source of education, research, and sharing knowledge to inspire further liberation and pursuits of justice. The need for Ethnic Studies is apparent when considering the long history of educational institutions in reproducing systemic oppression, including violence at the hands of educational institutions as well as exclusion from high-quality schools. Fortunately, Ethnic Studies has been shown time and time again to help improve disparities in school achievement and contribute to a more positive, inclusive school culture.

Further, while Ethnic Studies was developed as the educational arm of broader struggles of decolonization and racial justice, it has also taken on its own life through the students and educators who carry out creative pedagogies and put knowledge into action. This has also led to the field becoming a target for politicization by outside commentators and stakeholders who consciously organize misinformation campaigns using the media and local activist networks. In the face of many misconceptions about Ethnic Studies, students and educators alike benefit from the knowledge and approach of Ethnic Studies scholarship. The future of the field depends entirely on today's students, who will come to shape the direction of the social movements that are central to the unfolding discipline and become the next generation of scholars to build innovative solutions to persistent systems of injustice in our society.

Key Terms

- **Geohistorical Macroscales of Ethnic Studies:** A perspective put forward by Tolteka Cuahutin to describe the dynamic principles that guide Ethnic Studies scholarship in terms of scope and approach:
  - Indigeneity and Active Roots,
  - Coloniality, Dehumanization, and Genocide,
  - Hegemony and Normalization; and,
  - Decoloniality, Regeneration, and Transformational Resistance.
- **Coloniality, Dehumanization, and Genocide:** Systems of oppression that are carried out through political, cultural, and militarized means, leading to the assault on Native and Indigenous lifeways.
- **Hegemony:** Systems by which violence and exploitation are maintained in regular patterns to advantage socially dominant groups and maintain the oppression of Black, Indigenous, and people of color communities, including women and non-binary people, as well as people of diverse faiths, abilities, and immigration statuses.
- **Decoloniality, Regeneration, and Transformational Resistance:** Going beyond revealing and examining violence and pain to bring students and education into the work of transformation, resistance, and social change.
- **Native and Indigenous Pedagogies:** Diverse perspectives in tribal communities that are commonly place-based and incorporate the cultural, historical, environmental, economic, and literary context of local Indigenous realities.
- **Colonial Education:** Settler institutions that have attempted erasure and genocide of Indigenous lifeways, including the government and Church-run Boarding Schools in the United States and Canada.
- **Third World Liberation Front (TWLF):** A multi-ethnic coalition of students that were awoken to the fact that they were being taught in ways that were dominating and irrelevant to themselves (Maeda, 2012), and included a coalition of the Black Student Union (BSU), Latin American Student Organization (LASO), Intercollegiate Chinese for Social Action (ICSA), Mexican American Student Confederation, Philippine (now Pilipino) American Collegiate Endeavor (PACE), La Raza, Native American Students Union, and Asian American Political Alliance
- **General Education Graduation Requirement:** A type of course that all students are required to take as part of their degree. In California, Ethnic Studies has become a general education graduation requirement in all public high schools and colleges.
- **Critical Race Theory:** A legal perspective put forward by scholars to identify the link between U.S. laws and the structure of racism, with the goal of better ending racial discrimination and disparities. This perspective has been misrepresented by conservative activists.

Discussion Questions

1. Review some of the demands from the Third World Liberation Front in Section 2.4. Do any of these resonate with your experience on our own campus? What demands would you make of your administration? How would you modify or update these demands for your own context?
2. Ethnic Studies as a field has grown in tandem with the constituent disciplines. What are the advantages of focusing on specific community formations, such as in Black Studies, Chicanx and Latinx Studies, Native American and Indigenous Studies, Arab American Studies, or Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies? What are the advantages of a comparative Ethnic Studies perspective?
3. The *Mendez vs. Westminster* case showcased the status quo perspective of segregation in public education at that time. What are some of the current perspectives that support segregation and inequity in education? How would you respond to those ideas now, given what you have learned in this chapter?

Journal Prompts

1. The field of Ethnic Studies is deeply rooted in activist traditions. This has included linking the work happening in classrooms and through education to the diverse struggles of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color groups. Reflecting on the students, families, and individuals that you learned about in this chapter, what are some strategies that lead to social change? Consider how these strategies relate to your own life or the things you have witnessed around you.
    - For a more focused exercise, consider directing the prompt to a specific activist group. For example, you may want to focus on the San Francisco State College Strikes for Ethnic Studies in 1968-1969.
    - You can access more primary documents and digital recordings from the Strike from the SFSU Diva Archive and SF State College Strike Collection at the SFSU Library.
    - To see the full Black Studies Curriculum from Spring 1968, you can visit the SFSU Digital Collections.
2. Educational institutions can promote freedom, self-determination, and justice, but they have also been places of elite domination, white supremacy, and settler-colonialism. Considering the schools you attended and where you have lived, what patterns have you witnessed? You may want to focus on examples of barriers and exclusion, positive work for inclusion and equity, or both.
    - Be sure to verify assumptions about the demographics of a school or neighborhood. For colleges and universities, you can find racial demographic information on websites like College Factual or by searching your school's website. You can look up information about demographics in a specific place by using the US Census website.

Class Activities

Role Play Discussion: Strategizing for Social Change

- For this activity, you will divide the class into three groups. Each group will represent a different constituency in the strike for Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State College: the Third World Liberation Front, the faculty union, and the anti-war groups who supported the strike.
- In these groups, the class will address a series of scenarios that mirror the experiences of the strikers and the college.
- Students should situate their responses to the circumstance based on their understanding of the text and historical examples referenced in the chapter and course material. Consider priorities, tactics, and context.

Example Scenario:

- A local newspaper ran coverage of a demonstration where a number of strikers were arrested. In the description of the events, they negatively characterized the students that were arrested and consistently called the strikers violent. Another demonstration is planned for the next day, and many student activists want to respond to the newspaper directly. Others have suggested focusing the demonstration on more peaceful tactics to avoid arrests and being called violent again. Your three groups are tasked with how to move everyone forward. What options would you consider? How would you decide who will do what? Take into account that there is limited time to communicate messages to your supporters.
- The instructor may adapt to emergent conditions based on what the groups decide to do. For example, this might include introducing external factors like additional repressive responses, political pressure, or resistance from other stakeholders.

Suggested Format:

Provide the instructions, divide everyone into groups, and review the scenario with everyone. Answer any questions that come up in the full group.

- Give each group a few minutes to discuss amongst themselves how they want to represent their interests in the discussion. Each group should also identify one or more people who will represent their group in the larger discussions. Others may contribute as well, but this will help to facilitate a flowing conversation.
- Return the large group, review the scenario once more, and provide each group an opportunity to provide their initial remarks. Facilitate discussion among the groups to achieve a dynamic and unified response to the outlined scenario.
- This would be well suited for a face-to-face modality or a synchronous online discussion using video chat technology and breakout rooms (e.g., Zoom). You could also adapt this to be a guided discussion board or multi-part online discussion in groups.

Ethnic Studies is…

- Each student will provide a creative response to the prompt, “Ethnic Studies is…” that is rooted in what you have learned from this chapter and the class. The response should be brief, about one sentence, and may highlight a definition of Ethnic Studies or what Ethnic Studies means to that individual.
  - This could take on different formats for different learners and styles. For example, using an Online Discussion board in an online course, students could post their short replies to the prompt and have an opportunity to view one another's. You can also have students provide their brief reply with a video recording or by completing a template image.
- Based on the format option(s) that individuals can submit, the group’s collective responses should be compiled and made available for discussion.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3: Africana/African American/Black Studies

By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick and Dr. Teresa Hodges

Learning Objectives

- Analyze and articulate concepts used in the field of Africana / African American / Black Studies, including Panafricanism, Black Power, Black Nationalism, discrimination, double consciousness, and controlling images;
- Apply theory and knowledge produced by Black communities to describe critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, lived experiences, and social struggles, with a particular emphasis on agency and group affirmation;
- Critically analyze the intersection of race and racism as they relate to class, gender, sexuality, religion, spirituality, in Black communities;
- Explain and assess how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation, as experienced, enacted, and studied by Black communities are relevant to current and structural issues such as communal, national, international, and transnational politics;
- Describe anti-racist practices to build a just and equitable society.

3.1: Introduction
3.2: Black Power and Black Studies
3.3: How We Got Here- Lifting “The Veil”
3.4: Systemic Racism
3.5: Cultural and Political Representation
3.6: Summary/Review
3.7: References

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3.1: Introduction

Introduction to Africana / African American / Black Studies

The field of Africana / African American / Black Studies emerged as an academic site of inquiry and struggle in response to the needs of the ongoing movements for racial justice and civil rights. Within the institution of higher education, Africana / African American / Black Studies provides a comprehensive and interdisciplinary home for the intellectual work being done by scholars to uncover, document, analyze, and explain the complex and varied experiences of people of African origin. It also works in conjunction with efforts to increase diversity and inclusion within higher education at all levels, including students, faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as supporting broader movements for justice and inclusion that advance change in different institutions throughout society.

In this chapter, the terms Africana Studies, African American Studies, and Black Studies are used throughout. These terms often refer to the same body of academic scholarship and community practice, but there are important differences to note. While Africana and Black Studies refer broadly to the experiences of people with African heritage throughout the world, African American Studies are explicitly focused on the experiences of people whose family lineage includes African peoples who were enslaved in the United States. These realities differ from the experiences of African people who were never enslaved, African migrants living in various parts of the world, or the descendants of enslaved people in countries outside of the United States. For the sake of inclusion, the terms “Africana Studies” or “Black Studies” are used to signal these multiple disciplinary names.

This chapter charts an overview of relevant and foundational history that shapes the development of Africana / African American / Black Studies. In the first section, you will have the opportunity to understand the broader political and historical contexts that shaped struggles for Black liberation in the 1800s and 1900s, which had many implications for society, including the creation of Black Studies programs. This is followed by a more focused examination of how the dynamics of exploitation and resistance have been more effectively studied and understood using a Black Studies framework. In the remaining two sections, these tools are brought to life in the context of systemic, cultural, and political dynamics that are the focus of Black Studies scholars and practitioners today.

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3.2: Black Power and Black Studies

Garveyism

Marcus Garvey was born in Jamaica in 1887 and became one of the most influential and well-known political activists in the early 20th Century. In 1910, he left Jamaica for England and later the United States. He continued to call all three countries home over the course of his life. Garvey is widely credited with being the leading voice for Panafricanism. His ideology emphasized pride, empowerment, and economic prosperity for Black communities, and is so widely studied and documented it came to be known as **Garveyism**. His speeches and writing encouraged people of African descent around the world to see themselves as part of a united community that could forge solidarity for economic and political alliances, as well as cultural and religious development. For example, the shared identity of Black people around the world was an essential mobilizing factor in the global movement to end South African Apartheid in the 1990s.

Black Power and Black Nationalism

Two political frameworks that are important for understanding Garveyism and Black Studies are Black Power and Black Nationalism. **Black Power** is a movement and political belief system that emphasizes building Black-serving institutions and leaders. The term Black Power was coined by Stokely Carmichael during a speech after being arrested for the 27th time in 1966. **Black Nationalism** is an ideology emphasizing pride in being Black, economic self-sufficiency, and Black separatism.

Panafricanism became the foundation for the idea of Blackness and Black identity, which brings together the experience of people of African heritage. This includes African people, African immigrants, and communities with origins on the African continent that have been enslaved, trafficked, and settled in various parts of the world, especially in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and Latin America. Marcus Garvey's legacy lives on in the political and social changes that he inspired, and he is celebrated as the first National Hero of Jamaica. Figure 3.2.1 shows a mural of Marcus Garvey in Oakland, California, sporting a military officer's outfit in a prideful, royal purple hue. This representation reflects Garvey's ongoing significance as an inspiration for militant, radical advocacy on behalf of Black people. At the end of Garvey's life in 1940, racial segregation was still legally enforced throughout the United States. It took many other activists and scholars to bring about the wide-scale changes that Garvey called for in his work.

Figure 3.2.1: Marcus Garvey mural in Oakland, CA (CC BY-NC 2.0; Thomas Hawk via Flickr)

The Civil Rights Movement

In the 1940s and 1950s, Black communities in the United States mobilized against Jim Crow laws and racial segregation in all aspects of life. Black people have been formally barred from many aspects of public life, including employment, education, housing, and voting. These legal conventions emboldened white people to participate in racial violence against Black people with no fear of consequence or retribution. This led to further restrictions on Black communities' ability to travel, participate in culture, observe their religious beliefs, or exist in many public places where white people are present.

Mobilization for the **Civil Rights Movement** was driven by women working directly in the community in partnership with churches and religious institutions. While organizers had political goals of changing laws and policies, they also identified that

community members had immediate needs for food, housing, education, and other social services. Churches often provided these services, and community members cultivated the time, capacity, and skills to participate in activism. The Southern Christian Leadership Conference brought together these religious groups to participate in the Civil Rights Movement. While women carried the movement forward on the front lines, the formal organizations and religious institutions in the Civil Rights Movement often prioritized charismatic male leaders to hold positions of authority and power (Robnett, 1997). This includes famous figures like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Figure 3.2.2 displays the statue of Martin Luther King (MLK) that is part of the U.S. Smithsonian Institute's National Mall, alongside memorials of famous presidents like Washington, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. Although MLK is undoubtedly one of the most important figures in the history of Black people in the United States, he was just one of many influential leaders during this era who made change happen.

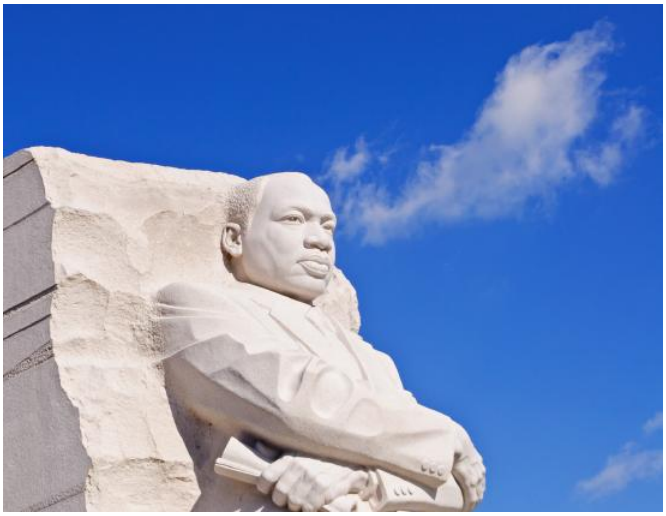

Figure 3.2.2: Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial (CC BY-SA 2.0; Scalet Sappho via Flickr)

The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was founded in April 1960 and was widely recognized for their sit-ins, Freedom Rides, voter registration drives, and other direct-action campaigns. SNCC's founding statement of purpose states, "Non-violence… seeks a social order of justice permeated by love… Justice for all overthrows injustice. The redemptive community supersedes systems of gross social immorality."

The Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party and Fannie Lou Hamer

Born to sharecroppers Lou Ella and James Lee Townsend in Montgomery County, Mississippi, on October 6, 1917, Fannie Lou Hamer was the youngest of 20 children. She worked as a sharecropper and a timekeeper for the plantation owner and was married to Perry Hamer. Fannie Lou was an outspoken civil rights activist that endured acts of violence by white doctors, policemen, and politicians. Hamer inspired many people to register to vote and ran for Congress to raise awareness around the acts of terror that white supremacists enacted to prevent Black people from voting.

Hamer co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP) in 1964. The Democratic Party in Mississippi barred participation from Black people, and they formed an all-white delegation for the National Democratic Party Convention. The "Dixiecrats" were a branch of southern Democrats who supported racial segregation and held substantial power in the U.S. South. MFDP organized voter registration drives for Black communities throughout Mississippi and supported Black leaders to run for office. They also protested the legitimacy of the Democratic Party delegation at the National Convention.

Sidebar: Fannie Lou Hamer

Fannie Lou Hamer was influential because she took a movement-wide perspective on leadership development and change. She was an advocate for the notion that "nobody's free until everybody's free." This remark was delivered in a national speech presented in Washington, DC in 1971, where she said:

> Now, we've got to have some changes in this country. And not only changes for the black man, and not only changes for the black woman, but the changes we have to have in this country are going to be for liberation of all people—because nobody's free until everybody's free. And as I wage the Fight in the South, and as I move across the country in helping political people get in office, and as I look at the South and I think about the kind of things that have gone on in the

> South—right after I voiced my opinion about what had happened to Jo-Etha, the insurance was canceled on my house. On the twenty eighth of January 1971—not '61, people—after all of the working and all of the trials and all the tribulations that we've had in Mississippi, on January 28, 1974, my house was bombed.
>
> – Fannie Lou Hamer, July 10, 1971, Washington, D.C.

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3.3: How We Got Here- Lifting “The Veil”

The Veil and Double-Consciousness

In Sociologist W.E.B. Du Bois’ (1903) seminal work outlining double consciousness theory, he argued that “the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line” (p. 281). Despite reductions in **de jure racial discrimination**, which is legally codified explicit racism, improved racial attitudes among the general public, and the election of the United State's first biracial Black president, the trouble of the color line persists in reproducing racial disparities in the United States and around the globe (Alexander, 2010; Bobo, 2017; Bonilla-Silva, 2013; Williams and Collins, 2001). As exemplified by the 2016 election of a Presidential candidate who campaigned on an explicitly racist, anti-immigrant, and nationalist platform (Bobo, 2017), national discourse and political rhetoric have become more divisive while hate crimes and brutality towards people of color and immigrants have risen (Eligon, 2018).

In this context, the Du Boisian theory of double consciousness is relevant for understanding the racial politics of the 21st century. For Du Bois, **double consciousness** symbolized the psychological impact of living in a racist society for African Americans in the years following the end of slavery. Societal treatment of African Americans as a “problem” contributed to the development of the Veil, a lens through which [African Americans] viewed themselves from the perspective of White Americans. Despite being citizens, African Americans were not fully regarded as such, a plight that contemporary Black Americans and other Americans of color still experience.

The content in the preceding two paragraphs was initially published in the article "Double Consciousness in the 21st Century: Du Boisian Theory and the Problem of Racialized Legal Status" by Tiffany Joseph and Tanya Golash-Boza (2021, p. 345) in *Social Sciences*, which is licensed CC BY 4.0.

Pre-colonial Africa

The African continent has been home to complex human societies for over 10,000 years. Families formed tribal groups and created some of the first known markers of culture and social organization, including tools, sharing resources, and agriculture. Many groups co-existed peacefully, while others fought over territory and other disputes. Before any contact with colonial outsiders, multiple large empires and kingdoms were created with systems of trade, taxation, and political representation. In Figure 3.3.1, there is a map that has the territorial borders of kingdoms and empires located throughout the continent, with some groups overlapping land claims with one or more other groups. This includes Mali Empire, Nok Culture, Fulani Empire, Akan States, Benin, Hausa, Kingdon of Kangaba, Christian Ethiopia, Songhai Empire, Empire of Ghana, Wolof, Empire of Kanem, Fatimid Caliphate, Ayyubid Dynasty, Umayyad Caliphate, Yoruba Yorubaland, Igbo, Great Zimbabwe, Kingdom of Aksum, Kongo Kingdom, Luba State, Lunda State, Carthaginian Empire, Persian Achaemenid Empire, and The Ptolemies.

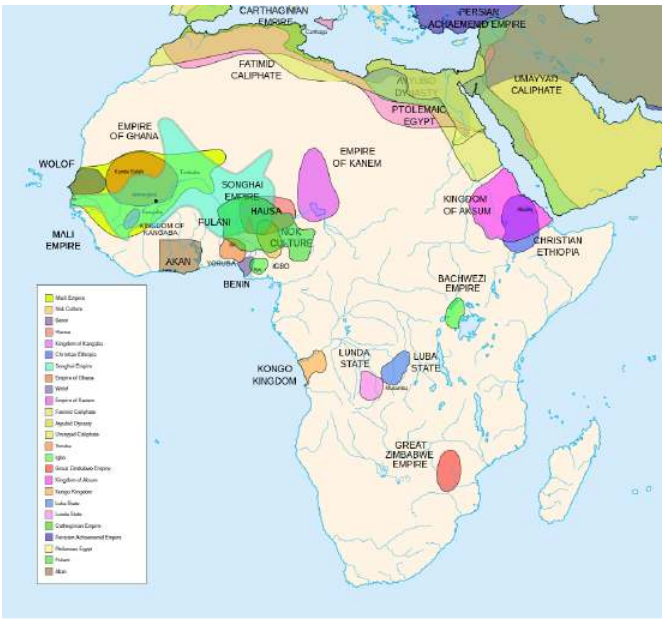

Figure 3.3.1: Africa History Atlas (CC BY-SA 3.0; Jeff Israel via Wikimedia)

For many centuries, the tribal groups and empires of Africa operated with relative autonomy. There was no sense of African or Black identity, but people identified instead with their local context, such as the Kingdom of Kush, which bordered Egypt to the south around 1070 BCE. One of the largest and most powerful empires was the Kingdom of Aksum, which operated for nearly a thousand years in the areas now claimed by Eritrea and Ethiopia. The kingdom of Ghana was the first state with a system of political representation starting in 350 CE. Outsiders to the continent first spread influence in the 600s, with the proliferation of Islam across northern Africa. Then, in the 15th century, Europeans, beginning with the Portuguese, began to arrive in large boats and enslave large numbers of West Africans from various groups and empires (Finlayson, 2020).

Chattel Slavery

By 1700, 50,000 people were being enslaved each year, and scholars estimate that, in total, 12 million African people were captured and trafficked to the western hemisphere (Finlayson, 2020). This historical era was defined by what scholars call the **Transatlantic Triangular Trade**, which exploited the people and natural resources of West Africa and the eastern segments of North, Central, and South America for the financial benefit and production of industrialization in Europe and European colonies. In Figure 3.3.2, a map displays visual icons representing the flow of people and products between the three regions. Arrows depict the flow of people and goods from each region. From Europe to West Africa: textiles, weapons, iron, and alcohol; From West Africa to Europe: gold, spices, and wood; From West Africa to South America: slaves; From West Africa to the Caribbean: gold, slaves, and spices; From the Caribbean to West Africa: textiles, spices, alcohol, and tools; From the Caribbean to the southeastern colonies: slaves, spices; From southeastern colonies to the Caribbean: wood, flour, fish, and meat; From the colonies to Europe: tobacco, wood, and fur; From Europe to the colonies: textiles and luxury items.

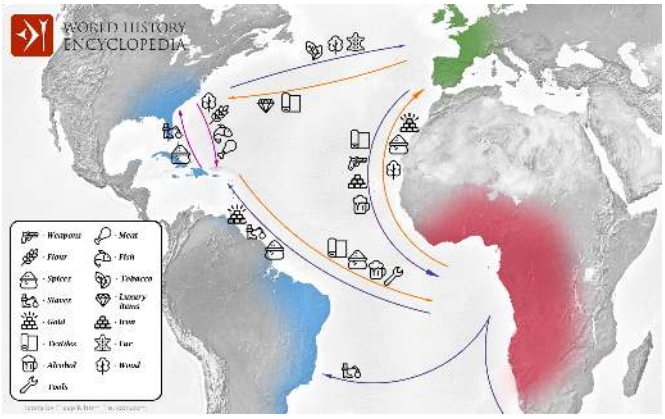

Figure 3.3.2: Transatlantic Triangular Trade Map (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; Olivier Lalonde via World History Encyclopedia)

In response to the widespread abduction and enslavement of African people, communities resisted this form of colonization and exploitation. Rebellions broke out on the ships that carried Africans to the western hemisphere, while others took their own life by jumping into the sea to avoid being enslaved and forced into hard labor. African people and their descendants have continued this legacy of resistance through a shared commitment to survival, political protest, armed rebellion, solidarity with Native Americans and Indigenous peoples, forging family connections, and building community with biological and chosen kin. At least 250 organized rebellions were conducted that included a group of 10 or more enslaved people, and countless more small-scale and individual rebellions were carried out (Zinn, 2015). In the United States, the colonial economy was built on the labor of slaves, including the large-scale cotton plantations in the South, as well as the infrastructure, construction, and service labor industries. In Figure 3.3.3, a painting of two Black women cotton pickers shows the central work done by enslaved women of African descent in the United States amidst the vast and prosperous fields that resulted.

Figure 3.3.3: The Cotton Pickers (Public Domain; Winslow Homer (Illustration) via World History Encyclopedia)

The system of **chattel slavery** meant that not only were individuals enslaved, but their descendants inherited the quality of being enslaved as well. To maintain this on a large scale, a racialized ideology of dehumanization and exploitation was created, which has grown and evolved over time to reproduce inequity and injustice in different forms. This can be understood through the many laws that legally defined Black people as property. Following the American Revolution, in which settlers of European descent overtook the system of colonial rule, the U.S. Constitution was built around this system. The **three-fifths compromise** was a decision in the 1787 U.S. Constitutional Convention that determined that while enslaved people were not eligible to vote, they would be counted toward the population when determining the number of representatives from each state, but only at 3/5th the rate of the free, white population. This meant that slave-owning states would have increased representation based on the number of enslaved people in their state despite those people not being represented in elections. This was the law of the land, which was supported by Court decisions like *Dred Scott v. Sandford*. In 1856, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Black people were never meant to be included within the terms of citizenship defined by the U.S. Constitution. The government would continue to support the maintenance and growth of slavery.

Sidebar: Voting Rights and Representation

Although the three-fifths compromise is no longer officially used in counting the population for elections, it still lives on in the current-day prison system. In 48 states, individuals who are convicted of a crime lose their right to vote while serving their sentence, and in 11 states, individuals must file a special petition to restore their voting rights, even after completing all terms of punishment, probation, and parole. However, those individuals are still counted toward the population when creating district maps and determining levels of representation. Individuals are counted in the communities where they are incarcerated, and this creates a pattern where white, middle-class communities gain political standing through the increased population, despite the prison population being disproportionately low-income and people of color. For up-to-date information on this topic and details about the policy in your state, you can view the interactive map of voting rights on the Movement Advancement Project website.

Abolition Movement

Resistance to slavery is as old as the institution itself. As noted above, people who were captured for the purpose of being enslaved often fled, fought back, or willfully ended their lives to avoid themselves and their families being forced into labor. In addition, religious and political elites critiqued the institution of slavery and the economies that built their prosperity on the backs of slave labor. Prominent among these voices for freedom were free Black people who fought against racist laws to receive an education and speak for human rights. This included prominent figures like Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglas, and Harriet Tubman. Harriet Tubman, shown in Figure 3.3.4, was also famous for her daring leadership in helping to free enslaved people and bring them to safety through a network of activists called the **Underground Railroad**. The Underground Railroad operated to provide safe hiding spaces and routes of travel for self-emancipated people who were fleeing to places where slavery was not legal and they could begin life anew. This included Canada, Mexico, and for a period of time, the Spanish-controlled colony of Florida.

Figure 3.3.4: Harriet Tubman (1895) (Public Domain; Horatio Seymour Squyer via Wikimedia Commons)

Abolitionist activists also created pressure to outlaw slavery and prevent its growth into new territories. Ongoing tensions between abolitionism and the proponents of slavery eventually resulted in the U.S. Civil War, a five-year struggle from 1861-1865 in which southern slave-owning states seceded from the United States in order to continue the institution of slavery. During the war, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, which gave the U.S. army the legal right to free enslaved people in the confederate states. The union army eventually won the war, in part due to the bravery and hard work of Black people from the north and south who often fought in the most dangerous and perilous parts of the war. In June of 1865, union general Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and proclaimed freedom for the people still held in bondage and slavery in Texas.

This became the basis of Juneteenth celebrations, which are observed in Mexico and the United States and commemorate the end of slavery and the hard work that led to that victory. At the end of that year, the U.S. Congress passed the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which formally abolished chattel slavery throughout the country. It states:

> Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Importantly, the amendment allows for slavery in cases where the individual is convicted of a crime. This amendment is used by federal and state governments to employ incarcerated individuals for paltry wages, at hourly rates of less than $1/hour, a system which constitutes a continued version of legal slavery (Alexander 2010). You can learn more about the prison industrial complex in the context of current systems of control and exploitation in Chapter 10.

Sidebar: Attacks on Historical Truth, Black Studies, and the 1619 Project

The institution of racialized slavery came to American shores in 1619. On the 400th Anniversary of this event, historian Nikole Hannah-Jones launched The **1619 Project** with the New York Times magazine to highlight this history and its legacy on Black communities and racial politics today. While this project is rooted in decades of peer-reviewed historical research, it has come under attack in conservative attempts to censor “Critical Race Theory,” among other aspects of discussing race, racism, and identity in schools. Critical Race Theory is an advanced legal framework that examines the relationship between U.S. laws and systemic racism. However, there are seventeen states that have created a ban on Critical Race Theory in K-12 schools through state-level executive action or legislation, along with four states currently considering such measures, as of September 2022. For up-to-date information on this censorship, you can visit the Edweek article on the topic, which details current information about legislative efforts targeting Critical Race Theory. Similarly, state-approved textbooks in places like Texas often exclude

mention of slavery or use misleading language to describe enslaved peoples as immigrant workers without mention of the historical realities that were enacted on slaves (Isensee 2015).

Reconstruction

The end of the Civil War in 1865 led to a wide-scale economic, cultural, political, and social shift in the United States. While the end of slavery was a huge achievement, the promise of equal opportunity and citizenship still faced significant resistance in the laws, traditions, and beliefs of the nation. Formerly enslaved Black communities had their basic freedom restored, but this did not undo the legacy of hundreds of years of forced labor, institutionalized sex slavery, being barred from education, intentional separation of families, and the destruction of traditional religious and cultural practices rooted in West African traditions.

The government sought to provide aid through the creation of the **Freedmen's Bureau**, and religious organizations provided basic services like food and education for children. During this time, Black people sought to exercise their right to vote and nurtured autonomous institutions of education, religion, and trade. In Figure 3.3.5, an artistic rendition is shown of free Black men in 1867 voting in New Orleans. Although there were no reparations from the government or from employers for years of unpaid wages, Black communities used their knowledge of the land and community ties with one another to begin healing from the history of slavery and working for justice.

Figure 3.3.5: Freedmen Voting in New Orleans (Public Domain; New York Public Library Digital Collection via Wikimedia Commons)

The Era of Jim Crow

The Reconstruction years saw many gains for the newly freed Black populations living in the United States at that time. However, while federal protections created a favorable political context in general, local realities were heavily influenced by regional and state laws and practices that maintained discrimination. These new laws, called **Black Codes**, were laws that created restrictions on Black people's abilities to own property, conduct business, lease land, and move freely through public spaces. These regulations worked to keep separate the established white society from the lives of Black people.

It is unsurprising that in 1877 when federal troops were removed from the U.S. South, policies rapidly shifted to what is now called the **Jim Crow era**. This was a time when public institutions actively established racial segregation. Despite the promises of the 14th and 15th Amendments that Black people would enjoy the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship, segregation created an explicitly tiered version of citizenship. The Courts upheld this doctrine through the notion of "separate but equal," which was codified in the 1896 decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case. While separate but equal was eventually struck down in the 1950s it took nearly a century of activism to achieve this fundamental civil rights perspective.

When racial identity became a legal category of inclusion and exclusion, that also meant that race had to be clearly defined. In practice, the "one drop" rule was applied to mixed-race people, meaning that if you had even one drop of Black blood, that made you legally and socially considered to be Black. While identity is much more complicated than one's heritage or genetic material, this idea has enduring effects on the treatment of people of color in the United States.

Sidebar: Black Wall Street and the Tulsa Race Massacre

In the Greenwood District of Tulsa, Oklahoma, Black business owners and professionals had organized a prosperous and autonomous area, which included Black-owned grocery stores, newspapers, movie theaters, churches, and healthcare providers. The city was a testament to Black communities' capacity and a centralized hub of intellectual and financial capital. It became known as **Black Wall Street** due to its economic, political, and social significance. However, in 1921, the District was massacred by a white mob for two days in one of the largest acts of racialized terrorist violence in U.S. history. Hundreds of people died or went missing, and nearly a thousand were injured. This attack was devastating not just for the victims, but it also became an enduring symbol of the threat of white violence in the face of Black prosperity, fueling the flames of white supremacy.

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3.4: Systemic Racism

Incarceration

The **New Jim Crow** (2010) chronicles the great systemic issue of incarceration that disproportionately affects communities of color, especially Black people. Michelle Alexander names statistic after statistic that demonstrates how white youth, for example, are criminalized way less and less harshly compared to Black youth (pp. 95-99). Cocaine is criminalized less than crack, as there are harsher penalties for being caught with crack. Experts, including WebMD, confirm that cocaine and crack are exactly the same; the only difference besides how they appear (cocaine as powder and crack as a rock) is how they are regarded. White youth are more likely to possess cocaine, while Black youth are more likely to possess crack (p. 97). Stereotypically, there is more drug dealing in Black neighborhoods, but Alexander actually describes how affluent white neighborhoods have higher rates of drug dealing (p. 97). Again, communities of color are criminalized more, and because these neighborhoods are surveilled more, they are more likely to get punished. White youth have fewer arrest rates and less severe punishment for possessing and dealing drugs (pp. 96-97). For more about Incarceration, see Chapter 10.

Systemic Racism and Health

Studies across the nation show that Black women have higher mortality rates while giving birth, and Black children have higher infant mortality rates. Some of the mortality rates among women tie to the lack of quality healthcare, doctors that have a bias against them as Black women, and more. Tennis superstar Serena Williams revealed that when she gave birth to her baby, she almost died. She publicly shared that the medical staff did not listen when she told them about some of her conditions that she felt were causing complications. Studies show that from complications from childbirth, “Black patients are more than twice as likely to die than White patients (37.3 vs. 14.9 per 100,000 live births)*” (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cited in Burris et al. 1576–96). Further, **“**Recent studies show that midwives are associated with improved birth outcomes, lower rates of infant death, and that Black pregnant women in the U.S. report greater satisfaction with the care they receive from midwives than from physicians" (Vedam et. al cited in Muigai, p. 86).

Muigai writes about how, historically, Black women have turned to midwives when white doctors wouldn’t treat them.

Figure 3.4.1: "Lost and Found." (CC BY 2.0; Blondinrikard Fröberg via Flickr)

Educational Inequity: Schooling

One way to understand inequity and diversity is to look at **disproportionality**, or how representation differs greatly compared to other groups or others within a group (NASP). In the two examples below, we see disproportionate rates of graduation for Black people compared to white people.

- "…the difference between blacks and whites in college graduation rates was greater in 2000 than in 1940…" (Katz, Stern, and Fader, 2005, p. 93)
- “…in 2000, 15 percent of 26-to-30-year-old African American women had graduated from college, compared to about 33 percent of white women of the same age. For men 26-30, the spread was proportionately larger: college graduates were about 29 percent of white men and a very low 12 percent of black men” (Katz, Stern, and Fader, 2005, p.94)

Sidebar: Teacher-to-student interactions

In other studies, we see how Black children and other children of color are treated differently by teachers compared to white children. This is a type of interpersonal oppression or person-to-person. For example, Darling-Hammond (2010) says,

> … dozens of studies have found that teachers typically hold more negative attitudes about Black children's personality traits, ability, language, behavior, and potential than they do about White children, and that most Black students have fewer favorable interactions with their teachers than White students (Footnote: Irvine, 1990). Studies have also found that children of color are more likely to be treated differently in the classroom—neither pushed academically nor praised as much as White students—and more often punished for offenses that White students commit without consequence; they are also more likely to be suspended from school than Whites who commit the same infractions. (Footnote: Fine, 1991; Nieto, 1992; Carter & Goodwin, 1994) (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 65).

Further, institutionally Black and Latino students have experienced segregation at high rates, even in the 2000s. Darling-Hammond writes,

> During the 1990s, segregation increased further across both schools and classrooms…By 2000, 72% of the nation's Black students attended predominantly minority schools, up significantly from the low point of 63% in 1980. The proportion of students of color in intensely segregated schools also increased. Nearly 40% of African American and Latino students attend schools with a minority enrollment of 90 to 100% (2010, p. 35).

These examples of educational inequity demonstrate discrimination and oppression from the interpersonal to structural levels. These practices and policies within schooling perpetuate cycles of domination that have consequences on Black and brown students. In the next subsection, we discuss Affirmative Action, which is one way schools seek to bring equity.

Figure 3.4.2: "Picketing the separate and unequal D.C. schools: 1947." (CC BY-NC 2.0; Washington Area Spark via Flickr)

Affirmative Action

Affirmative action has been a contentious measure to address equity. The Legal Information Institution at Cornell Law defines affirmative action this way:

> Affirmative action is defined as a set of procedures designed to; eliminate unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future. Applicants may be seeking admission to an educational program or looking for professional employment. In modern American jurisprudence, it typically imposes remedies against discrimination on the basis of (at the very least) race, creed, color, and national origin (Legal Information Institute).

In the fight with Affirmative Action, court cases where schools were accused of denying admission to students in order to admit supposed "less qualified" candidates such as in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978), etc. Affirmative Action famously increased student of color enrollment at the University of California campuses until it was banned when Proposition 209 passed in 1996 to forbid the consideration of race in public school admissions. "Initially, Proposition 209 drastically reduced diversity at UC's most competitive campuses. In 1998, the first admissions year affected by the ban, the number of California Black and Latino first-year students plunged by nearly half at UCLA and UC Berkeley" (Watanabe, 2022). The enrollment of African Americans at the top three selective schools since the banning dropped 34% at UC Berkeley, 22% at UCLA, and at 30%

UC San Diego (Johnson, Mosqueda, Ramon, Hunt; 2008, p. 1). This is especially significant because the enrollment of these groups were way below the population residing in the state.

The impact of banning Affirmative Action in California public universities led to the implementation of a Comprehensive Review in 2002 at the University of California for admitting students, which serves to apply weight to other admission factors, i.e., “students experiences and personal circumstances” and not just SAT scores and GPA (Johnson, Mosqueda, Ramon, Hunt; 2008, p.1). Johnson, Mosqueda, Ramon, and Hunt also point out that the post-Proposition 209 declines are also significant because

1. “the percentage of UC-eligible African American high school graduates rose from 2.8% to 6.2% (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2004)” and
2. “the number of African American applications to UC campuses has increased by 65% since 1997 (UCOP, 2007b; UCOP 2007c). (Johnson, Mosqueda, Ramon, and Hunt; 2008, 1).

These statistics show that there was a decrease in African American students at UC campuses despite them meeting criteria. Chacon (2008) points out that:

> the implementation of Proposition 209 has done nothing to address the disadvantages faced by underrepresented minorities in California’s primary and secondary education system. Instead, Proposition 209 simply has taken away one tool, however "artificial," that could have remediated some of those inequalities (Chacon, 2008, p. 1219).

Further, she writes that some Proposition 209 proponents advocate for “class-conscious strategies” because they claim the issue is not race (Chacon, 2008, p. 1219); others claim that considering race is “polarizing” and worsens when we do things like place high regard for race in policies like affirmative action (Chacon, 2008, p. 1220).

Students of color have disproportionately inequitable educational experiences. For example, Solorzano and Ornelas (2004) point out that whites made up 49% of AP courses in the state’s “top 50 high school” while Latinos only comprised 16% and Blacks 5% (Johnson, Mosqueda, Ramon, and Hunt; 2008, p. 5). Such a statistic might show how Blacks and Latinos are less in AP classes and are therefore considered less competitive for admissions slots and that race, not just class, is a factor. But as the second point about how the implementation of Proposition 209 does not address equity in K-12, it therefore ignores the root of the problem. This is epitomized by the claim that considering race in policy is “polarizing” because it would likely be polarizing if one is not an advocate for educational access for all and instead hopes to maintain the status quo. It is true that affirmative action enables other *criteria* for admissions, but there is still the same *expectation* for students to perform as well as those at the same school as those who were not admitted under affirmative action. Further, affirmative action is consistent with Brown v. Board of Education in providing access to education that students of color may not have otherwise due to the lack of preparation they faced from institutional racism (such as tracking) present in their schooling. Affirmative action recognizes the inequities and potential of students of color.

Sidebar: Abigail Fisher v. Affirmative Action

Abigail Fisher, a white woman, fought against affirmative action in court in 2013 and 2016 for her spot at the University of Texas, Austin, citing that the reason she didn’t get admitted was because it favored students of color over her. Ultimately, Fisher lost her case. Cases like hers and others are highlighted in this 2022 PBS update, "The evolution of affirmative action cases, from Bakke to Fisher" which provides links to the cases and to where-are-they-now with some of those who brought affirmative action to court.

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3.5: Cultural and Political Representation

Black Women's Representation

The sections on "Black Women's Representation" and "Images and Stereotypes of Black Women in the Media" comes from author, Hodges (2014).

Race has consequences because physical bodies have been constructed to be valued differently. Representations of race, especially skin color, have come to signify meaning and ultimately mark such associations with a race. For these reasons, portrayals of racial representations cannot be ignored. Some scholars question the relevance of cultural representation to struggles of the conditions faced by Blacks, but others posit that cultural representation still does have an impact on addressing these struggles and also reflect the conditions faced by Blacks.

Lisa Collins (2002) points out that Black women were rarely seen in American and European art history, and that the depictions that did exist of Black women were ones in which "nineteenth-century visual culture consistently linked the Black female figure with slave, sexual, and service economies" as a reflection of the history of enslavement of Black women" (Collins, p. 103). Further, Patricia Hill Collins' "5 Controlling Images of Black Women" (1999) summarizes mainstream representations that perpetuate particular notions of Black womanhood. Patricia Hill Collins distinguished **controlling images of Black women**: "the "Mammy" (p.72), the "Matriarch" (p.74), the "Welfare Mother" (p.78), the "Black Lady" (p.81) and the "Jezebel/hoochie" (p.81).

Images and Stereotypes of Black Women in the Media

The Mammy, a faithfully obedient and domestic servant, is considered more "desirable" to whites because of what she is meant to model for Black behavior and Black status, especially towards whites (Hill Collins, 1999, p. 72). It is possible that the Mammy also serves to appease the white imagination to visually see Black subordination and desexualization. In the case of the Matriarch, Hill Collins describes this image as a single working mother who is blamed for the lack of achievement (i.e., academic) of her children due to her working outside of the home, and thus were "failed mammies" (p. 75). Davidson (2010) points out the catch-22 in that Black women who assume the primary role as head of household usually are still judged by the false belief that women should be in the home. In such a case, the proverbial cards are 'always stacked against' Black women. If they stay home, their children starve, but if they work, they are absent from their children's lives. In both cases, they are accused of being uncaring mothers' (Davidson, 2010, p. 197). Hill Collins points out that the controlling image of the Matriarch seeks to remove the blame of "negative phenomena plaguing the black community" away from structural inequities and instead directly places blame on an alleged cultural deficiency of Blacks, and especially Black single mothers (Collins, 1999, p. 76).

Figure 3.5.1: "Mammy dolls." (CC BY 2.0; Joel Kramer via Flickr)

For the Welfare Mother image, Hill Collins says, "African Americans [are] racially stereotyped as being lazy by blaming Black welfare mothers for failing to pass on the work ethic. Moreover, the welfare mother has no male authority to assist her" (Collins, 1999, p. 79). This stereotype and blame coincides with the image of the Matriarch but also favors heteronormativity (p. 79) and also ignores the fact that for a long time after welfare began, Black women were not able to receive welfare.

The fourth image, the Black lady, is a “modern day mammy” that is a “middle class professional” that works so hard she doesn’t have “time for a man” (p. 81). This image is used as an example of “unfair ‘reverse racism’ ” towards whites because she works in jobs that whites consider themselves to be more deserving of, but the supposed disadvantage of her blackness is pointed to as the reason for obtaining her position (p. 81).

Finally, the Jezebel or hoochie is portrayed as a sexually aggressive female that occupies a “deviant” position in sexuality due to her hypersexuality, which Hill Collins points to in mainstream rap videos (p. 84). That and homosexuality is pointed to as emasculating men due to being seen as emulating the hypersexuality of Black men (p. 84).

Other scholars speak of controlling images that include Hill Collins' labels or a variation of them. For example, Wallace-Sanders (2002) states

> Black women have historically been represented as hypersexual, ignorant, and violent female ‘Negro beasts,’ in addition to many other denigrating types including the long-suffering desexualized Mammy, the primitive Topsy, the exotic Jezebel, and the evil, emasculating Sapphire. These well-known stereotypes are of pathologized bodies that are specifically Black and female, and they are also found in literature and in media images from the news to contemporary music (p. 3).

Lisa Collins’ (2002) summarization of these representations supports Patricia Hill Collins’ “Controlling Images of Black Women” and captures the perpetuation of particular notions of Black womanhood.

But regardless of which summary of images is more encompassing, all of these images have been used to dictate discourse and policy, for example, on reproduction with the ad on a New York City billboard which stated “the most dangerous place for an African American is in the womb” on AIDS (Gray, 2005, 85) and on pregnancy (p. 88). Gray further adds that the representation of Blacks, for example, can be used for or against causes, such as justification for colorblindness or as part of “campaigns…against affirmative action” (p. 186). In these ways, Black visibility is often used for harm and thus supports why the negotiation of representation is still important to struggles of equity. For more about reproductive justice, see Chapter 8, section 8.4: "Intersectionality and Reproductive Justice - Part I."

Classic Film and Literature

The famous movie *Daughters of the Dust* is set in 1902 but was filmed in 1991. Described as:

> ...an African American family heirloom, a gorgeously impressionistic history of the Gullah people set on the South Carolina Sea Islands at the turn of the century… The story focuses primarily on the women of the extended Peazant family of luxuriant Ibo Landing, a black community descended from the slaves who worked the indigo, rice and cotton plantations before emancipation. Isolated from the mainland, the Peazants have preserved many of the traditions, beliefs and language of their West African ancestors. All that stands to be lost, however, as the Gullah clan prepares to migrate from this paradise to the industrialized North. Only the matriarch Nana (Cora Lee Day), an 88-year-old mystic, insists on remaining behind with the old souls and her "scraps of memories (Kempley, 1992).

It is an important film, being the first film directed by a Black woman, Julie Dash, to get a wide release. It helped inspire Beyonce’s *Lemonade* visual album that features scenes and imagery reminiscent of Dash's film, and even the director of *Lemonade* speaks to the influence of *Daughters of the Dust.* It visually captures collectivity, with many of the scenes having at least two or more people, often a group of them. “The Gullah are known for preserving more of their African linguistic and cultural heritage than any other African-American community in the United States” (Gullah history). While this film shows collective identities, especially one that is present post-slavery, the collective wisdom portrayed in this film is also evident. The oldest ones and the youngest ones are seen as the “most important members of the family” as one points out in the film. This reflects cycles of knowledge and life that start with the old and are maintained with the young. In *Daughters of the Dust*, a scene where the children are being taught by one of the adults shows how learning is passed on to the younger generations and how that is important to their community. This scene and many others that show collectivity in the film don’t always have dialogue and are sometimes shown in snippets, rotating through different video clips such as some in the group dancing together or taking a photo together, and with music in the background.

It is interesting that although collectivity is huge in this film, and the connections between the oldest and youngest are present, there is still conflict between Nana (the eldest) and some of the other adults just because Nana wants to stay in the South Carolina Sea Islands. One of the characters, Unborn child, mentions that Nana asked for help, and she (unborn child) came in time. This shows that not only do children learn from elders, but the children also help the elders as well. Further by the end of the film, it is the adults, minus a few including Yellow Mary and the woman who ran off with the Native American man that left the note at the beginning, who feel it is time to move on yet Nana at the end says that she will be remembered by the adults.

Sidebar: Comparison

This article titled "Beyoncé vs Daughters of the Dust: How an American indie classic inspired Lemonade" discusses direct comparisons between Dash's *Daughters of the Dust* and Beyonce's *Lemonade*. It includes images, clips, and Black Feminist history.

Black Liberation

Figure 3.5.2: "Black Lives Matter Flag - Minneapolis MayDay Parade 2017." (CC BY 2.0; Tony Webster via Flickr)

Alicia Garza (2014) writes,

> I created #BlackLivesMatter with Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi, two of my sisters, as a call to action for Black people after 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was posthumously placed on trial for his own murder and the killer, George Zimmerman, was not held accountable for the crime he committed. It was a response to the anti-Black racism that permeates our society and also, unfortunately, our movements (Garza, 2014).

Black Lives Matter is intentional about focusing on Black lives as they are disregarded and made inferior. Garza further emphasizes that BLM is a movement founded by queer Black women and that there is purpose in that. She writes,

> When you design an event / campaign / et cetera based on the work of queer Black women, don't invite them to participate in shaping it, but ask them to provide materials and ideas for next steps for said event, that is racism in practice. It's also hetero-patriarchal. Straight men, unintentionally or intentionally, have taken the work of queer Black women and erased our contributions. Perhaps if we were the charismatic Black men many are rallying around these days, it would have been a different story, but being Black queer women in this society (and apparently within these movements) tends to equal invisibility and non-relevancy (Garza, 2014).

For more about Black Lives Matter see Chapter 11 on Social Movements.

African American Policy Forum

"Founded in 1996, The African American Policy Forum (AAPF) is an innovative think tank that connects academics, activists and policy-makers to promote efforts to dismantle structural inequality" (AAPF). They center intersectionality while advocating for marginalized identities. Kimberlé Crenshaw, the critical legal scholar who coined the word "intersectionality", co-founded the forum and serves as Executive Director alongside co-founder Dr. Luke Charles Harris who serves as Deputy Director. #SayHerName draws attention to Black girls and women who are victims of police violence, specifically from "racist police violence." They highlight how Black girls and women are also impacted and not just Black men. #TruthBeTold is a campaign to bring banned books to the public and also galvanize Black voters for what was the 2022 midterm elections. There are more initiatives.

Black Girls Code

Black Girls Code is an organization that was founded to help promote equity in STEM, especially amongst Black girls and girls of color. They provide workshops that help teach girls how to code or do computer programming through fun, accessible, and

culturally relevant pedagogies. From learning coding through Black joy, creating art, through video games, and more, Black Girls Code is a popular company in the tech world that has chapters and partnerships throughout the country.

Black Feminism

Black feminism has a long history, even if not named as such. Since slavery, Black women have fought for their human rights and dignity. Sojourner Truth and Ida B. Wells were two women who fought for intersectional frameworks long before Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term. Sojourner Truth was an enslaved woman who was famously known for her "Ain't I a Woman?" speech, where she compares the treatment by men of her as a Black woman compared to the treatment of men towards white women. Intersectionality, especially as discussed below, is central to understanding Black women's experiences and struggles. Not only is intersectionality important in identifying compounding and intersecting oppressions, but many Black women support the idea that intersectionality is the key to understanding power dynamics in everything from relations between people to impacts within larger institutions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Black women found themselves marginalized amidst the movements for Black power and liberation. The **Combahee River Collective** was a group of women, including prominent Black lesbians, who articulated demands for recognition and power within the Black community. These demands included inclusion for sexual orientation and gender with race. Black feminists, or what many call womanists to distinguish themselves from white feminists, galvanized along with other women of color movements. For more about Combahee see Chapter 8, section 8.2 on "Women and Trans Women of Color of 1960s - 80s Liberation Movements." Black women were prominent figures in the Black Panther Party, for example, but still experienced gendered oppression even within the Party. Angela Davis wrote *Women, Race, and Class* to show the intersections between gender, race, and class. She writes, "Racism and sexism frequently converge—and the condition of white women workers is often tied to the oppressive predicament of women of color. Thus the wages received by white women domestics have always been fixed by the racist criteria to calculate the wages of Black women servants." (Davis, 1983, p. 94). For more about this see Chapter 11, section 11.4 on the Domestic Workers labor movement.

Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith co-edited *All the Women are White, All the Blacks are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave* and published in 1982. Speaking of Black Women's Studies, Hull and Smith (1982) write, "Only a feminist, pro-woman perspective that acknowledges the reality of sexual oppression in the lives of Black women, as well as the oppression of race and class, will make Black women's studies the transformer of consciousness it needs to be" (p. xxi). They are calling to center Black women's oppression in women's studies and feminism in general due to the multiple marginalization and multiple oppression of Black women.

Audre Lorde (1984 then 2000) wrote, "In a society where good is defined in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, there must always be some group of people who, through systematized oppression, can be made to feel surplus, to occupy the place of the dehumanized inferior. Within this society, that group is made up of Black and Third World people, working-class people, older people, and women" (p. 114). I begin with this quotation because she starts her essay on "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" with this quotation and it emphasizes difference. This is about who is seen as different and therefore treated as less than. In her writing, Lorde especially discusses Black women, and generally that we treat difference in one of three ways: "ignore it, and if that is not possible, copy it if we think it is dominant, or destroy it if we think it is subordinate" (p. 115). Understanding the power of difference is perhaps our key to liberation, including for Black women.

bell hooks wrote *Feminism is for Everybody* and stipulated that if one isn't putting equity at the forefront and considering race/gender/class disparities as central to the cause of feminism then one isn't really for feminism. She points out, "...we could only become sisters in struggle by confronting the ways women – through sex, class, and race – dominated and exploited other women, and created a political platform that would address these differences" (hooks, 2000, p. 3). She further discusses how embracing white supremacy within the feminist movement is not feminism (p. 4), how turning our back on working-class women supports the patriarchy and is not feminism (p. 5), and even being anti-abortion is not feminism (p. 6). In this way, she warns that "lifestyle feminism" removes "politics" and attempts to claim it as feminism for all.

Sidebar: Black Womanism

Black womanism is a particular term that some use to separate Black feminists from white feminists. This article "A Brief History of Civil Rights in the United States: The Womanist Movement" shows a little about the history, images, and a video about Black womanism.

There are many ways to demonstrate and promote Black liberation and these are just some of the ways. One of the most pressing ideas about Black liberation, as seen through Black women, is how we are not free unless the most marginalized are free. In our struggle to address inequities and uplift the Black community, we must remember that even historically, our power in numbers can help overcome efforts to divide the collective spirit. Blackness, as a community, has endured for generations, and that is a testament to the strength of our legacy.

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3.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have explored the history and context that led to the creation of Black Studies, as well as some of the important concepts and scholarship that have come out of this area. The core theories and ideas presented in Black Studies, including Panafricanism, Black Power, Black Nationalism, discrimination, double consciousness, and controlling images, are central to a clear and truthful analysis of Black communities' experiences and political context. Black Studies is rooted in liberation struggles, and this has led to the creation of theories and concepts that respond to and integrate the wisdom gained through intergenerational movements for social change. In this context, we can apply theory and knowledge produced by Black communities to describe critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, contributions, and lived experiences, with a particular emphasis on agency and group affirmation.

While racialization is central to Black identity, this chapter has also shown us the importance of intersectionality, and the significance of multiple interlocking systems, including class, gender, sexuality, religion, and spirituality. For example, gender roles have historically structured the assumptions about who can lead in what ways when it comes to social movement organizing. Religious institutions have long played an important role in Black communities, ranging from social services and economic prosperity to political organizing and community development. In contemporary movements, churches still play an important role, and young activists have also established multiple sites of influence and resources that are used for advocacy and social change. With these tools in mind, we are all better equipped to stand in solidarity with Black leaders advocating for change and finding ways to contribute directly to a more just and equitable society in our own communities and spaces.

Key Terms

- **Garveyism:** An ideology centered on the thinking of Marcus Garvey, which emphasized pride, empowerment, and economic prosperity for Black communities.
- **Black Power:** A movement and political belief system that emphasizes building Black-serving institutions and leaders. The term Black Power was coined by Stokely Carmichael during a speech after being arrested for the 27th time in 1966.
- **Black Nationalism:** An ideology that emphasizes pride in being Black, economic self-sufficiency, and Black separatism.
- **Panafricanism:** The foundation for the idea of Blackness and Black identity, which brings together the experience of people's heritage. This includes African people, African immigrants, and communities with origins on the African continent that have been enslaved, trafficked, and settled in various parts of the world, especially in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and Latin America.
- **Civil Rights Movement:** A group working toward equality and legal rights for a marginalized group. Most commonly referring to the movement of organizations led by African Americans in the U.S. between the 1940s and 1970s that advocated for equality in education, employment, housing, voting, and other major civil rights areas.
- **De Jure Racial Discrimination:** Legally sanctioned discrimination that is supported by existing laws and political belief systems. De jure discrimination is the opposite of de facto discrimination, which is discrimination that happens due to structural patterns but not as a result of explicitly biased laws.
- **Double Consciousness:** The psychological impact of living in a racist society for African Americans in the years following the end of slavery. Specifically, double consciousness means the way that Black people have to see themselves through the lens of a racist society, in addition to an authentic self-perception and identity.
- **Transatlantic Triangular Trade:** The economic system that supported the colonization of the United States and the Americas by European countries. This arrangement exploited the people and natural resources of West Africa and the eastern segments of North, Central, and South America for the financial benefit and production of industrialization in Europe and European colonies.
- **Chattel Slavery:** The specific form of slavery in which the children of enslaved people are automatically considered to be slaves themselves. This system contributed to the creation of racial categories in colonial America.
- **Three-Fifths Compromise:** A decision in the 1787 U.S. Constitutional Convention that determined that while enslaved people were not eligible to vote, they would be counted toward the population when determining the number of representatives from each state, but only at 3/5th the rate of the free, white population. This meant that slave-owning states would have increased representation based on the number of enslaved people in their state despite those people not being represented in elections.
- **Underground Railroad:** A network of anti-slavery activists who operated to provide safe hiding spaces and routes of travel for self-emancipated people who were fleeing to places where slavery was not legal so they could begin life anew. This included

Canada, Mexico, and for a period of time, the Spanish-controlled colony of Florida.

- **1619 Project:** A project by historian Nikole Hannah-Jones and the New York Times that recognized and investigated the 400th anniversary of racialized slavery in the United States. The project has become the target of conservative attempts to censor discussions of race, history, slavery, and racial disparities today.
- **Freedmen's Bureau:** A federal agency that operated in the years following the U.S. Civil War to support recently freed communities of Black people in the southern United States. Despite early successes, the program was completely eliminated.
- **Black Codes:** Laws that created restrictions on Black people's abilities to own property, conduct business, lease land, and move freely through public spaces. These regulations worked to keep separate the established white society from the lives of Black people.
- **Jim Crow Era:** A time where public institutions actively established racial segregation. Despite the promises of the 14th and 15th Amendment that Black people would enjoy the rights and responsibilities of full citizenship, segregation created an explicitly tiered version of citizenship. The Courts upheld this doctrine through the notion of "separate but equal," which was codified in the 1896 decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case. The term "Jim Crow" refers to minstrel shows where white actors would wear Blackface and portray negative stereotypes of Black men.
- **Black Wall Street:** The Greenwood District of Tulsa, Oklahoma, was home to many thriving Black-owned businesses and families prior to being targeted by white supremacists in 1921 who massacred the area over two days, with hundreds missing or dead. It was one of the deadliest acts of terrorism in U.S. history.
- **New Jim Crow:** A book by legal scholar Michelle Alexander that demonstrates the historical continuity between the systems of slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and mass incarceration today.
- **Disproportionality:** How representation differs greatly compared to other groups or others within a group
- **Affirmative Action:** An approach to achieving equity in public institutions, companies, and other organizations that experienced considerable resistance. Affirmative action includes practices meant to eliminate historical patterns of discrimination and to provide corrective adjustments that recognize the barriers faced by historically underrepresented groups.
- **Controlling Images of Black Women:** A perspective coined by sociologist Patricia Hill Collins that emphasizes the constellation of stereotypes that work to control and subordinate Black women in public society, including the Mammy, the Matriarch, and the Welfare Queen.
- **Black Lives Matter:** A movement of activists and organizations around the world that advocate against police brutality and killing of Black people. The movement has become a centerpiece in contemporary struggles for rights, equity, justice, and recognition.
- **Black Feminism:** The tradition of Black women using intellectual, social, cultural, and political strategies to end violence and exploitation.
- **Combahee River Collective:** A group of women, including prominent Black lesbians, who wrote a collective statement demonstrating their political analysis and commitment to addressing interlocking structures of discrimination, including sexism, heterosexism, and racism.

Discussion Questions

1. Describe some forms of resistance from the Black community whether during slavery, Reconstruction, contemporary times, etc.
2. Discuss the experience of slavery.
3. Explain how structural inequality, inequality through policies and laws within government, health, schooling, media, etc. subordinated Black Americans.
4. How do Black Power, Black Nationalism, Black Wall Street, Black Lives Matter, and Black Feminism contribute to uplifting the Black community and also for sub-identities within the Black community?
5. How was the Civil Rights Movement significant in the history of Black progress?
6. How do the struggles of Black women show other dimensions of Black experiences?
7. Compare the Freedmen's Bureau and affirmative action as efforts to rectify past injustices.

Journal Prompts

1. Black activists have engaged in a long history of high-risk activism. This means that taking action, stepping up, and demanding social change incurs complex risk. The immediate risk could include physical violence, negative reactions, and direct resistance from police, white supremacists, and bystanders. Beyond the immediate risks of protest, being involved in social change efforts has also meant risking one's job and housing, and putting one's family in danger. Reflecting on what you learned in this chapter,

what factors influence groups to take on these risks? Consider the larger political context, as well as how organizations and movements support each other in the face of external threats.
2. Identify a piece of media (artwork, song, podcast, book, article, poem, etc.) that was created by a Black artists. In writing, provide a description of the media and the artist, along with your interpretation of the piece's significance. This may include commentary and analysis related to race, as well as other topics. You should consider how the artists' own experience and perspective may influence their creation.

Class Activities

K-W-L about Slavery

1. Students are split into groups of five.
2. Each group has a paper or Google Doc with a KWL chart, which is a table with three columns, labelled, "K - Know," "W - Want to Know" and "L - Learned" along with a row where one can type responses. An example is shown after these instructions.
3. Each group will write under K all the things they already KNOW about slavery. What have they learned from TV, movies, family, books, etc.
4. Under W, students will write WHAT THEY WANT TO KNOW. These are things they may have questions on, or what they want to know about slavery that they don't already know. At the end of the semester, they will revisit their charts to fill in what they have LEARNED.
5. Students will use this chapter to begin their exploration of learning about slavery. The instructor can do more focused lessons on it and also may guide them in doing student exploration on the subject. This chart idea can be used for any topic but preferably larger topics.

K - Know	**W - Want to Know**	**L - Learned**
Add your responses here	Add your responses here	Add your responses here

Controlling Images of Black Women

Instructor will find clips of movies with Black women characters. Using the "Black Women's Representation" section, students will identify whether the characters fall into the controlling images and why/why not. Students can also compare movies directed or written by Black women and compare them to others. This can be done with movies, tv, music, videos, commercials, etc.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

4: American Indian/Native American Studies

By Dr. Melissa Leal and Dr. Tamara Cheshire

Learning Objectives

- Analyze and articulate concepts such as decolonization, sovereignty, self-determination, imperialism, and settler colonialism as analyzed in Native American Studies/American Indian Studies.
- Identify Indigenous Ways of Knowing and recognize theories and knowledge produced by Native American/American Indian communities to describe critical events, histories, cultures, intellectual traditions, lived-experiences and social struggles with emphasis on agency and group-affirmation.
- Critically analyze the intersectionality of race, class, gender, sexuality, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, and language in Native American/American Indian communities.
- Describe the historical and contemporary experiences of Native Americans/American Indians in the United States and critically review how struggle, resistance, solidarity, and liberation, are relevant.
- Describe and actively engage with anti-racist and anti-colonial issues and the practices and movements in Native American/American Indian communities to build a just and equitable society.

4.1: Introduction
4.2: Indigenous Ways of Knowing
4.3: Core Concepts and Theories
4.4: Invasion, Occupation, Imperialism and Hegemony
4.5: Perspectives and Future Directions
4.6: Summary/Review
4.7: References

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4.1: Introduction

Introduction to American Indian/Native American Studies

"Powerful storytelling can create pathways of empathy and understanding across cultural, racial and socioeconomic divides that were built up to keep us separated from one another." -Frank Waln from In Their Own Words

-American Writers Museum May 2, 2019

As a special note to the reader, we the authors of this chapter will be using Indian, **American Indian**, Native, and **Native American** interchangeably throughout this chapter. We humbly realize that we cannot cover everything there is to know about American Indian Studies/Native American Studies in this one single chapter. The information provided is meant to be an overview of the foundational knowledge in this core discipline area of Ethnic Studies: American Indian/Native American Studies. We would like to encourage you to take Native American Studies courses, and do your own research about any of the content and topics raised in this chapter.

Before we begin, it is important to discuss whether or not your professor included a Land Acknowledgement Statement in their syllabus. A Land Acknowledgement Statement is a critical step towards working with local Native communities to secure meaningful partnership and inclusion in the stewardship and protection of their cultural resources and homelands. It is imperative that faculty, staff, administrators and students at your college know whose tribal land you occupy to recognize local tribal sovereign rights to the land in order to begin the work to decolonize your campus and community.

Land Acknowledgement Statements must be created in collaboration with local sovereign tribal nations. Land Acknowledgement Statements should be read at the beginning of meetings, events, graduation, orientation, convocation and be included on your college's website and course syllabi. These statements are important because they recognize that local tribes continue to exist and are part of the community. Contacting local tribes is the first step in this collaboration, which has the capacity to result in a great opportunity to build a working relationship and help serve Native American students on your campus.

The authors of this chapter acknowledge that we are writing in the unceded territory of California, home to nearly 200 tribal nations. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of our various regions. By taking a moment to honor these ancestral grounds that we are on, we support the resilience and strength that all Indigenous people have shown worldwide. The Miwok are one of the tribal nations in our area. Below is a photo of a bust of a Miwok dancer done by Miwok artist Jim Plamondon.

Figure 4.1.1: Miwok Dancer Bust done in Metal by Artist Jim Plamondon dedicated in 1992, 2012. (Public Domain; Carol Highsmith via Wikimedia Commons)

American Indian/Native American Studies: An Academic Discipline

American Indian Studies (AIS) or Native American Studies (NAS) is an academic discipline that formally began in the late 1960's when Native American student activists coordinated with Asian American, Chicana/o/x, Puerto Rican and Black students to demand change within higher education. During this time, American Indian students at San Francisco State (Student Kouncil of Intertribal Nations - SKINS), Berkeley, UCLA and UC Davis were speaking out about American Indian rights, criticizing federal Indian policy and laws, discussing American Indian identity, and seeking to preserve tribal cultures.

Student activism focused attention on the inequity evident in the low enrollment and success rates of Black, Chicano, Asian American and American Indian students on college campuses as well as the lack of coverage of these core groups within the college curriculum. American Indians had long been the subject of study in disciplines like sociology, history, art and anthropology, but these disciplines only viewed Native people from an "outsider" perspective, treating us as subjects of study, often reinforcing stereotypes. Vine Deloria Jr., enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, author, historian and activist for Native American rights, concerned with the establishment of federal policy based on inaccurate academic studies, often criticized anthropologists and historians in his writings (ie. Custer Died for your Sins: An Indian Manifesto).

American Indian students and community leaders including Indian activists from the American Indian Movement (AIM), United Native Americans (UNA) and the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC) as well as other organizations influenced the national political climate by providing information to the media that the general public did not know, which in turn pressured a response from the federal government and local colleges and universities. This movement specifically addressed broken treaties, unlivable conditions on reservations, and the lack of fair and equitable representation of Native people in academia and scholarly research.

While other disciplines may "study" and teach about Native people, American Indian Studies (AIS) or Native American Studies (NAS) provides the voices, social struggles, contributions and lived experiences of Native people culturally, socially, economically, legally, politically, and academically. AIS/NAS actively promotes the sustained and thriving existence of Native peoples and sovereign tribal nations with an emphasis on agency and group-affirmation. To accomplish this, AIS/NAS encourages important research to identify critical issues relevant to Native communities. This commitment to Native communities distinguishes AIS/NAS from other academic disciplines. One could argue that NAS or AIS began way before the 1960's in that Native voices can be heard speaking about justice and equity, establishing laws and governing councils, as well as sustainable land and environmental policies of nations, if one listens, from the beginning of our existence. But that is the point…if one listens.

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4.2: Indigenous Ways of Knowing

We Have Always Been Here and We Shall Remain

Salmon was presented to me and my family through our religion as our brother. The same with the deer. And our sisters are the roots and berries. And you would treat them as such. Their life to you is just as valuable as another person's would be.

-Margaret Saluskin, Yakama

We have always been here. We learned to respect and appreciate the land, water, plants and animals as living beings, and know them as our equals, as family; because without them there is no us. We were created here, and we shall remain.

Each nation has their own creation story telling of the way things came to be: plants, animals, water, rivers, lakes, rain, the earth, mountains, valleys, wind, fire, stars and people. Not only do these stories tell us about ourselves and our creation, but they reveal how everything is related, connected, and intertwined. Important information is passed down generation after generation in stories. For example, there is the Karuk story about how fire came to the people; and the Iktomi (the spider) trickster stories among the Lakota that teach us about how Iktomi lives in each of us when we trick others and laugh about it. We also understand that it is not fun being the one who is tricked and through this we learn humility and to laugh at our response to being tricked in the first place. These stories teach us about how things came to be and how they still continue to affect us every day.

Reasons *why* we plant, *what* we plant, *how* we plant and how we harvest sustainably is passed on through storytelling. Stories tell us about what to gather and hunt as well as when to do so. Some stories tell us about medicine, while other stories warn us of poison and sometimes one plant can be both depending on how you prepare it. Specific stories can only be told during certain times of the year. Every story has a lesson which often includes how to behave and how not to behave in certain situations. Our creation stories root us here in our homelands in North America. These stories reveal our ties to everything here and provide evidence that attest to this as our homeland, our place of creation. Our stories are not fairytales. They teach us how to live in the world.

Anthropologists are quick to put dates on our existence in North America because of their colonized mindset to attempt to "prove" we have no history or "not enough" history in our homelands to lay claim to it. By trying to date our existence closer to the invasion of the Americas, they are attempting to dismiss our connection to our place of origin and our creation. The Bering Strait Theory is one such attempt. More and more evidence is being found that dates the bodies of our ancestors before the Ice Ages. We don't need their scientific evidence to prove we were created here, we have our stories of creation that mention in detail specific locations with landmarks, extreme weather events, stars and their locations in the sky to document our creation, existence, and so much more. It is the scientist who needs our stories and **Indigenous ways of knowing** to connect the past to the present and future survival of humankind. If you ask an American Indian person how long they have been in a place, their response will most likely be "since time immemorial."

Sidebar: Maidu Creation Story by Harry Fonseca

Figure 4.2.1: Creation Story, 2000. (Public Domain; Harry Fonseca, Smithsonian)

In northern California Maidu belief, the world begins with *Helin Maideh* (Great Person), who first created water and air. He floated on a raft with Turtle at the beginning in that formless world with no sun, no moon, no stars. He was lonely, so he thought into creation *Kodoyampeh* (World Maker), and together, the three set out to make the world. Turtle dove into the water over and over for days on end—until finally he returned with a tiny bit of earth from the bottom of the waters.

They took the dirt, formed it into a cake, anchored it with four white feathered ropes, and that became the world, with its hills and mountains, lakes and streams. *Helin Maideh* next made the animals, fishes, birds and plants. Then the three set out to

populate the earth. There are many stories and many versions, but in one, *Kodoyampeh* put a willow stick under each arm, and went to sleep. When he woke, the first man and woman were there to greet him.

Kodoyampeh made the world comfortable for First People, with food and fire, and changing seasons: Rain Season (*kummini*), Leaf Season (*yominni*), Dry Season (*ilaknom*), and Falling Leaf Season (*matminni*). He gave them songs and stories to tell to their children and grandchildren (*Harry Fonseca: Maidu Creation Stories*, 2020).

Indigenous ways of knowing refers to the way of knowing that a band or tribe of people accumulates over generations of living in and experiencing a specific environment, resulting in them making sense of their world. Indigenous ways of knowing inform decision-making about fundamental aspects of day-to-day life. This knowledge is integral and fundamental to Indigenous cultures that encompasses language systems, sustainable resource use practices, cultural and social interactions, ritual and spirituality. Today Indigenous ways of knowing are one of the core concepts taught in American Indian/Native American Studies.

There are currently 574 federally recognized Tribes, Nations, Bands, Pueblos, Native communities and villages. The Federal Register (*Federal Register Request Access*, n.d.. Indian Entities Recognized) published by the Bureau of Indian Affairs maintains the current list of tribes eligible for funding and services from the federal government and more importantly recognizes that tribes have a "unique" political relationship with the U.S. federal government. This relationship, as well as problems and issues that arise from a structurally racist government, as well as the ramifications of colonialism, and the resiliency of Native people will be discussed throughout this chapter. There are even more Tribes that are not Federally Recognized. There are many reasons for this, including but not limited to: false claims of extinction by anthropologists/census takers, genocide, and the very difficult Federal Acknowledgement Process.

California - A Place Based History and Approach

A **place-based learning** approach recognizes meanings and stories in the land, and celebrates the connection to Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Environmental history and Indigenous experience are intricately linked and carry a cultural responsibility to the land and the people. Learning about the relationship with place as family, is important and should not be separated. The authors of this chapter are including this section to provide you with that connection, specifically between California Native women and the land where we live.

Prior to colonization of what is now called the “State of California,” American Indians lived fairly peaceful lives amongst each other. Resources (food, shelter, medicine, clothing, etc) were plentiful and the land was tended in a method that ensured bountiful and continuous harvests of staple foods like acorn and other nuts and grasses. To find out more about this connection between the people and the land please see the Sidebar: Tending The Wild below.

Sidebar: Tending The Wild series on PBS

The PBS series, Tending The Wild, reveals the environmental knowledge of Native people across California and explores how they have actively shaped and tended the land for millennia, developing a deep understanding of plant and animal life. This documentary series reveals the balance between nature and how traditional practices can inspire a new generation of Californians to live sustainably within their environment.

Throughout different sections of this chapter, the reader will find timelines in order to put into context and in relationship to each other, important events happening to American Indians/Native Americans in the United States. It is important to recognize that United States federal policy has swung like a pendulum back and forth, seemingly in favor of Native people and then against them; but the reader must understand the context of such events and how all federal policy has been in opposition to tribal sovereignty, Native people and their survival.

Sidebar - Timeline - Important Events in California Indian History After Colonization by the U.S. 1800's

- 1834 - The California missions ended after Mexico became independent of Spain. The newly independent Mexican government eventually passed laws that called for an end to the mission system through a process called “secularization.”
- 1848 – Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo - Signed between the United States of America and Mexico to end the Mexican-American War. This Treaty gave the U.S. ownership of California.

- 1849 – Gold Rush – Devastated Indian communities in California. Those people and tribes that had survived colonization and missionization now had bounties on their heads as settlers flocked to California in search of gold and wealth. The California Indian population dramatically decreased (Exact numbers vary between sources).
- 1850 – California State Constitution was ratified.
- 1851-52 – Eighteen unratified Treaties with California Indians. These unratified treaties allowed the State of California to take Indian land without paying for it.
- 1853- 1857 – Seven military reserves established by Congress.
- 1863 – Section 3 of the Act for the Governance and Protection of Indians was repealed. Indians in California could no longer legally be indentured servants.
- 1881-82 – State Superior Court decides that Indians on land grants can stay, however this decision was reversed on appeal to the Federal Court.
- 1883 – "On the Conditions and Needs of the Mission Indians of California" was published as a special report to the Commissioner of Indians Affairs by Jackson-Kinney.
- 1887 – Dawes Allotment Act permits granting of lands to individual Indians on and off reservations.

Missionization

In an effort to not glorify the Mission system and the horrible acts that took place because of the Missions, this chapter will not describe the creation of the California Mission system by Spain and the Catholic Church (this is a practice of decolonization). However, it will highlight California Native women who have made significant contributions to this world with their actions, words, and being.

Toypurina (Kimivit - Gabrielino - Tongva)

The invasion of Spanish people destroyed the land. The Spanish efforts to steal and occupy the land was what some authors call a dual revolution. The Spanish were also concerned with dominating the land and thus cleared the land for agricultural and pastoral production. Clearing the land was often the first step in settler colonialism. Spanish colonists also introduced livestock which then devastated the usual and accustomed places that California Indian people hunted, fished, gathered, and harvested. Domesticated livestock grew exponentially in California. The livestock were just set free to graze and roam, consuming grasses and acorns on which indigenous people subsisted. Livestock overgrazed areas and that allowed plants native to Europe to replace native plants and scare away deer and other animals.

In an attempt to regain control over their lands (and bodies) and prevent further decimation by livestock and missionaries, Kumeyaay shot cattle at night and killed animals when they came too close to their towns. Some indigenous people did more. In 1784, a Tongva man named Nicolas Jose, an alcalde at Mission San Gabriel, went to the town of Japchavit and met Toypurina. Toypurina was known as a healer and they spoke about attacking the mission. Jose gifted her with beads in exchange for her to call together the unbaptized indigenous peoples from the area. Toypurina agreed and gathered people together to plan an attack. However, on the night of the planned attack, someone had betrayed the Tongva and the Mission guards were ready for them. Toypurina was captured and she and other leaders of the rebellion were put on trial.

When asked about the attack, Toypurina is quoted as saying that she participated in it because she ‘‘was angry with the Padres and the others of the Mission, because they had come to live and establish themselves on her land.’’ Spanish officials found her and the three other men on trial to be guilty of leading the attack. The three men were held at the prison (presidio) in San Diego, and Toypurina was imprisoned at the prison in San Gabriel while they awaited word of their punishment. In June 1788, nearly three years later, their sentences arrived from Mexico City: Nicolás José was banned from San Gabriel and sentenced to six years of hard labor in irons at the most distant penitentiary in the region. Toypurina was banished from Mission San Gabriel and sent to the most distant Spanish mission. She ended up at Mission San Carlos Borromeo as an exile. She continued to move for the rest of her life and eventually passed away in 1799 at Mission San Juan Bautista. Toypurina's story is an example of indigenous resistance (Akins & Bauer, 2021).

Sidebar: Toypurina: A Legend

This article titled "Toypurina: A Legend Etched in the Landscape of Los Angeles" by Maria John on KCET.org reviews the significance of Toypurina by examining various murals and artwork in L.A.

The following timeline is important for readers to see significant points throughout California history that have impacted California Indians and tribes.

Sidebar - Timeline - Important Events in California Indian History After Colonization by the U.S. 1900's

- 1905-06 – Kelsey (Special Indian Agent) conducts a census of non-reservation Indians. It counted at least 11,755 Indians that were not supported by the United States Government.
- 1917 – State court rules that non-reservation Indians are State citizens.
- 1924 – U.S. citizenship granted to all Indians.
- 1928 – California Indian Jurisdictional Act – Allowed the State of California to sue the United States on behalf of the Indians of California.
- 1933 – 1st Roll of California Indians.
- 1934 – Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) – also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act – was enacted to decrease federal control of American Indian Affairs and increase Indian self-government.
- 1944 – United States Court of Claims issues judgment in favor of California Indians, $17.5 million for land minus $12 million in expenses.
- 1946 – Indian Claims Commission Act – Created the Indian Claims Commission to hear any long standing claims of Indian tribes against the United States.
- 1953 – Public Law 280 – A federal law that states that the State may assume jurisdiction over reservation Indians. California becomes a mandatory PL 280 state.
- 1954-55 – California Indians Claims Case hearings in the Bay Area
- 1955 – 2nd Roll of California Indians. Indian people on this roll would be given $150.00 per capita payment.
- 1958 – California Rancheria Termination Act - 41 Rancherias vote for termination. The Act called for the distribution of the rancheria communal lands and assets to individual tribal members. 1,300 people/families received allotments of land.
- 1963-64 – California Indians vote to accept compromise for land settlement claim.
- 1969 – Occupation of Alcatraz Island – created a modern period of activism in Indian Country.
- 1969 September – Indians on the Hoopa reservation in Northern California believe the BIA has short changed them by as much as 500,000 dollars. They are complaining of the housing provided for them after the flooding of the Trinity and Klamath Rivers in 1964. BIA records show that as much as $427,000 - $1,417,000 has not been accounted for.
- May 18, 1970 – the Elem Pomo Indians reoccupied Mu-Do-N Island (Rattlesnake Island) in Clear Lake, California. They claimed the island was illegally acquired by Boise-Cascade Corporation.
- June of 1970 – the Pit River Nation began to reassert its ownership of ancient lands in California. Many Indians are arrested as the government refuses to recognize their rights.
- July 1970 – DQ University was incorporated as a tax exempt, non-profit institution. The initial incorporators were Kenneth Martin (Assiniboine), David Risling (Hoopa, Yurok, Karok), and Jack Forbes (Powhatan).
- October 29-30, 1970 – Senator George Murphy's Office issues a press release dated October 28, that the DQ-U site is to go to the University of California. This is in spite of the fact that DQ-U has submitted the only legally complete request for the site.
- November 3, 1970 – Native American students occupy the former Army communication facility between Davis and Winters in support of DQ-U. DQ-U trustees initiate court action to prevent the illegal transfer of the site to the University of California.
- November of 1970 – about 24 Pomo (and other) activists occupied an abandoned CIA spy post near Santa Rosa. Used in the 1950's to monitor foreign broadcasts, it had been vacant for a decade. They were forcibly removed 3 days later with 5 arrests. Ultimately, though, title to this land was transferred to the Pomo (intertribal). It is now the Ya-Ka-Ama ("Our Land," in Pomo) American Indian Learning Center, just as had been demanded in 1970. It maintains a nursery for endangered and other Native plants, carries out related economic development projects, and educational and cultural programs, supported and participated in by all the Pomo bands.
- 1972 – 3rd Roll of California Indians, $668.51 per person settlement.
- 1980's – Tillie Hardwick, a Pinoleville Pomo, sued the U.S. on the behalf of the terminated Pomo reservations. Victory restored federal status to 17 small California reservations, including many -- but not all -- Pomo bands, which continue their struggle for federal recognition.

Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy
(Hupa, Yurok and Karuk and an enrolled member of the Hoopa Valley Tribe in Northern California)

Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy (Native American Studies, Humboldt State University) researches Indigenous feminisms, California Indians and decolonization. In her blog post titled "Give It Back: Publishing and Native Sovereignty," Cutcha writes:

> I've become obsessed with the idea of finding out what would happen if I started mourning loss of land, loss of lives, loss of fish - if my grief was on display. As an academic I've internalized the message that somehow the work isn't supposed to be deeply personal. Like I don't carry the blood of my ancestors in my veins, blood that has run rivers red as we held on to the bodies of slaughtered children and wailed into the night sky asking ourselves "why" or "what are we supposed to do now?"
>
> Like we didn't sing or dance for all those we lost. Like that song doesn't come from me now. Like I don't close my eyes and hug my daughter just a little bit tighter at night because there was a time when they would have ripped her from my arms and sold her. And I would never stop looking for her. I would do anything to find her again. Like my ancestors didn't search until they couldn't search any longer. Like we don't continue to search, or grieve even now.
>
> And we live here in this space that they stole from us. This place where we buried our beloved. Where we sing and dance and laugh and love. This place where we cried tears of joy and sadness and from laughing so hard our stomachs hurt and from hurting so hard we thought we'd never laugh again (2020).

In just 3 short paragraphs Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy describes what it is like to be a California Indian woman today. She bids us to think about land theft, loss and destruction. She makes us think about the significance of intergenerational trauma and how violence doesn't just hurt the victim. Cutcha calls us to think about missing and murdered indigenous women and places that California Native people deem sacred. Her life is place based. She speaks and writes from an internal place that is spiritually, emotionally, and intrinsically connected to where her ancestors and she were raised, and where their creation happened. Colonization may have pushed many of us from our homelands, but we return. See more on Dr. Risling Baldy's work on the Hupa Coming-of-Age Dance as decolonizing praxis under Chapter 8, section 8.6: Transformational Liberation through Love.

Deborah A. Miranda (Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation, Chumash)

In her phenomenal book titled *Bad Indians, A Tribal Memoir (2013)*, Deborah Miranda writes, "Stories are their chief knowledge," wrote the padre from Mission San Juan Bautista. Yes — and they are, still. May it always be so" (p.xx).

She knew that the best way to tell the history of her people was to share stories. In this book, she tells stories specifically about her family and her life but all California Indians can relate. Moving through locations and time periods, Deborah teaches us about the results of missionization and later settler invasion and colonialism. She invites us into the world of a descendant of a survivor and she reminds us, as Cutcha does, that what the land and the people experienced during the first wave of colonization and genocide is still felt by the land and the people today. She places women and "women's issues" at the forefront of all of her work. In an article titled "Saying the Padre Had Grabbed Her": Rape is the Weapon, Story is the Cure," Dr. Miranda writes about the rape of a girl named Vicenta by a Padre at the Mission. Below is an excerpt from that paper.

> Why does Isabel Meadows tell Harrington this story about a girl named Vicenta who is raped by a priest and tells? And why do I retell this story now, so long afterwards? Why discuss sexual violence as part of reclaiming and reinventing a California Indian identity? Why give room to these particular destructive powers when trying to harness the creative powers necessary to create our mosaic history? I know these are questions that people will ask, even members of my own tribal community. The short answer is a brief and brutal fact: California Indian women have still not healed from the tragedy of Missionization, colonization, and the violence it inflicted on our bodies. As mentioned earlier, 86% of rapes against Indian women are committed by non-native men; this is unusual in a crime which, among other ethnic/racial groups, does not typically cross racial lines to any great degree (Miranda, 2010, p. 93).

Stories hold truths and the only way that the history of these places can be told is if these stories remain at the forefront. American Indian women have and continue to suffer from extreme rates of violence. That violence occurred on or near the land that was the place of creation for their people. How can we not have a place based history in California? The places that we live in, and come from, are seeping with the story of that land. So how then do California Indian people begin to heal?

Something Inside is Broken By Dr. Melissa Leal (Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation)

She woke up this morning, thinking about being broken

About pieces of her body being torn apart

Away from her core and stretching her soul a million miles.

She wondered if her mother and grandmother and great-grandmother felt that way

Or maybe what she felt was older than all of them?

Maybe that feeling was from another time and place

She remembered seeing a struggle, a fight between peoples

A desperate attempt to eradicate what was, and remains so powerful

The blood memory of generations of women

Who were connected to the trees and rocks

Who lived by the water and learned from the birds

A people who sang and danced out of love

Who prayed for renewal

A people who carried generations of strength in their bones

Whose veins flowed profusely with the blood of the sacred

She saw these women in her dreams, mere shadows of light

Moving within the darkness

Resilient

Beautiful

Resiliently beautiful

With copper skin, kissed by the sun

Given the breath of life from the Creator herself

The dream seemed like a distant memory

A thought she once had or a story she once heard

She wasn't sure of the time nor the place

She wasn't able to identify each face in the shadows

But when she woke up that morning she knew that

Something inside was broken.

In summary, the land that is now called "California" has many names. Each of the unique tribal groups in California called this large area of land something different. However, their homelands and rivers, creeks, bays all had specific names to them and other names for neighboring peoples. A person cannot understand the history of California without first understanding the stories of those places that hold significance to California Indian peoples. Stories hold truths and these stories are intricately connected to the people and place, from the past to the present, and are revealed in the resiliency of the people and places that we live and come from.

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4.3: Core Concepts and Theories

Concepts and Theories in American Indian/Native American Studies

And while I stood there I saw more than I can tell and I understood more than I saw; for I was seeing in a sacred manner the shapes of all things in the spirit, and the shape of all shapes as they must live together like one being.

-Black Elk

The following are important core concepts and theories in American Indian/Native American Studies.

Sovereignty

Sovereignty is a political concept that refers to dominant power or supreme authority. In modern democracies, sovereign power rests with the people and is exercised through representative bodies such as Congress or Parliament. A sovereign tribe would exercise power without limitation and work on behalf of their people without external interference by the federal government. The term also carries implications of autonomy; to have sovereign power is to be beyond the power of others to interfere.

Native people have a unique legal history with the U.S. federal court system that centers on sovereignty between Native nations and the United States. In Felix Cohen's (1941) Handbook of Federal Indian Law, the principles of **tribal sovereignty** are expressed as:

> adherence to three fundamental principles: (1) An Indian tribe possesses, in the first instance, all the powers of any sovereign state. (2) Congress renders the tribe subject to the legislative power of the United States and, in substance, terminates the external powers of sovereignty of the tribe. . . . (3) Those powers are subject to qualification by treaties and by express legislation by Congress, but save as thus expressly qualified, full powers of internal sovereignty are vested in the Indian tribes and in their duly constituted organs of government (pp. 122-123).

Native scholars argue that because of the unique legal status of Native peoples in the United States, Native American Studies should focus primarily on the defense of Native sovereignty. According to Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, "The major reason for the development of Native American Studies as a discipline was to defend indigenous nationhood" (1997, p. 11). Cook-Lynn's illustration of Native Studies is one of a unique discipline that focuses on Native people's lived experiences, geographies and languages which is different from an etic, so called "scientifically objective" perspective filled with implicit biases and colonial judgment more commonly found in other disciplines like history, anthropology and sociology.

Understanding Native Sovereignty movements, like the Red Power movement, is vital, but it is also important to note that these movements were informed by other social justice movements including the Civil Rights and Black Power movements (see Chapter 11, page 11.3: U.S. Civil Rights and Liberatory Movements). As these movements coincided, informed, and affirmed each other, the exchange between them allowed for greater insight into the oppression each had experienced including the impact of settler colonialism. Vine Deloria Jr. in his (1970) work, *We Talk, You Listen*, argued that sovereignty could be used as a critical framework for any group seeking liberation (p. 118), and in so being, political power and coalition building between diverse groups could be used to dismantle settler colonialism. We are stronger together and this is where power lies, in our ability to be allies and co-conspirators.

Self-Determination

Self-determination refers to the social movements, legislation, and beliefs by which Native American tribes in the United States exercise **self-governance** and decision making on issues that affect their own people. Self-determination is an integral piece of sovereignty and the right of a people to decide upon its own form of government, without outside influence and relates to the freedom and free will of the people of a given area to determine their own political status and independence. Self-determination includes tribal self-governance and intellectual self-determination (Teves et al., 2015). When tribes institute their own court systems, have their own tribal police, develop their own K-12 tribal schools and/or tribal colleges, these are acts of self-determination and sovereignty.

Colonization

Colonization is the process of using power and assuming control through war, force, genocide, slavery, and intimidation of someone else's territory, resources, culture and identity; and forcing one's own culture, systems of law, government, and religion

upon the remaining Indigenous group survivors. According to Ward Churchill, “If rape is violence…then so too is the interculture analogue of rape: colonial domination” (2003, pp. 244). The invaders from Europe colonized the Americas as well as other areas of the world including Africa, India, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, etc.

Often it is mentioned as an "excuse" for colonization happening in the first place that "everyone" or all cultures "colonize," employing Conflict Theory. There is an assumption by the colonizers that tribes in the Americas also "colonized" other tribes, but this is not the case. Colonization did not take place amongst tribes or in the Americas, not until Europe invaded in the 15th century.

Colonialism

Colonialism is the power and practice fueled by a rapist mentality (Churchill, 2003) of one country or group of people to subjugate and enslave other people and their sovereign nations through establishing colonies with the goal of economic dominance, taken by force or through deception, the land and resources from Indigenous peoples.

The process of colonization often includes forced assimilation or the imposition of religion, language, economic systems, and other cultural practices from the colonizing group. According to Churchill, “so long as Native North America remains internally colonized, subject to racial codes, unindemnified for the genocide and massive expropriations we've suffered—and continue to suffer—genocide, colonialism, racism and wholesale theft will remain the signal attributes of American mentality and behavior” (2003, pp. xiv). Churchill’s (2003) point about the continuation of genocide and land theft is well taken.

Tribes continuously have to fight the federal government to make sure they honor treaties in order to maintain their homelands and the limited resources on those lands, including rights to clean water. Within the last ten years, the Water Protectors of Standing Rock, a movement which began in early 2016, joined in solidarity against the proposed route of the more than 1,000 mile Dakota Access Pipeline, just north of the Standing Rock reservation. In February of 2022, the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, “withdrew as a cooperating agency from the U.S Federal government's ongoing environmental assessment of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), citing lack of transparency by the U.S Army Corps of Engineers” (Sutherland, 2022). The reason for the withdrawal was due to the concerns raised about an inadequate emergency response plan in case a large spill occurred affecting the tribe’s water supply.

Settler Colonialism, also known as Anti-Indigenous Settler Colonialism Theory

Settler Colonialism refers to an invasive group or culture that actively occupies and attempts to destroy through genocidal acts to replace/erase Native peoples and cultures (Wolfe, 1999; Wolfe, 2006), often appropriating parts of the Indigenous cultures during that process. This theft also includes the power to re-identify the Indigenous population and subsume an important piece of their identity as being the "rightful" inhabitants of this land, thereby reinforcing racist nativism.

There are three important points to Settler Colonialism:

1. Invaders come to permanently occupy the land.
2. Settler Colonialism is not a singular event; it is more of an ongoing, persistent strategy to eliminate Native tribal populations in order to claim sovereign rights and assert jurisdiction over Native land.
3. Settler Colonialism actively and continuously functions to eliminate Native people while at the same time promoting and asserting the false narratives of "settler belonging" or "Manifest Destiny," which will be discussed later in the chapter, in order to eliminate challenges of sovereignty by Native people. The concept of "*terra nullis*" is often promoted through this false narrative, that the land was "unoccupied" at the time of the European invasion; and this is just the beginning.

Settler Colonialism which “destroys to replace” (Itsuji Saranillio, in Teves, Smith & Raheja, 2015) adopts and promotes the same rapist genocidal mentality as colonialism, should actually be termed "invader colonialism" because to use the term "settler" seems to be innocuous and implies that the land and the people needed to be "settled" because it was/they were "wild" and "out of control" at the time of the invasion. This is directly related to Brian Baker’s (2011) work which will be covered in more detail later on in this chapter on stereotypes of Native people as "wildly roaming the land," somehow unaware of the productivity inherent within the soil itself and therefore "undeserving" of the right of occupancy or "ownership."

The fact is that Native people lived sustainably for hundreds of thousands of years in the Americas prior to the European invasion. When Europeans arrived in North America in the late 15th century, they believed that the land was "untouched" by human hands and unoccupied because of how clean and clear the water was and how the soil was so rich, providing for abundant resources. This was not by chance, but because of sustained, managed work by Native peoples who learned how to live within the environment without depleting resources or causing permanent environmental damage.

Racist Nativism

This term is not what it seems to be in that it is based in white supremacy and how white Americans consider themselves to be "Native" to the United States, due to their forced take over of the land and genocidal acts against the original Native inhabitants. One could argue that Racist Nativism is rooted in the genocide and assimilation of the original Native inhabitants of North America who remained, and the subsuming of Native identity by white America. White America then positions itself as the Native rather than the "'foreigner" and uses this power to identify and oppose the "non-white foreigner", which "creates the defense and protection of a nationalistic identity, where the foreigner becomes a perceived threat to the nationalistic identity" (Perez Huber, 2010, p. 80). Racist Nativism is used to connect white supremacy, power and ownership to U.S. soil (Perez Huber, et. al. 2008); and institute who is "suitable" to be an "American".

United Nations Definition of Genocide

As established at the U.N. convention of 1948, any one of five acts is considered genocide if "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group":

1. killing members of the group;
2. causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
3. deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
4. imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
5. forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

The term "genocide" is often incorrectly used to describe extreme examples of mass murder, the death of vast numbers of people. Genocide can be an "act in progress." Genocide does not have to be complete to be considered genocide. By identifying government policies that are created to enact (the process of) genocide, we can prevent the end result. American Indian Studies/Native American Studies scholars consider that genocide has been and continues to be committed against Native people.

Indian, American Indian, Native and Native American Identity

The terms Indian, American Indian, Native and Native American have been used interchangeably in academia to refer to a specific population of people having origins in any of the tribal homeland locations within the United States. These terms can also apply to an individual identity of a person who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation, enrollment or community recognition (Stony Brook, 2011). It is important to understand the legal and political nature of identity terminology for this core group. American Indian is not simply an ethnicity but also a legal status. American Indians are citizens of separate nations, i.e. the Navajo Nation or the Ohlone/Costanoan Esselen Nation, as well as U.S. citizens.

Indian, American Indian, Native and Native American are all problematic in that these terms were not created by the people themselves and are racialized and political terms employed by the U.S. government to legally lump uniquely diverse nations together. Christopher Columbus began the confusion because he just didn't know where he was and believed he was in Asia in search of a new trade route and gold, when he landed on Taino shores. The term Indian comes from *Indios* which was a term used by Spain and Portugal to mean a member of any of the indigenous peoples of America or eastern Asia. A very important point that needs to be made here is that Indians, American Indians, Natives and Native Americans are not related to Indians from India or Indian Americans. Please do not make this mistake.

Political not Racial

Native nations have their own names for themselves and their people, from their own languages, but Native people also occupy, "a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of their identities" (Brayboy, 2006, pp. 429). This was established in the 1974 Supreme Court ruling that federal relationships with tribes are political, not racial, in nature. In Morton v. Mancari, the Supreme Court held that the federal government's special treatment of Indians is political and non-racial when it "can be tied rationally to the fulfillment of Congress' unique obligation toward the Indians" (*Morton V. Mancari, 417 U.S. 535 [1974]*). The federal government itself has a unique "trust" relationship with tribes in that the relationship is based on treaties.

Tribal Critical Race Theory

Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCRT) is a framework that allows for the analysis of programs and problems experienced by Native Americans or American Indians within systems or institutions (Brayboy, 2006). TribalCRT addresses the legal, social and political aspects of the relationship between the United States federal government and American Indians (Brayboy, 2006), which is

very complex because tribes have sovereignty, a domestic dependent nation status and treaty rights that guarantee resources until the end of time. TribalCRT is related but distinct from Critical Race Theory.

According to Brayboy (2006), the nine tenets of Tribal Critical Race Theory address how colonization is “endemic” and how all federal U.S. policies are “rooted in imperialism, white supremacy and a desire for material gain” (p. 429). Establishing this country on this premise automatically creates a racist governmental system that is meant to "other," disenfranchise and take advantage of all people of color. In addition, governmental and educational policies toward Native peoples are intimately linked to assimilation (Brayboy, 2006).

Nine Tenets of Tribal Critical Race Theory (Brayboy, 2006)

1. colonization is endemic;
2. U.S. policies pertaining to Indigenous peoples are rooted in imperialism, White supremacy, and a desire for material gain;
3. Indigenous peoples occupy a liminal space that accounts for both the political and racialized natures of their identities;
4. Indigenous peoples have a desire to obtain and forge tribal sovereignty, tribal autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification;
5. the concepts of culture, knowledge, and power take on new meaning when examined through an Indigenous lens;
6. governmental and educational policies toward Indigenous peoples are intimately linked around the problematic goal of assimilation;
7. tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups;
8. stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are therefore real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being;
9. theory and practice are connected in deep and explicit ways such that scholars must work towards social change (pp. 429-430).

Brayboy (2006) identified three types of knowledge that coexist: cultural knowledge, the knowledge of survival, and academic knowledge. To review, cultural knowledge (also known as cultural capital) encompasses everything a person knows as a member of a particular cultural group, specifically what individuals know as members of tribal nations. Knowledge of survival or resistance capital/survivance incorporates adaptation strategies that have been learned as well as the personal choice made with the community to change and adapt in order to survive. Knowledge of survival promotes resilience, another significant factor added to the theoretical framework. It is important to combine multiple forms of knowledge in order to manifest the power for change. Brayboy (2006) explained that “power is rooted in a group‘s ability to define themselves, their place in the world, and their traditions” (p. 435). Power is essential and equates to inherent sovereignty. Because power is based in the community, it is shared (Brayboy, 2006). What follows is the ability to meet the needs of the people through the rights to self-identify, self-govern, and self-educate.

Another fundamental aspect of TribalCRT is recognizing that governmental policies toward Native people have promoted and reinforced assimilation (Brayboy, 2006). Early treaties guaranteed federal resources for Natives (Klug & Whitfield, 2003), but the interpretation and implementation of resources was left to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA’s perspective promoted assimilation and the abandonment of tribal culture and language (Brayboy, 2006; Klug & Whitfield, 2003). However, attempts at complete assimilation have failed (Brayboy, 2006).

The ultimate goal of TribalCRT is social change (Brayboy, 2006; Williams, 1997). Scholars who adopt TribalCRT as a working philosophy confront inequity and assimilation practices. Researchers strive to create systems or make change in organizations that will address the needs of Indigenous people and their communities (Burkhart, 2004).

Tribal Critical Race Theory at its core challenges the notion that institutions “serve as bastions of objectivity, meritocracy, color blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity” (Ramirez, 2011, p. 46). These frameworks expose color blindness and race neutrality for what they really are, a strategy to avoid addressing oppression, discrimination, and inequity within the system to maintain power and privilege for the dominant groups in American society (Calmore, 1992; Delgado, 1989; Villalpando, 2004).

Blood Quantum

American Indians have been racialized, but our identity is a political one. Blood quantum was introduced, “in 1705 by the Colony of Virginia, which adopted the ‘Indian Blood law’ [used] to reduce the civil rights of Indigenous people with ½ or greater blood quantum” (Livermont, Blood Quantum Blues, WERNATIVE). It is important to note that Tribal Nations did not use blood quantum to determine membership until it was adopted and imposed by the U.S. federal government to trace race between generations of

Native people in order for the U.S. federal government to not have to fulfill their treaty obligations to tribes. If there are no Native people, then there can be no Native tribes.

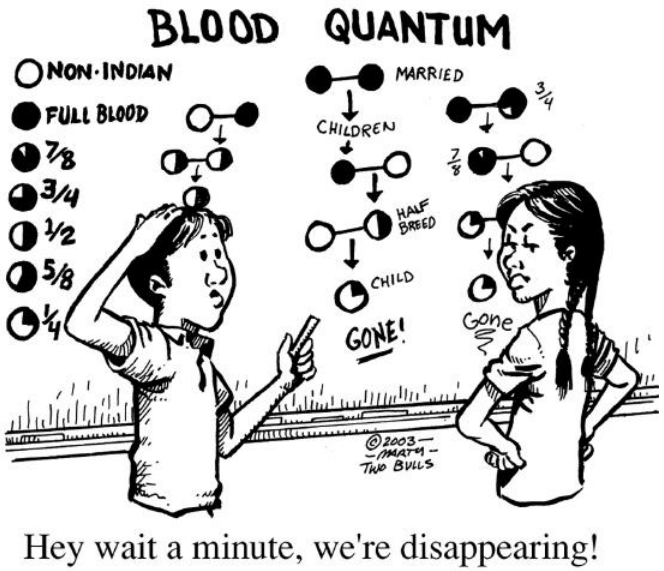

Figure 4.3.1: Blood Quantum: Hey wait a minute, we're disappearing! 2003. (CC BY-NC 4.0; Marty Two Bulls)

Image 4.3.1 is a cartoon of two students looking at each other after they have written on a chalk board how blood quantum is making them disappear with the caption beneath stating, "Hey wait a minute, we're disappearing!" This image represents how blood quantum is making our tribes disappear one person at a time.

According to the U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), an American Indian or Alaska Native is a person, “who has blood degree from and is recognized as such by a federally recognized tribe or village (as an enrolled tribal member) and/or the United States” (BIA, 2017, p. 1). According to Pevar (2012), “Congress has the authority to limit tribal sovereignty over membership determination, but unless Congress acts, each tribe enjoys the exclusive right to determine tribal membership for tribal purposes" (p. 90). The fact that the U.S. government has taken control of identifying Native people in the first place through treaties and laws reveals that racism exists within the structure of the federal government which opposes tribal sovereignty and self-determination of Native nations, impacting Indian identity.

The U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) issues certification of degree of Indian or Alaska Native Blood (CDIB) to tribal members. The CDIB recognizes the individual’s relationship to an enrolled member or members of a federally recognized tribe and states the person’s name, tribe, "blood quantum" of the individual, and birth date. American Indian or Alaska Native peoples are the only group in the United States that the federal government continues to demand calculated lineal ancestry to acknowledge formal belonging because of their economic ties through treaties to sovereign tribal nations. The U.S. Federal government, through treaty responsibility, is required to provide housing, food, jobs and education to federally recognized tribes; so the fewer recognized tribal members, the more likely a tribe will no longer exist and the federal government will no longer be required to fulfill their treaty obligations.

The only comparable example in U.S. history is the "one drop rule" of African American blood which states that if a person has a “single drop” of "Black blood," that person will be identified as Black. This rule is also known as the "one Black ancestor rule" and some courts have called it the "traceable amount rule." For American Indians, the rule is the opposite. The federal government wants Native people to "blood quantum out" in order to not be considered Native. In this way the federal government is systematically "assimilating" Native people into becoming "non-Native" so that tribes cannot count these people as tribal citizens. This means that the federal government will not have to fulfill their treaty obligations to tribes because there will be no more tribes due to there being no tribal citizens.

Blood quantum is determined through a formula that reduces by half each generation that is intermarried with someone other than a member of that same tribe going back to enrollees who were originally counted on Census rolls created by the federal government. There are many issues with blood quantum including self-determination, or the sovereign right of tribes to determine their own citizenship vs. the federal government imposing this requirement.

The way blood quantum works is that for each generation that does not marry someone who is a tribal member of the same tribe, with at least the same amount of blood quantum, the percentage of Native blood reduces by half. For example if someone is 100% Lakota, has a child with someone who is 100% non-Native, then the child would be 50% or half Lakota and 50% or half non-Native. Now if both parents are from different tribes then the child is 50% or half one tribe and 50% or half the other, but the tricky part is that the child can't be an enrolled member of both tribes based on the federal government's regulations; they can only be enrolled in one tribe. If that child grows up and has a child with someone who is not from either tribe, then their child's blood quantum reduces by half again or to 25% or one-quarter Native, which is often the threshold for enrollment. It only takes intermarrying (having a child with someone who is not the same tribe as you) of 3 generations to "blood quantum out" of tribal enrollment, where a child is not necessarily considered Native American/American Indian anymore and cannot be enrolled in any of their tribes.

Some tribes have opted to use heritage, documented descendancy or lineal descent from enrolled members as a qualification for tribal membership in addition to possessing a minimum fraction of Native blood (there are many tribes that don't use blood quantum at all). The most common requirement is one-fourth but some tribes require as little as one-thirty-second. As you can imagine, this also has many issues including but not limited to access to birth records, if they exist, death records, if they exist, and problems with the initial lists the federal government created where people often changed or altered Native names when translating them into English.

Because tribes are self determined, sovereign nations, blood quantum is not the only means by which a person can be considered American Indian/Alaska Native. As stated earlier, lineal descent is one way, but other factors include, "a person's knowledge of [their] tribe's culture, history, language, religion, familial kinship, and how strongly a person identifies as American Indian or Alaska Native" (BIA, 2017, p. 1). To make this even more complicated, the U.S. federal government determines which sovereign tribal nations are federally recognized. This in turn affects who can legally claim to identify as American Indian or Alaska Native.

Eligibility criteria for tribal enrollment (or membership) will differ from tribe to tribe. It is important to note that tribes have inherent authority to determine membership qualifications. The Supreme Court recognizes that tribes have the right, "to define [their] own membership for tribal purposes has long been recognized as central to its existence as an independent political community" (Reclaim Justice as Key to Self-Governance, Indian Country Today, 12/6/2006). Enrollment eligibility criteria is listed in the tribe's constitution. A person cannot be enrolled in more than one tribe and tribes also have rights to disenroll and adopt persons into the tribe (Pevar, 2012).

Federal Recognition, Treaties and Trust

A federally recognized tribe is one that has an established, ratified treaty through the U.S. Congress. Federal recognition was established by the federal government in order to make land deals or **treaties** with tribes. Through recognizing tribal sovereignty, the federal government could establish bills of sale, and develop a "trust" relationship with tribes. A "trust"relationship also known as the 'doctrine of trust responsibility', refers to the fact that the federal government has "power over and responsibility" to tribes at the same time, specifically in regard to "promises enshrined in treaties" (Day, 2019). Treaties are considered the "supreme law of the land" (Article 6 of the U.S. Constitution), in effect forever and therefore equivalent to federal laws. However, the outcome of *Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock* held that Congress has authority to change the stipulations of treaties based on Due Process and Just Compensation (Pevar, 2012). This has resulted in an untenable relationship between tribes and the federal government. For example, the federal government can terminate federal recognition at any time, which effectively ends the obligations of the federal government towards the tribe, thereby breaking treaties made with that tribe. Every treaty ever made between the federal government and Native tribes has been broken by the federal government.

Every treaty ever made between the federal government and Native nations (over 500) consists of three important points:

1. Native tribes being recognized as sovereign nations with land;
2. Native tribes being forced or coerced to "give up" land;
3. in exchange for being provided the same or similar resources for all time to continue the tribe's existence.

New borders and behavior of tribal members were also negotiated. Remember, every treaty has been broken by the U.S. federal government. The rights, protections, and services provided by the United States to individual American Indians and Alaska Natives come from their enrollment in a federally recognized tribe. Federally recognized tribes have a government-to- government relationship with the U.S. The "trust relationship" has certain legally enforceable obligations and responsibilities from the U.S. federal government to enrolled tribal members.

California - 18 Unratified Treaties

While the history of the Federal-Indian relationship in California shares some common characteristics with that of Native people elsewhere in the United States, it is different in many aspects. It includes the unprecedented magnitude of non-native migration into California after the discovery of gold in 1848, nine days before the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo; the Senate's refusal to ratify the 18 treaties negotiated with California tribes during 1851-52; and the lawless nature of California's settlement after the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, including State sanctioned efforts to "exterminate" the indigenous population.

Under pressure from the California Congressional delegation, the United States Senate not only refused to sign the 18 treaties that had been negotiated, but they also took extraordinary steps to place the treaties in hiding. Between the un-ratified treaties and the Land Claims Act of 1851 (established to determine the validity of prior Spanish and Mexican land grants), most California Indians became homeless.

Major shifts in federal Indian policy at the national level during the late 19th century exacerbated what the federal government had deemed "Indian problems" in California. Passage of the General Allotment Act in 1887 opened part of the limited lands in California to non-Indian settlement. In 1905 the public was finally advised of the 18 unratified treaties. Citizens sympathetic to the economic and physical distress of California Indians encouraged Congress to pass legislation to acquire isolated parcels of land for homeless California Indians. Between 1906 and 1910 a series of appropriations were passed that provided funds to purchase small tracts of land in central and northern California for landless Indians of those areas. The land acquisitions resulted in what has been referred to as the Rancheria System in California.

In 1934, with the passage of the **Indian Reorganization Act** (IRA), the reconstituting of tribal governments included the Bureau of Indian Affair's supervision of elections among California tribes, including most of the Rancheria groups. Although many tribes accepted the provisions of the IRA, few California tribes benefited economically from the IRA because of the continuing inequities in funding of Federal Indian programs.

Beginning in 1944, forces within the BIA began to propose partial liquidation of the Rancheria system. Even the limited efforts to address the needs of California Indians at the turn of the century and again through passage of the IRA were halted by the federal government when it adopted the policy of termination. California became a primary target of this policy when Congress slated forty-one California Rancherias for termination pursuant to the Rancheria Act of 1958. During the past quarter century, judicial decisions and settlements have restored 27 of the 38 Rancherias that were terminated under the original Rancheria Act. Additional tribes have since then been restored as a result of Acts of Congress." United States Department of the Interior, Indian Affairs (Schneider, Leal, 2019).

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4.4: Invasion, Occupation, Imperialism and Hegemony

Genocide in the US - Colonialism Beyond Columbus

We survive war and conquest; we survive colonialism, acculturation, assimilation; we survive beatings, rape, starvation, mutilation, sterilization, abandonment, neglect, death of our children, our loved ones, destruction of our land, our homes, our past and our future. We survive, and we do more than just survive; we bond, we care, we fight, we teach, we nurse, we bear, we feed, we earn, we laugh, we love, we hang in there no matter what.

-Paula Gunn-Allen, 1992

As explained earlier in this chapter, genocide occurred in the United States. Colonialism itself is an act of genocide and needs to be recognized as such, but it is more complicated when you add Imperialism on top of Manifest Destiny and the Doctrine of Discovery.

Imperialism

Imperialism is an exploitative relationship between the United States and Tribes. The clearest example of imperialism in US history is the treatment of Native people. Treaties between the US government and Native nations recognized tribes as sovereign. The creation of the reservation system and the acquisition of reservation land in violation of treaties are textbook examples of imperialism and colonialism. The federal government created policies designed to promote either assimilation or extermination. Native lands were taken through conquest and incorporated into US territories, while Native Americans themselves were forced onto reservations and initially denied citizenship.

Sidebar - Timeline Native History in the U.S. from 1778 - 1885

- 1778 - First Treaty between the United States and the Leni Lenape or Delaware
- 1789 - The United States Constitution becomes effective. Congress has the power to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations and with Indian Tribes. The Constitution also provides that "the laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance of; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land", thus superseding any other laws.
- 1790 - Congress passes the first Indian Trade and Intercourse Act which was modified in 1834. The Act prohibits conveyances of an Indian tribe's interests in land unless the conveyance is negotiated in the presence of a federal commissioner and ratified by Congress.
- 1831- Federal trust doctrine first described by the Supreme Court. In Cherokee Nation v. Georgia, and in the 1832 decision of Worcester v. Georgia, Chief Justice John C. Marshall articulated the roots of the federal trust doctrine and affirmed that Indian affairs was the province of federal rather than state regulation. In Cherokee Nation, an original action in the Supreme Court, the Tribe sought to enjoin Georgia from taking tribal land and imposing burdensome regulations on the Tribe. Chief Justice Marshall termed tribes "domestic dependent nations," with the federal/tribal relationship resembling "that of a ward to his guardian." The Court, ultimately, held that it lacked jurisdiction to hear an original action brought by a tribe against a state.
- 1832 - the Court revisited Georgia's attempt to control the Tribe in Worcester v. Georgia. Worcester, a minister and federal postmaster, and another non-Indian challenged their conviction in the Georgia courts for unlawfully residing on the Cherokee Reservation without a state license. The Court invalidated the state law and confirmed the Nation's sovereign rights under various treaties, including the right of self-governance and the right to occupy its own territory to the exclusion of the citizens of Georgia and of Georgia laws. According to Chief Justice Marshall, the "Cherokee nation . . . is a distinct community, occupying its own territory, . . . in which the laws of Georgia can have no force . . . ." The Court described Georgia's attempts to regulate the Cherokee as "interfere[ing] forcibly with the relations established between the United States and the Cherokee nation, the regulation of which, according to settled principles of our constitution, are committed exclusively to the government of the union."
- 1838 - Jackson's Forced removal of the Cherokees begins. The election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 led to a change in the previous policy of seeking voluntary removal by eastern Indian tribes to western lands. In 1838, Jackson ordered the Army to begin forced removal of the Cherokees. The forced migration became known as the "Trail of Tears." Several other east coast tribes were also impacted and forcefully removed from their homelands.

- 1849 - Responsibility for Indian affairs transferred to the Department of Interior. The authority over Indian affairs was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior pursuant to a statute that created the Interior Department. This change, however, did not precipitate a shift in federal policy, which continued to emphasize removal from eastern states. And despite the transfer, Congress continued to debate for a number of years whether the War Department should regain authority over Indian affairs.
- 1854 - First allotment of Indian tribal lands. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, George Manypenny, advocated reducing the size of reservations in combination with allotting portions of the reservation in severalty to individual Indians. In Manypenny's view providing Indians with private real property would help to establish "habits of industry and thrift as will enable them to sustain themselves."
- 1871 - An end to treaty making with Tribes. In 1871, Congress enacted an appropriations Act that included a rider stating "[t]hat hereafter no Indian nation or tribe within the territory of the United States shall be acknowledged or recognized as an independent nation, tribe, or power with whom the United States may contract by treaty" This was because the House of Representatives was jealous of the power the Senate had in enacting treaties with tribes.
- 1885 - Major Crimes Act enacted. In 1883, the Supreme Court in Ex parte Crow Dog, 109 U.S. 556, overturned the conviction of Crow Dog for the murder of Spotted Tail, both members of the Brule Band of Sioux. The General Crimes Act, which at the time provided the basis for criminal law in Indian country, excluded "crimes committed by one Indian against the person or property of another." Such acts generally were dealt with under tribal law, rather than through federal prosecution. Crow Dog's prosecution took place on the theory that an 1868 Treaty with the Sioux had implicitly repealed the Indian exception to the General Crimes Act. The Supreme Court reversed Crow Dog's conviction, ruling that "[t]o justify such a departure, in such a case, requires a clear expression of the intention of Congress, and that we have not been able to find." In the wake of Ex parte Crow Dog, Congress enacted the Major Crimes Act in 1885. As enacted, the legislation provided that seven offenses, including murder and manslaughter, that, if committed against "another Indian or other person" within a territory or on an Indian reservation, constituted crimes under federal law. The Major Crimes Act in effect repealed the Indian exception to the General Crimes Act for certain crimes. The Major Crimes Act, as amended, is codified at 18 U.S.C. section 1153.

The Doctrine of Discovery and Manifest Destiny

According to the Upstander Project (2023), the **Doctrine of Discovery** established a spiritual, political, and legal justification for colonization and the seizure of land not inhabited by Christians. Foundational elements of the doctrine can be found in a series of papal decrees, beginning in the 1100's, which included expressions of territorial sovereignty for Christian monarchs supported by the Catholic Church. Two papal decrees that stood out include:

1. "Romanus Pontifex" in 1455, granting the Portuguese a monopoly of trade with Africa and authorizing the enslavement of local people;
2. “Inter Caetera” in 1493 to justify Christian European explorers’ claims on land and waterways they allegedly discovered, and promote Christian domination and superiority, and has been applied in Africa, Asia, Australia, New Zealand, and the Americas.

If an invader proclaims to have “discovered” the land in the name of a Christian European monarch, reports his “discovery” to the European rulers and returns to occupy the land, it is now his, even if someone else was there first. Furthermore, the “discoverer” can label the previous occupant’s way of living on the land as "inadequate" according to European standards, which justifies their claim to the land. This ideology supported the dehumanization of Native people, their dispossession, murder, and forced assimilation. The doctrine supported white supremacy as white European settlers claimed they were “instruments of divine design” and possessed cultural superiority.

In an 1823 Supreme Court case, Johnson v. M'Intosh, the Doctrine of Discovery became part of U.S. federal law and was used to dispossess Native peoples of their land. In a unanimous decision, Chief Justice John Marshall writes, “that the principle of discovery gave European nations an absolute right to New World lands” and Native peoples certain rights of occupancy (*Johnson & Graham’s Lessee V. McIntosh, 21 U.S. 543, 1823*).

The Doctrine of Discovery was the inspiration for Manifest Destiny, which justified American expansion westward by propagating the belief that the U.S. was destined to control all land from the Atlantic to the Pacific and beyond.

Figure 4.4.1: "American Progress", 1872. (Public Domain; John Gast via Wikimedia Commons)

Manifest Destiny, coined in 1845 by newspaper editor John O'Sullivan, is the idea that white, Christian Americans were divinely ordained to "settle" (invade and steal) North America. This included a belief in the inherent superiority of white Americans as well as the conviction that they were destined by the Christian God to "conquer" the people and territories of North America. The ideology of Manifest Destiny was used to justify extreme measures to murder and decimate Native populations in order to "free" the land from its inhabitants, including forced removal and violent extermination. Proponents of Manifest Destiny advocated for and pursued a policy of removal. The ideology of Manifest Destiny inspired a variety of measures designed to commit genocide through removal or destruction the Native population that already inhabited North America.

Sidebar - Timeline Native History in the U.S. from 1921 - 1948

- 1921 - Snyder Act encourages spending for tribal needs. The Snyder Act authorized appropriations "for the benefit, care, and assistance of Indians throughout the United States." This legislation facilitated the passage of regular Indian appropriation bills to fund activities by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- 1924 - Indian Citizenship Act enacted, The Citizenship Act of 1924 granted American citizenship to "all non-citizen Indians born within the territorial limits of the United States." Indians would not have to go through a naturalization process.
- 1928 - Merriam Report published. The "allotment" period (beginning in 1887) created numerous health and welfare problems, which were detailed in this multi-year study undertaken by the Brookings Institute. The Report documented extensive poverty, disease, poor educational opportunity, and massive dislocation of Indians from their homelands. It recommended numerous changes, including the creation of a commission to hear Indian claims. The Report was a precursor to significant changes in federal policy.
- 1934 - Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). In 1934, Congress enacted the IRA to encourage tribes to revitalize their self-government, to take control of their "business and economic affairs," and to assure a solid territorial base by putting a halt to the loss of tribal lands through allotment. This sweeping legislation manifested a sharp change of direction in federal policy toward tribal sovereignty, replacing the assimilationist policy that had been in place since the General Allotment Act of 1887. The IRA prohibited any further allotment of reservation lands, extended indefinitely the periods of trust or restrictions on alienation of Indian lands, provided a mechanism for the acquisition of trust land for tribes, and prohibited any transfer of Indian lands (other than to the tribe or by inheritance) except exchanges authorized by the Secretary as "beneficial for or compatible with the proper consolidation of Indian lands and for the benefit of cooperative organizations." The overriding purpose of the IRA, however, was broader than remedying the negative effects of the General Allotment Act. As the Supreme Court has said, Congress sought to "establish machinery whereby Indian tribes would be able to assume a greater degree of self-government, both politically and economically." Congress thus authorized Indian tribes to adopt their own constitutions and bylaws and to incorporate. Congress also authorized the Secretary to take specified steps to improve the economic and social condition of Indians, including: adopting regulations for forestry and livestock grazing on Indian units, assisting financially in the creation of Indian-chartered corporations, making loans to Indian-chartered corporations out of a designated revolving fund "for the purpose of promoting the economic development" of the Tribes, paying tuition and other expenses for Indian students at vocational schools, and giving preference to Indians

for employment in positions relating to Indian affairs. Of particular significance to the current work of the Section, Section 5 of the IRA authorizes the Secretary of the Interior "in his discretion," to "acquire. . .any interest in lands. . . within or without existing reservations, . . . for the purpose of providing land for Indians." The acquired lands "shall be taken in the name of the United States in trust for the Indian tribe or individual Indian." Pursuant to authority expressly delegated to the Secretary to prescribe regulations "carrying into effect the various provisions of any act relating to Indian affairs," the Secretary has issued regulations governing the implementation of his authority under Section 5 to take land into trust.

- 1943 - Tribal leaders create the National Congress of American Indians. The group sought to promote tribal interests at a national level.
- 1946 - Indian Claims Commission established. In 1946, Congress enacted the Indian Claims Commission Act (ICCA), which created the Indian Claims Commission (ICC), establishing a novel mechanism for Indian tribes to bring past claims against the United States. The cognizable claims under the ICCA included "claims in law or equity arising under the Constitution, laws, treaties of the United States, and Executive orders of the President," as well as claims for lack of "fair and honorable dealings that are not recognized by any existing rule of law or equity." Moreover, neither laches nor statute of limitations constitute permissible defenses to claims brought under the ICCA. Claims that had arisen prior to enactment of the statute were to be filed by 1951. Monetary compensation was the sole remedy available to the ICC. The Commission concluded its work in 1978 and transferred its remaining cases to the Court of Claims.
- 1948 - "Indian Country" defined. In 1948, Congress codified existing federal common law regarding what constitutes "Indian county" for purposes of federal criminal jurisdiction. The Supreme Court subsequently has applied the Indian country definition to determine the scope of tribal jurisdiction.

Removal, Reservations/Rancherias and Relocation

Often known as the 3R's, removal, reservations/rancherias, and relocation greatly affected Native people both individually and collectively. Tribal systems rely on community and the collective ability of our people to work together within a familiar environment to survive. Once we are moved and relocated, we are no longer in a familiar place with family or community. We are forced to try to survive on our own without any help. What happens to our traditions and what are the ramifications to our families, our tribes?

Removal

In 1830, President Andrew Jackson (also known by his political platform as "the Indian killer") signed the Indian Removal Act, which empowered the federal government to take Native-held land east of Mississippi and forcibly remove and relocate Native people from their homes in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina, Florida, and Tennessee to "Indian territory", or what is now Oklahoma. Tribes affected were the Cherokee, Choctaw, Creek, Chickasaw and Seminole. From the southeast alone, the federal government moved roughly 60,000 people to eastern Oklahoma. This atrocity known as the Trail of Tears, which occurred up until 1907 resulted in tens of thousands of Native Americans dying or being murdered after being forcefully removed from their homes in error. The "Trail of Tears" is well known but there was not just one "Trail of Tears"; there were many instances where the federal government used their military to forcibly remove and relocate tribes. For example, in California in the 1860's, the Concow Maidu were forcibly moved to Round Valley.

Known as the Nome Cult Trail or the Conkow Trail of Tears, which began on August 28, 1863; on that day, the Conkow Maidu people were rounded up by armed soldiers and began a grueling march from Chico to Round Valley. Of the 461 Conkow Maidu who began the journey, only 277 remained by the time they reached Round Valley. One hundred and fifty who were too exhausted, sick or malnourished to continue the journey had been left behind five days into the journey with only enough food to last them for a month. Others died of sickness, exhaustion, starvation, or thirst, while two managed to escape en route. Dorothy Hill writes in "The Indians of Chico Rancheria:" "Indian versions of the cruel hardships that their ancestors encountered on the drive to Round Valley are more explicit than the government accounts" (Hill, 1978).

According to Beth Stebbins' book, *The Noyo:* "The problems that had beset the coastal reservation were carried over to the Round Valley reservation" (Stebbins, 1986) a number of first-person accounts of conditions on the Nome Cult reservation described hard-working Native Americans who labored on the farm and yet had not the means to obtain clothing, nor had they received clothing allotments in two years. There were no schools for the children, a dire scarcity of supplies, and "no substantial buildings erected for the Indians to live in," according to Condition of the Indian Tribes: Report of the Joint Special Committee (1865):

> Life on Nome Cult Farm was difficult in other respects as well. Not only did the original inhabitants of Round Valley, the Yuki, now have to confine their lives to only a small portion of their own ancestral land — Nome Cult Farm — they also had

to live side by side with strangers from a number of other Native American tribes. Some of the tribes were enemies of the Yuki, and none had a common language (KCET, 2018).

Ethnic cleansing has been defined as the attempt to get rid of (through deportation, displacement or even mass killing) members of an ethnic group. Ethnic cleansing is also the systematic forced removal of ethnic, racial, and religious groups from a given area, often with the intent of making a region ethnically homogeneous. Removal policies were acts of ethnic cleansing, and meant to take land from Native American tribes and place it in the hands of white invaders.

The ideology of Manifest Destiny was also used to justify extreme measures to murder and decimate Native populations in order to "free" the land from its inhabitants, including forced removal and violent extermination. Proponents of Manifest Destiny led by the US government advocated for and pursued a policy of Indian Removal. The ideology of Manifest Destiny inspired a variety of measures designed to commit genocide through removal or destruction of Native people reinforcing settler colonialism, racist nativism and white supremacy.

Reservations/Rancherias

Reservations were one mechanism by which the federal government thought that they would be able to deal with "the Indian problem." A federal Indian reservation is an area of land reserved for a tribe or tribes under treaty or other agreement with the United States, executive order, federal statute or administrative action as permanent tribal homelands, and where the federal government holds title to the land in trust on behalf of the tribe. Journalist Simon Moya-Smith (Lakota) writes "Indian reservations were first established as prison camps. The U.S. gave each prison camp a number. The Pine Ridge prison camp, for example, is prison camp 334. Then, the U.S. documented each Native by assigning them a number, too. That's why, today, we have enrollment numbers" (Moya-Smith, 2018). In California, most of the "reservations" are actually called rancherias. Rancherias were formed as land set aside for homeless Indians.

Approximately 56.2 million acres are held in trust by the United States federal government for various Indian tribes and individuals. There are approximately 326 Indian land areas in the U.S. administered as federal Indian reservations (i.e., reservations, pueblos, rancherias, missions, villages, communities, etc.).

The largest reservation is the 16 million-acre Navajo Nation Reservation located in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. One of the smallest is a 6 mile rectangular parcel in Oregon where the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Confederated Tribe's Council Office is located. Many of the smaller reservations are less than 5 miles long or wide. Native landholdings have decreased over the years (156 million acres in 1881 to 50 million in 1934) (Dunbar Ortiz, 2014, p. 11-12).

The fact that Native Americans, once confined to **reservations and rancherias**, did not have the resources to take care of themselves, tied into this stereotype and false imagery. Blaming Native people for their own impoverished conditions when they had nothing to do with it, helped to ingrain the "lazy Indian" image into the American psyche.

Relocation

Congress passed a resolution (House Resolution No. 108, 83rd Congress, August 1, 1953) beginning a federal policy of termination, through which American Indian tribes would be disbanded and their land sold. A companion policy of "relocation" moved Indians off reservations and into urban areas. Operation Relocation of 1952, which moved reservation Natives to urban areas, promised transportation, training, work and housing. This happened in major cities across the nation, including Chicago, Dallas-Fort Worth, Denver, Detroit, Los Angeles, Oakland, San Francisco, Portland, etc. Relocation was successful in moving a majority of Natives to urban locations. By 1980, 50% of Native people lived in urban areas. The goal was to assimilate Natives by encouraging them to marry non-Natives. But this plan somewhat backfired. Although intermarriage occurred, many urban Indians did not melt into urban White America. Instead, they looked for ways to remain Native. Intertribal pow-wows were a way to retain connections and traditions. Urban Indians created ways to remain Native and never surrendered their identities.

Dawes Act

Sidebar - Laws and Acts 1887

- 1887 - General Allotment Act - The General Allotment or Dawes Act established the allotment of tribal land in severalty to individual Indians and the abolition of the tribal system as the major tenets of federal Indian policy. The Act authorized the President to survey reservations and allot lands to individual Indians for use as agricultural or grazing lands. Title to these lands was to continue to be held in trust for 25 years, at which point the land would be patented to the individual in fee. The program, as it developed, led to a considerable amount of land losing its trust protection and being sold to non-Indians. As a

> result, by 1900, Indians retained approximately one-half of the land that they had held in 1881. Congress did not revisit Indian policy or the allotment approach in a comprehensive manner until 1934.

The 1887 **Dawes Allotment Act** was a way in which the federal government could obtain reservation land, established through treaties. Between 1870-1900, federal Indian policy changed from treaty making, removal, establishing reservations and warfare to a new policy meant to break up reservations and tribal lands. The Dawes Act, named after Senator Henry Dawes of Massachusetts, authorized the President to break up reservation land into small allotments parceled out to individual Native Americans, encouraging farming. The key term here is "individual":

> To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section; To each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; To each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; and To each other single person under eighteen years now living, or who may be born prior to the date of the order of the President directing an allotment of the lands embraced in any reservation, one-sixteenth of a section (Dawes Act, 1887).

Although this act did not initially apply to all tribes because several were exempt, Dawes was another effort to assimilate Native people into American society, break treaty rights and obligations of the federal government and ultimately economically benefit the federal government once more through the stealing and selling of Native land. Through this effort of assimilation, the federal government did not have to follow their treaty obligations to provide for tribes in exchange for Native land, because they could just take it.

The Dawes Act abolished tribal governments and recognized state and federal laws as superseding tribal sovereignty. Individual Indians were listed on rolls in order for the Department of the Interior to determine eligibility for land distribution. Further excuses were used to promote the act including listing individual land ownership as a way to protect American Indian property rights. Removing land from tribal possession meant the disruption and obstruction of tribal governance, sovereignty, traditions and way of life. To make matters worse, land allotted to individuals was usually unsuitable for farming, which was required in order to maintain individual land ownership. In addition, individuals could not afford all the necessary resources like tools, animals, seeds and supplies necessary to begin, let alone maintain a farm. Tribes were left unpaid or underpaid for the land allotments which often were too small to farm. Native people often were not able to afford the taxes on the property, so it began to be confiscated by the state; which was an issue for the federal government. Allotments were also outright sold to non-Native individuals, resulting in extensive loss of tribal lands. The Dawes Act (1887) document can be found at the National Archives website.

Prior to the Dawes Act, tribes relied on treaty rights to protect their land claims, especially when it came to the federal government attempting to take more and more tribal land. Treaty rights protected original agreements between tribes and the federal government. After the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887 and the Lone Wolf v. Hitchcock (1903) Supreme Court’s decision; Congress could apply any Act to Native Americans regardless of prior treaty rights. This court ruling allowed for the federal government to have superior power over Indian tribes.

Assimilation, Boarding Schools and Adoption

Over 100,000 Native American children were forced to attend **boarding schools**. The main primary role of this education for Indian girls was to inculcate patriarchal norms and desires into Native culture, so that women would lose their places of leadership in Native communities (Smith, 2004, p. 89-90).

Another federal government assimilation initiative and prime example of cultural imperialism that was allegedly done for the "benefit" of Native people was the creation of boarding schools. Richard Henry Pratt founded Carlisle Indian School at an abandoned military barrack in Carlise, Pennsylvania. Pratt believed that Native people and cultures were inferior and proposed that the cultures be eradicated through forced assimilation of Native children, in order to “kill the Indian to save the man.” Pratt and others recognized that it would be much easier to assimilate children rather than adults, and easier still if the government could separate children from their families and tribes.

Whether they attended Haskell Industrial Training School in Lawrence, Kansas, Sherman Institute in California, Chemawa Indian School in Oregon, or anyone of the 367 schools in United States, Native children were forbidden from practicing their ceremonies and traditions, and would be punished if they spoke about their families or spoke their tribal language. Violence against children was sanctioned through corporal punishment. Girls were taught to be maids and domestic servants for white households and boys were taught farming and industrial labor. If parents resisted, their children would be taken by force.

For a comprehensive list of Native American Boarding schools in the United States please see the PDF created by the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition.

Adoption

The boarding schools closed because they were no longer affordable for the federal government to support. The Bureau of Indian Affairs worked with the states and turned to the adoption of Native children to white parents and families. They utilized the state's family court systems and child protective services to institute systemic racism in policies and procedures in order to kidnap Native children from their families. It was an extension of what the Bureau of Indian Affairs had done previously with the boarding schools, but this time it was sanctioned by the state, who received funds from the federal government as incentive.

Indian Child Welfare Act

Sidebar - Laws and Acts 1978

- 1978 - Indian Child Welfare Act - Congress passed ICWA in response to the alarmingly high rate of Native children being separated from their parents, extended families, and tribal communities.

The 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was established in response to previous assimilationist policies by the U.S. federal government. Beginning with boarding schools and then adoptions of Native children to non-Native parents and moving to high numbers of Indian children forcibly removed from their families by public and private agencies and placed in non-Native foster homes, the Indian Child Welfare Act was meant to keep Indian children with Indian families. The actual act can be found under the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (25 USC §§ 1901-63) at the Tribe Court Clearinghouse.

ICWA itself provides preference of who can foster and adopt Native American children. Preference goes in the following order: first to Native family members, this includes extended family like grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, cousins, etc.; second, the tribe the child belongs to; third, any Native family, regardless of tribe. It is important to note that this law applies to states and state agencies, not to tribes. Although federally recognized tribes have the right to petition the state courts that Native children be placed in their care with Native foster parents on reservations, often state judges refuse this placement and elect to place Native children in local non-Native foster homes. We must ask why would judges choose to place Indian children in foster care with non-Indian parents/families? The answer to this question is financial gain. The more Native children placed in foster care, the more money the state receives for these children.

Termination

Sidebar - Laws and Acts 1952 - 1970

- 1952 - House of Representatives signs termination policy. The House of Representatives endorsed a resolution calling on a committee to propose legislation "designed to promote the earliest practicable termination of all federal supervision and control over Indians."
- 1953 - House Resolution on termination passes. Congress unanimously adopted House Concurrent Resolution 108 stating that it was "the policy of Congress, as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship." Among other things, it specifically called for the termination of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin. Subsequently, the Tribe was informed that unless it agreed to termination it would not receive funds that had previously been awarded by the Indian Claims Commission. Numerous other tribes also were terminated by specific statutes following the approval of the Resolution.
- 1954 - Congress terminates a group of tribes. In 1954, Congress enacted legislation terminating the Southern Paiute of Utah, the Alabama and Coushatta Indians of Texas, the Klamath of Oregon, the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin, and other tribes and bands in Oregon. Congress terminated additional tribes over the next eight years.
- July of 1970 - President Richard Nixon formally ended the termination policies established in the 1950's and announced a new policy of "self-determination without termination." The administration introduces 22 legislative proposals supporting Indian self-rule.

Termination occurred in 1953 when the U.S. Congress adopted an official policy of termination declaring that the goal was to, "as rapidly as possible make Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States" (House Concurrent Resolution 108). The real

goal of termination was the theft of Native lands; and a companion policy was the “relocation” of Native people off reservations into urban areas. From 1953 to 1964, 109 tribes were terminated, and federal responsibility and jurisdiction were turned over to state governments. Approximately 2,500,000 acres of trust land was removed from protected status (sold to non-Natives) and 12,000 Native Americans lost tribal affiliation as well as resources guaranteed through treaty for all time.

State Recognition and State Law PL 280

Sidebar - Laws and Acts 1953 - 1976

- 1953 - Public Law 280 enacted. Congress enacted a statute that delegates to five states criminal and civil jurisdiction over Indian lands within their boundaries.
- 1976 - Supreme Court limits reach of Public Law 280 - In Bryan v. Itasca County, the Supreme Court ruled that Public Law 280, which was enacted in 1953, does not provide for state regulatory power over Indian lands.

Public Law 280 which was passed in 1953 is a federal law of the United States establishing a method whereby States may assume criminal jurisdiction over reservation Indians and to allow civil litigation that had come under tribal or federal court jurisdiction to be handled by state courts. State governments and tribes disapproved of the law. Tribes disliked states having jurisdiction without tribal consent and state governments resented taking on jurisdiction for these additional areas without additional funding. With mutual dissent, additional amendments to Public Law 280 have been passed to require tribal consent in law enforcement and in some cases, the states have been able to return jurisdiction back to tribes and the federal government. However, the act mandated a transfer of federal law enforcement authority to state governments in six states. Mandatory PL-280 states are: Alaska (except the Metlakatla Indian Community), California, Minnesota (except the Red Lake Reservation), Nebraska, Oregon (except the Warm Springs Reservation), and Wisconsin.

Decolonization

Decolonization may be defined as the active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, independence and power that originate from a colonized nation's own Indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and also applies to personal and societal, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression. Per Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang: “Decolonization doesn’t have a synonym”; it is not a substitute for ‘human rights’ or ‘social justice’, though undoubtedly, they are connected in various ways (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Decolonization demands an indigenous framework and a centering of Indigenous land, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous ways of thinking (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Decolonization refers to fighting back against the ongoing colonialism and colonial mentalities that permeate all institutions and systems of government. Decolonizing actions must begin in the mind, and that creative, consistent, decolonized thinking shapes and empowers the brain, which in turn provides a major prime for positive change. Undoing the effects of colonialism and working toward decolonization requires each of us to consciously consider to what degree we have been affected by not only the physical aspects of colonization, but also the psychological, mental, and spiritual aspects.

Stereotypes, Othering and Invisibility

Brian Baker discusses othering and the stereotypes of Native people in his chapter “Imaginary Indians: Invoking Invented Ideas in Popular and Public Culture” (Baker, et. al., 2011). Baker establishes that the purpose for his article is to provide an analysis related to imaginary Indians based on ideas invented by members of white American culture that functioned to set Indians apart from society as the “other.” Baker begins with a discussion of the relevance of being relegated to the status of “other” as it relates to public and popular culture. He argues that in order to understand the ideas of imaginary Indians, one must decolonize the mind.

Baker’s four interrelated dimensions of imaginary Indians include:

1. Indians roaming the land
2. Indians as children
3. Wild and dancing Indians
4. Indians as redskins and warriors (via mascots)

In Baker’s (2011) article, Native men are portrayed as violent, Native women as hyper-sexualized, and both are in need of care like children, from the "great white father," forcing a patriarchal, patronizing, treatment onto Native people. This false narrative and

oppressive treatment dehumanizes Native people while at the same time supports westward expansion by the "brave pioneers" and reinforces settler colonialism.

The group that becomes the "other" in American political, economic and cultural institutions, experiences invisibility and visibility in their daily lives. The "other" is invisible because they are ignored and unnoticed while at other times the "other" is visible but only through stereotypes. In both situations, the ideas that are invented and invoked play a key role in how individuals within a group experience their lived status as the other, despite the fact that invented ideas are rooted in an imaginary world (Baker, 2011).

Stereotypes about Native people were created and used by Americans to rationalize and justify settler colonialism, manifest destiny, white supremacy, and ultimately racist nativism. These stereotypes continue to exist in American popular culture because of the desire to keep Native Americans within the category of the “other.” Understanding the powerful reality of colonialism and institutional racism, we must deconstruct and examine our basic ideas that we have been socialized into accepting uncritically.

Americans invented ideas about imaginary Indians as a way to explain and validate the effective ways in which they subjugated Native peoples who became Indians.

Indians roaming the land....

Invented stereotypes have become so effectively institutionalized within the framework of public culture that they have been ingrained into the American imagination. The imaginary Indian wandering aimlessly over the land was a powerful political philosophy central to Manifest Destiny in that it validated the idea that Indians did not “settle” on the land because they “roamed” over it; implying there was something wrong with them because they could and would not “settle” in the same way colonists did, therefore they had no “rights” to the land.

White American lawmakers and officials in the Bureau of Indian Affairs exploited “roam” and “wander” in reference to Indians in order to justify how the U.S. would deal with the so-called “Indian problem.” Eventually it became necessary to constrain the roaming Indians and limit their human existence on the landscape by drawing reservation boundaries around them in order to enclose and isolate them from American society. Once relegated to an inhumane existence on reservations where it was not possible to support their families, the roaming Indians no longer existed as obstacles to Americans who were provided with the opportunity to "settle" and bring "civilization" to the landscape.

Devaluing Indigenous ways of knowing and living within their environment while at the same time not having to “conquer” it, is a way to colonize and stereotype cultures who have lived and thrived here for hundreds of thousands of years. In so doing, minimizing Indigenous existence is another way of making an excuse for taking the land and killing the people, effectively sanctioning genocide.

Indians as children....

Figure 4.4.2: "Seven Indian children of uneducated parents", 1897. (Public Domain; Photo by Francis Benjamin Johnston, via Wikimedia Commons)

Throughout the 19th century, American political officials increasingly described Indians as children who needed to be cared for. In this way, they could create a parent-child relationship, not only controlling Native people but also their resources. Framed as “children,” Native people could not be trusted to take care of themselves or even be around others because they were not responsible, they were lazy and greedy, like children.

Federal policy, through various Acts, laws, Executive Orders and court rulings, created a guardian status for the federal government with inherent authority over the Indian as a '"ward" of the court. The American government created the idea of the "Great Father" who cared for the "red children" who, due to their "inherent cultural inferiority," required constant American paternalistic guidance.

The fact that Native Americans, once confined to reservations, did not have the resources to take care of themselves, reinforced this stereotype and false imagery. Blaming Native people for their own impoverished conditions when they had nothing to do with it, helped to ingrain the "lazy Indian" image into the American psyche. Uncle Sam being the Great Father taking care of his "red children" whom he inherited when he came to this continent, is also a metaphor for why Uncle Sam doesn't take very good care of his 'red children' and provides them with inferior food; because it is an excuse or punishment for them being lazy and non-productive like other '"hard working" white? Americans.

Wild and Dancing Indians....

Wild and dancing Indians have been a long standing stereotype that has been reinforced in adult and children's literature as well as children's movies like *Peter Pan*. If you have ever seen Disney's *Peter Pan*, you will know about the "wild dancing Indians." In addition, you may also be able to make the connection to the Hollywood "cowboy and Indian" movies where the stereotypes of the imaginary Indian prevails. These images regulate Indians to the status of "other" in American society and simply equates Indian with "deviant, uncontrollable behavior," which is similar to the previous imagery of the Indian as the child. On the flip side, drinking and debauchery are often associated with adult Indians. This bleeds into the idea that the Native American male is a wild savage that can't be trusted, especially around white women. In the example below, Frank Waln who is an award winning Sicangu Lakota Hip Hop artist and music producer from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota uses the song "What makes the red man red" in Disney's Peter Pan as a base for his rap song to call out the pervasive stereotypes. Waln has is BA in Audio Arts and Acoustics from Columbia College in Chicago. Waln has three Native American Music Awards. He has written for various publications including *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education, and Society* and *The Guardian*. Frank Waln travels the world telling his story through performance and doing workshops focusing on self-empowerment and expression of truth.

Sidebar: Lyrics to "What makes the red man red" by Frank Waln

Watch this video and listen to this song by Frank Waln –What makes the red man red?

[Intro]
Personally, I should prefer to see the aborigines
And the Indians, too!
And the Indians, too!
This should be most enlightening
What makes the red man red?
Teach 'em all about red man

[Chorus]
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
Teach 'em all about red man (red man)

[Verse 1]
Your history books (lies)
Your holidays (lies)
Thanksgiving lies and Columbus Day
Tell me why I know more than the teacher
Tell me why I know more than the preacher
Tell me why you think the red man is red
Stained with the blood from the land you bled
Tell me why you think the red man is dead
With a fake headdress on your head

Tell me what you know about thousands of nations
Displaced and confined to concentration camps called reservations
We died for the birth of your nation
Hollywood portrays us wrong (like savages)
History books say we're gone (like savages)
Your god and church say we're wrong (savages)
We're from the Earth, it made us strong

[Chorus]
Many moons, red man fought paleface
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
What made the red man red?
Please, you want to stay here and grow up like, like savages?

[Verse 2]
Savages is as savage does
The white man came and ravaged us
Caused genocide, look in my eyes
And tell me who you think the savage was
Savages?
Savages?
Their great celebration continued into the night

[Bridge]
Manifest destiny arrested what's best for me
They kill my culture, America made a mess of me
You inherited everything we die for and all we get is a goddamn mascot
Manifest destiny arrested what's best for me
They kill my culture, America made a mess of me
You inherited everything we die for and all we get is a goddamn mascot
Redskin, red-redskins, redskins, redskin, those redskins
Many moons the red man fought paleface
Sometimes you win, sometimes we win
You made me red when you killed my people
Made me red when you bled my tribe
Made me red when you killed my people
(Like savages, like savages)

[Chorus: The Chief & Frank Waln]
The real true story of the red man
The real true story of the red man
No matter what is written or said
What made the red man red?
All the lies that you spread
What made the red man red?
All the blood that you bled
What made the red man red?
All the lies that you spread
What made the red man red?
You, you

> [Outro]
> Pale-face savages
> Pale-face savages
> Go out and catch a few Indians
> Savages

Indians as Redskins and Warriors

During the timeframe when Americans imposed the most constraints over Native people preventing them from practicing their religions and speaking their languages, preventing them from asserting important dimensions of their indigenous identities, Americans became more fascinated with and began to “play Indian” in reference to their imaginary world relating to Indians. Some scholars say this is when the American psyche, riddled with guilt for the genocide they had committed, attempted to make amends by taking over complete control of Indigenous identity, glorifying the “fight til the end” when there were “no more” Native people, thereby rendering the Native people left, invisible.

Since the 1700’s non-Natives have literally collected and worn cultural artifacts to “play Indian” reflecting dominant cultural interpretations and ideas about Indians. “When the symbolic dimensions of Indian are invoked in reference to the material objects associated with the idea of Indian, the assumption is that one passes through racial and ethnic boundaries to become Indian” (Baker, 2011, p. 353). Thus the ability to play Indian by members of the dominant society in the context of popular culture is intimately tied to the invented ideas that reflect American racism towards Indians. In this imaginary world, all Indians are the same.

The imaginary Indian has also been invented as a mascot and team name in American sports and has been institutionalized in popular culture. Indians are conceptualized as “fierce heathen warriors” inherently prone to “being cold-blooded and cunning” in their ability to fight and kill. Indians have been set apart in popular culture with purposeful stereotypes and derogatory names like redskins, wahoos and wagonburners.

Mascots have been argued by non-Natives to be something that should “honor” Indians because of the qualities the mascot stands for; but this is based on the imaginary Indian, and not true histories and identities, ignoring Native American voices. The erasure of real Indians is the issue. The very concept and name "redskin" is directly connected to genocide. The team "redskin" comes from the bounties that were paid to settlers for bringing in the scalps/heads/bodies of dead Indians. Team owners and many Americans choose to ignore and hide behind ignorance in their refusal to acknowledge this fact.

It is extremely difficult to change ideas associated with the imaginary Indian because the reality is that those ideas have been effectively institutionalized within the frameworks of public culture and ingrained in the American psyche. Children today still act on the legacy of stereotypes created more than 400 years ago through a history of colonialism. Native people today are still being defined as the “other” through the use of stereotypes including the use of the “chief” or “redskin” as mascots. As long as the imaginary Indian continues to have an existence in American popular and public culture as a “redskin warrior,” Indians in America will continue to experience institutionalized racism due to their colonially imposed status as the “other” (Baker, 2011).

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4.5: Perspectives and Future Directions

We Are Still Here

It is this spirit of hope, determination, bravery, courage, and ferocious love that creates resilient people and resilient recovery from loss and trauma. It is this spirit that will help American Indian people today and tomorrow.

-Belcourt-Dittloff, 2006

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, Native nations are sovereign, domestic dependent nations that have survived imperialism, colonization, settler colonialism, white supremacy, the doctrine of discovery and manifest destiny. We have survived acts of genocide, assimilation, boarding schools, termination, removal and relocation; and we have done more than survive, we have thrived and kept our traditions and cultures alive for over 500 years. The following discussed topics are just a few ways we have fought for our right to exist and have succeeded.

Land, Water and Mineral Rights

Land, water and mineral rights are often protected through treaties; but remember treaties, the supreme law of the land, can be broken and all of them have been, by the federal government. The only recourse tribes have is to take the federal government to court, through the federal justice system, up to the Supreme Court. It is a long, costly and arduous process and the Supreme Court has the ability to deny hearing a case. Previous Supreme Court Judges, like Justice Marshall, recognize the bias within the system and have written opinions about the rights of tribes and limitations. The primary point is that legal protections are set in precedence and land, water, fishing, timber and mineral rights are somewhat protected for tribes, whether they are outlined in treaties or not. If they are not outlined in treaties, they are called “reserved rights,” which are rights that were never given up through treaty. Rights to land and resources must be expressly outlined and given up through treaty, otherwise, they remain reserved rights to the land and resources that can be accessed by the tribe and tribal members.

Federally recognized tribes today that have reservations and resources on those reservations can utilize and invest in those resources for the tribe to be financially stable and somewhat financially independent from the federal government, but there are always federal restrictions. States have also often attempted to intervene between tribes and the federal government in order to benefit financially from both entities.

The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) passed by the U.S. Congress in 1934, encouraged tribes to take control of their “business and economic affairs” to insure a solid land base by putting a halt to the loss of tribal lands through allotment (Dawes). The IRA was a sharp change in direction in federal policy leaning towards tribal sovereignty, replacing assimilationist policies that had been in place since the late 1800’s. The IRA prohibited any further allotment of reservation lands. It also provided a way for tribes to purchase land back and place it in trust through the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. The IRA of 1934 was meant to further establish tribal self-government politically and economically. Through the IRA, Congress authorized tribes to adopt their own constitutions and bylaws. Furthermore, Congress authorized the Secretary of the Interior to take steps to improve the social and economic conditions of Native people by adopting regulations for forestry, livestock grazing on lands in trust and/or reservation lands, assist in the creation of chartered corporations, make loans to these corporations out of a revolving fund to protect economic development of tribes, pay tuition and other expenses for Native students at vocational schools, and giving preference to Native workers for employment related to Indian Affairs. What is even more important about the IRA is that it authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to acquire lands “within or outside of existing reservations” to be placed in trust for Native people and tribes. The key word is “trust.” Individual and tribal ownership is still an issue with the federal government and they must maintain their patriarchal, regulatory role in maintaining land for tribes.

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Tribes have utilized traditional ecological knowledge for hundreds of thousands of years to sustainably manage their homelands. This knowledge ranges from the understanding of waterways to use of fire and controlled burns to replenish soils. Only recently have indigenous people actually been heard in the conversations on how to care for the land and what is called the "environment." The concept that we, human beings, are also the environment is only beginning to be acknowledged. One of the many teachings that relates to the importance of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) is the 7th generation principle. Tribal peoples understand that living in this world requires that we have an understanding and respect for generations before us and also for at least 7

generations after us. This is one of the principles that helps us to understand why we need to care for the earth. The concept of 7 generations comes form the Haudenosaunee, but all tribal nations have a concept of caring for the world for future generations.

> The Peacemaker taught us about the Seven Generations. He said, when you sit in council for the welfare of the people, you must not think of yourself or of your family, not even of the generation. He said, make decisions on behalf of the seven generations coming, so that they may enjoy what you have today.
>
> -Oren Lyons, Faithkeeper, Onondaga Nation

Sidebar - Timeline Native History in the U.S. from 1900 - 2007

- 1934 – Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) – also known as the Wheeler-Howard Act – was enacted to decrease federal control of American Indian Affairs and increase Indian self-government.
- 1952 - Arizona v. California litigation begins. The longest-running water rights litigation began in 1952 with the filing of an original action in the Supreme Court by Arizona against California seeking a division of the waters of the Colorado River. The United States subsequently intervened to protect federal water rights, including reserved water rights held for the benefit of five Indian tribes (for the Fort Mojave, Fort Yuma (Quechan), Chemehuevi, Colorado River, and Coocopah Indian Reservations).
- 1964 Survival of American Indians (SAIA) formed and staged "fish-ins" to preserve off reservation fishing rights in Washington State. Those who participate in the fish-ins later help the occupiers on Alcatraz. Fishing and land rights protests continued throughout the 1960's and early 1970's.
- 1973 - United States files treaty fishing rights case in Michigan - The United States filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Bay Mills Indian Community to obtain a clear determination of the Community's right to fish in areas of Lakes Michigan, Huron, and Superior ceded under an 1836 treaty. Several other tribes intervened, and the treaty right was initially confirmed by a 1979 decision. After that ruling, the parties entered into a consent decree in 1985 in which Great Lakes fishery was allocated among the parties by lake, zones, species, and catch limits. After that decree expired in 2000, it was replaced by a new agreement.
- 1977-78 the U.S. Congress passed approximately 59 laws that help redefine tribal issues regarding water rights, fishing rights, and land acquisition. Some land is returned to the tribes and issues of self-governance are further clarified.
- 1979 - Important tribal fishing rights decision issued - In Washington v. Washington State Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel Association, the Supreme Court held that, in general, tribal fishing rights under treaties that contain a phrase reserving for tribes the "right of taking fish [off reservation] at all usual and accustomed grounds and stations" entitle tribes to "take a fair share of the available fish." According to the Court's interpretation of a series of treaties protecting tribal fishing rights in western Washington, a "fair share" allows Indians to secure as much as 50 percent of a fishing harvest, "but no more than, is necessary to provide the Indians with a livelihood--that is to say, a moderate living." Thus, Fishing Vessel and other rulings support the proposition that certain treaties create an enforceable right to take fish. This also reserves the right to protect fish.
- 1984 - Environmental Protection Agency issues Tribal policy - The agency stated that "in keeping with the federal trust responsibility, [EPA] will assure that Tribal concerns and interests are considered whenever EPA's actions and/or decisions may affect reservation environments."
- 1987 - Clean Water Act amended to include a provision treating tribes as akin to states - In the mid-1980's, Congress began to amend federal pollution control statutes to treat tribes like states. In 1986, Congress amended the Clean Water Act to include such a provision. In 1990, Congress included such a provision in the Clean Air Act.
- 1988 - Wyoming Supreme Court issues important water rights decision - In 1977, the State of Wyoming began proceedings to determine all of the water rights in all of the river systems in the State. This included determining all water rights within the Big Horn River basin, which includes the Wind River Reservation inhabited by the Eastern Shoshone and the Northern Arapahoe Tribes. The Tribes and the United States, on its own behalf for federal lands and as trustee for the Tribes, participated in the proceedings. In a landmark decision, the Wyoming Supreme Court in 1988 ruled that Congress, through the Treaty of Fort Bridger, reserved water rights for agricultural use on the Reservation. The Tribes were awarded almost 500,000 acre-feet of reserved rights with a priority date (the date the water right was established) of the Treaty. The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed the decision by an equally divided Court. Since that ruling, the Wyoming Supreme Court has also held, among other things, that the Tribes can use their water rights only for agricultural purposes, and that the State

Engineer's office has administrative authority over all water rights (although the State must turn to the courts to take enforcement action against the Tribes).

- 1999 - Supreme Court issues major off-reservation tribal hunting, fishing, and gathering rights decision - The Indian Resources Section is frequently involved in litigation protecting tribal off-reservation treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather ("usufructuary rights"). The Supreme Court's ruling in Minnesota v. Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, holding that the Chippewa retained rights on lands ceded to the United States in 1837, was a significant victory and a clear statement of tribal rights.
- 2007 - Off-reservation tribal hunting, fishing, gathering rights settlement reached in Michigan. The United States filed a lawsuit in 1973 in order to honor and enforce commitments the federal government made to the Ottawa and Chippewa Indian Nations in the 1836 Treaty of Washington. In that treaty, the Ottawas and Chippewas ceded lands and waters that encompass much of Michigan and the Great Lakes but, in return, retained hunting and fishing rights within the ceded territory.

Economic and Resource Development

Tribes today are working on their futures through economic and resource development. As Native people, our best investment is in our people. Tribes uniquely understand this concept they are investing in our people through education and job placement. In fact, tribal nations require quite a bit of resources, including people power in order to maintain their existence. Tribal Councils and governments, legal systems, K-12 schools and colleges, human resources, resource management, health centers and hospitals, and so much more are required for a nation to be operational and serve its people. It is imperative that tribes take on as much responsibility for these services as possible to maintain self-determination and sovereignty and to remove as much influence from the federal government as possible because the federal government has proven time and again that it only has its best interest in mind when dealing with Native people, which has been to the detriment of Native people and our nations.

Sidebar - Laws and Acts

- 1988 - Indian Gaming Regulatory Act - Shortly after the Supreme Court's 1987 ruling in California v. Cabizon Band of Mission Indians, which held that California lacked authority to impose its regulatory gaming requirements on a tribal bingo operation, Congress enacted comprehensive legislation to address Indian gaming. Among other things, the statute created the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC). The IGRA legislation sought to provide a statutory basis for the operation of gaming by Indian tribes as a means of promoting tribal economic development, self-sufficiency, and strong tribal governments. IGRA applies only to federally recognized tribes, which may conduct gaming only on "Indian lands" within their jurisdiction. Section 20 of IGRA bars gaming on property taken into trust after October 1, 1988. There are limited exceptions to that rule, however. One is for "restored lands," under which gaming is permitted on lands taken into trust in conjunction with "the restoration of lands for an Indian tribe that is restored to Federal recognition." Subsequent litigation handled by the Indian Resources Section has frequently concerned interpretations of the Section 20 exceptions.

Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act was passed in 1990. This legislation addressed protection of Native American gravesites and the repatriation of remains on federal and tribal lands and culturally significant objects from museums receiving federal aid. A number of states have enacted similar statutes like California and CalNAGPRA.

Sidebar - Laws and Acts

- 1978 - Indian Child Welfare Act - Congress passed ICWA in response to the alarmingly high rate of Native children being separated from their parents, extended families, and tribal communities.

CalNAGPRA

In 2001, the State Legislature passed AB-978, the California Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (CalNAGPRA) of 2001 (Steinberg, 2001), requiring all state agencies and museums that receive state funding and that have possession or control over collections of human remains or cultural items to provide a process for the identification and repatriation of these items to the appropriate tribes. The bill also created a Repatriation Oversight Commission with oversight authority. The

intent of the legislation was to cover gaps in the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (Udall, 1990) specific to the State of California.

After the Repatriation Oversight Commission remained unfunded for over a decade, the Native American Heritage Commission (Commission) was granted oversight authority. In 2018, the State Legislature added additional Commission responsibilities under AB-2836 (Gloria, 2018), including providing technical assistance to the University of California (UC) in adopting policies and procedures adopted to expedite repatriation of remaining items in its possession.

On September 25, 2020, Governor Newsom signed AB-275 (Ramos, 2020) into law, which amended CalNAGPRA and became effective on January 1, 2021. In AB-275, the State Legislature added additional Commission responsibilities, including maintaining a list of California Indian tribes and their state aboriginal territories, adopting mediation procedures, and publishing notices of completion of preliminary inventories and summaries on the State of California Native American Heritage Commission website.

Historical Trauma & Mental Health

Historical trauma is multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial or ethnic group. It is related to major events experienced by a particular group of people because of their status as oppressed, such as slavery, the Holocaust, forced migration, and the violent colonization of Native Americans.

Some effects of historical trauma include: experiencing poor overall physical and behavioral health, including low self-esteem, depression, self-destructive behavior, marked propensity for violent or aggressive behavior, substance misuse and addiction, and high rates of suicide and cardiovascular disease. Acute problems of domestic violence or alcohol misuse that are not directly linked to historical trauma may be exacerbated by living in a community with unaddressed grief and behavioral health needs.

Parents' experience of trauma may disrupt typical parenting skills and contribute to behavior problems in children. Compounding this familial or intergenerational trauma, historical trauma often involves the additional challenge of a damaged cultural identity (Sotero, 2006).

Considerable work has been done with communities of Native Americans, who experienced repeated massacres and traumas, including the forced removal of children to federal and mission boarding and day schools (Brave Heart, 2003). From her work with tribal communities, clinician and researcher Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart describes historical trauma as the "cumulative emotional and psychological wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experience" (Brave Heart, 2003, p. 8).

Indian Health Service

Indian Health Service (IHS) is an agency within the US Department of Health and Human Services that is responsible for providing federal health services to American Indians and Alaska Natives. The provision of health services to members of federally-recognized tribes came from the special government-to-government relationship between the federal government and Indian tribes. This relationship, established in 1787, is based on Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, and has been given form and substance by numerous treaties, laws, Supreme Court decisions, and Executive Orders. The IHS is the principal federal health care provider and health advocate for Indian people, and its goal is to raise their health status to the highest possible level. The IHS provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to 574 federally recognized tribes in 37 states (Indian Health Service).

Politics and Activism

Sidebar - Timeline Native History in the U.S. 1955 - 1985

- 1955 - Indian Long-Term Leasing Act enacted. In 1955, Congress passed legislation that extended the maximum terms of mineral and grazing leases approved by the Secretary of the Interior.
- 1958 - Congressman secures Interior Department moratorium on Indian land sales. During the termination period, large amounts of tribal land were lost. In 1958, Senator James Murray, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs persuaded the Interior Secretary to halt further Indian land sales pending a study. The study that was subsequently prepared showed that the termination policy had been "disastrous" in its implementation.
- 1959 - Eisenhower's Interior Secretary speaks out against termination. Interior Secretary Fred Seaton signaled the end of the termination era when he stated that it is "absolutely unthinkable. . . that consideration would be given to forcing upon an Indian tribe a so-called termination plan which did not have the understanding and acceptance of a clear majority of the

members of the affected tribe."

- 1961 - President Kennedy appoints Stewart Udall as Interior Secretary. The appointment of Stewart Udall led to the creation of a special task force on Indian affairs. The Task Force recommended that the termination policy be abandoned. Two members of the Task Force subsequently were appointed to lead the BIA, and under their leadership, BIA expanded reservation services.
- 1961 - Tribal representatives endorse self-determination. Representatives of numerous tribes issued a "Declaration of Indian Purpose" which stated that Indians "want to contribute to their own personal tribal improvements and want to cooperate with their Government on how best to solve the many problems in a businesslike, efficient, and economical manner as rapidly as possible."
- 1961 - the Nations Indian Youth council (NIYC) organized following the American Indian Charter Convention in Chicago to encourage greater self-sufficiency and autonomy of Native Nations.
- 1964 - was the first landing at Alcatraz. Five Sioux Indians claimed the island under the Fort Laramie 1868 Treaty enabling possession of surplus federal lands. They occupy Alcatraz for four hours, calling for the island's transformation into a cultural center and an Indian university.
- 1965 - LaNada Boyer (Means-War Jack) relocated to San Francisco as part of the BIA Relocation program. She rejected that program as a form of termination, the federal government's series of laws and policies intended to assimilate Native Americans into the American mainstream and became active in the Mission District which had the largest concentration of Native people in the city where she participated in the formation of the larger pan-Indian movement that flourished in urban centers.
- 1968 Summer - United Native Americans (UNA), a pan-Indian organization, is founded in the San Francisco Bay Area to promote self-determination through Indian control of Indian affairs at every level.
- 1968 July - the American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded in Minneapolis to protect the city's Native community from police abuse and to create job training, housing and education programs.
- 1968 - LaNada Boyer (Means-War Jack) became the first Native American student to enter the University of California at Berkeley. It was at UC Berkeley that she helped to form the Native American student organization.
- 1968 - President Johnson urges end to termination and endorses self-determination. In an address to Congress, President Johnson proposed "a new goal" for federal Indian programs that specifically endorses self-determination and gives "an opportunity [for Indians] to remain in their homelands, if they choose, without surrendering their dignity; an opportunity to move to the towns and cities of America, if they choose, equipped with the skills to live in equality and dignity."
- 1968 - Indian Civil Rights Act - Congress enacted the Indian Civil Rights Act to ensure that the provisions akin to those in the Bill of Rights applied to tribal governments.
- Spring of 1969 - the Berkeley Campus Chapter of UNA joined the Third World student strike which became the catalyst for the creation of the first Native American Studies program and the Department of Ethnic Studies. Leaders of the effort were LaNada Boyer (Means-War Jack), Patty Silvas, Carmen Christy, Horace Spencer, Richard Oakes, and Jack D. Forbes. The Native American Student Alliance was formed from this and planned the 1969 Alcatraz occupation. Other plans were being developed on other California college and university campuses. Forbes drafted a proposal for a College of Native American Studies to be created on one of the University of California campuses. The State Legislature endorsed the idea.
- October of 1969 - the American Indian Center in San Francisco burned down. It had been a meeting place that served 30,000 Indian people with social programs. The loss of the center focuses Indian attention on taking over Alcatraz for use as a new facility.
- 1969 - The Native American Student Union brings together Indian college students in a California Conference. Leaders included Dennis Turner, Lanada Boyer (Means-War Jack), and many others.
- November 20, 1969 - 14 Indians landed on Alcatraz. The next day 80 to 100 Indians of 20 tribes occupy Alcatraz Island to set up an Indian Cultural Center. By November 28 about 400 Indians were on the island. They defy the federal government and set up permanent occupancy for 19 months. Native American college students are intricately involved in this occupation.
- December of 1969 - members of the American Indian Movement, led by co-founder Dennis Banks, arrived at Alcatraz. After two weeks, they returned to Minneapolis bringing new ideas about confrontational activism and land seizures as a tool to confront the federal government's Indian policies.
- March 14, 1970 - Indians began occupying BIA offices. Many occupy the Littleton, Colorado BIA office to protest anti-Indian employment policies of the Bureau.

- 1970 - Self-determination without termination announced - President Nixon announced a new direction in federal Indian policy when, in a special message to Congress on July 8, 1970, he condemned the forced termination of Indian tribes. He reiterated the federal government's responsibility to Indians but also proposed new policies to encourage Indian independence and self-determination.
- September 1970 - 50 Indians from different tribes in the U.S. climbed to the top of Mount Rushmore and announced they were "taking over", until 123,000 acres of Indian land that was unjustly taken for a gunnery range in World War II is returned.
- November of 1970 - AIM painted Plymouth Rock red and occupied the Mayflower replica on Thanksgiving Day.
- June 11, 1971 - the fifteen remaining Alcatraz occupiers were escorted off the island by U.S. marshals and FBI agents officially ending the 19 month and nine-day long occupation.
- July 4, 1971 - AIM stages a Fourth of July counter-celebration by occupying the Mount Rushmore National Monument.
- 1972 - after an 11 year effort, the Alaska Native Claims Movement negotiates a large land claims settlement giving Alaska Natives 44 million acres of land and $962.5 million. This act becomes a model for struggling Indigenous movements around the world.
- November 1972 - AIM organized the Trail of Broken Treaties; more than 2,000 Indians went to Washington on the eve of the presidential election to president Nixon with a 20 point program. They occupy the Bureau of Indian Affairs headquarters for seven days, demanding that the U.S. recognize tribal self-determination.
- 1973 - Menominee Restoration Act is enacted, marking the first restoration of a terminated tribe. It "reinstated all rights and privileges of the tribe or its members under Federal treaty, statute, or otherwise which may have been diminished or lost." Numerous other tribes were subsequently restored.
- 1973 Wounded Knee II - when members of the Lakota Sioux tribe with the help of AIM on the Pine Ridge Reservation attempted to have Dick Wilson, the BIA backed head of the tribal administration, impeached, they received resistance from the federal government, which wanted to keep him in power. Led by Russell Means, AIM seizes control of Wounded Knee (site of the 1890 massacre) and the perimeter is placed under siege for 71 days. More than 500,000 rounds of ammunition are fired into AIM’s bunkers. Two Indians and two FBI agents were killed. Nearly 1,200 people were arrested. The end of the standoff is negotiated on May 7, with the federal government’s promise that Native American grievances will be addressed. Native Americans attend one meeting with White House Representatives and are promised congressional review of their concerns and a second meeting, but no further meetings take place.
- 1973-76 - the three years following Wounded Knee II are referred to by Native people as the "Reign of Terror" as the FBI carries our intensive local surveillance, makes repeated arrests, harasses local tribal members and institutes legal proceedings against AIM leaders and supporters on the Pine Ridge reservation. The Guardians of the Oglala Nation (GOON’s) affiliated with the BIA, backed by Dick Wilson control the reservation with an iron fist and often shoot first, asking questions later. The FBI does not attempt to interfere. During this time 61 homicides among AIM supporters are reported; many are never investigated.
- 1974 - Supreme Court ruled that federal relationships with tribes are political, not racial, in nature - In Morton v. Mancari, the Supreme Court held that the federal government's special treatment of Indians is political and non-racial when it "can be tied rationally to the fulfillment of Congress' unique obligation toward the Indians." Subsequent decisions have both reaffirmed the holding and made clear that it applies to the federal government's dealings with Indians generally. For example, in United States v. Antelope, the Supreme Court held in 1977 that "[f]ederal regulation of Indian tribes, therefore, is governance of once-sovereign political communities; it is not to be viewed as legislation of a 'racial' group consisting of 'Indians.'"
- June 26, 1975, two FBI agents enter Jumping Bull Ranch where a large number of AIM supporters were invited to protect the Jumping Bull elders. A shootout ensues and the two FBI agents are killed. One of the AIM defenders, Leonard Peltier, is later captured in Canada. He is extradited and convicted of murder by an all white jury. Activists continue to campaign for his exoneration and release while Peltier serves two consecutive life sentences in federal prison.
- 1975 - Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act - Congress enacted the ISDEA to permit tribes to contract with the federal government to provide certain federal services and programs to tribal members.
- 1977 - AIM sponsors talks resulting in the 1977 International Treaty Conference with the U.N. in Geneva, Switzerland.
- February 11-July 1978 - Indian participants embark on the "Longest Walk" from Alcatraz Island to Washington D.C. to symbolize the forced removal of Indians from their homelands and to draw attention to continuing problems. The action challenges the backlash movement against Indian treaty rights. They present a manifesto to the Carter administration.

- 1980 - The Supreme Court rules that the U.S. owes the Lakota Sioux interest from 1877 payment as compensation for taking the Black Hills, originally part of Indian lands. The Lakota reject the payment, hoping to reclaim the Black Hills from the U.S.
- 1985 - An AIM security camp is established on Navajo land near Big Mountain, Arizona to support the traditional Dine elders in their resistance to forced relocation.

Alcatraz, AIM and Wounded Knee

Figure 4.5.1: "San Francisco (CA, USA), Alcatraz, Barracks -- 2022 -- 3087." (CC BY-SA 4.0; Dietmar Rabich via Wikimedia Commons)

In October of 1969 the American Indian Center in San Francisco burned down. It had been a meeting place that served 30,000 Native people with social programs. The loss of the center focused Indian attention on finding a new location. Taking over Alcatraz for use as a new facility was one idea that took fruit. After all, the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie includes a provision for tribes to reclaim Native lands that were stolen by the federal government and used as military posts, forts, prisons, etc. and Alcatraz is a decommissioned federal military prison that closed because the expenditures to run the facility were too high.

On November 20, 1969, 14 Indians landed on Alcatraz and began the occupation. The next day 80 to 100 Indians from 20 different tribes landed on Alcatraz Island to set up an Indian Cultural Center. By November 28, 1969 about 400 Indians were on the island. They defied the federal government and set up permanent occupancy for 19 months until they were forced out by the armed federal marshals, FBI agents, and special forces police on June 11, 1971.

Alcatraz was an important start to the next series of events bringing national recognition to Indian issues. Native American college students who were intricately involved in the occupation, fueled the development of Native American Studies/American Indian Studies at San Francisco State and Berkeley; the creation of the Native American Studies department at UC Davis; and the establishment of DQ University, the first tribal college in California, located at an abandoned Army Telecommunications center and government surplus land near Davis, California (Frank-Cardenas, 2019). Please take a listen to Radio Free Alcatraz - by John Trudell.

In December of 1969, members of the American Indian Movement, led by co-founder Dennis Banks, arrived at Alcatraz. After two weeks, they returned to Minneapolis, bringing new ideas about confrontational activism and land seizures as a tool to confront the federal government's Indian policies.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded in 1968 in an effort to stop police harassment of Indians in the Minneapolis area. Borrowing some tactics from the Vietnam war protests of the era, AIM soon gained national notoriety. However, many mainstream Indian leaders denounced the youth-dominated group as too radical. In 1972, a faction of AIM members led by Dennis Banks and Leonard Peltier sought to close the divide by making alliances with traditional tribal elders on reservations. They had their greatest success on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, after a group of young white men murdered a Sioux man named Yellow Thunder. Although Yellow Thunder's attackers received only six-year prison sentences, this was widely seen as a victory.

Wounded Knee was the site of two conflicts between Native people and the U.S. Army and later the FBI. On December 29, 1890 the U.S. Army's 7th Cavalry surrounded a band of Ghost Dancers under BigFoot, a Lakota chief, near Wounded Knee Creek and demanded they surrender their weapons. The U.S. Army brutally murdered approximately 300 Native women, elderly men and

children. Historians speculate that the soldiers of the 7th Cavalry were deliberately taking revenge for the regiment's defeat at Little Bighorn in 1876 (History.com Editors, 2022).

Again in 1973, brutal murders were happening again on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Members of the American Indian Movement occupied Wounded Knee for 71 days to protest conditions on the reservation. Two FBI AIM's growing prestige and influence, however, threatened the conservative Sioux tribal chairman, Dick Wilson. When Wilson learned of a planned AIM protest against his administration at Pine Ridge, he retreated to tribal headquarters where he was under the protection of federal marshals and Bureau of Indian Affairs police.

Rather than confront the police in Pine Ridge, some 200 AIM members and their supporters decided to occupy the symbolically significant hamlet of Wounded Knee, site of the 1890 massacre. Wilson, with the backing of the federal government, responded by besieging Wounded Knee.

During the 71 days of the siege, which began on February 27, 1973, federal officers and AIM members exchanged gunfire almost nightly. Hundreds of arrests were made, and two Native Americans were killed and a federal marshal was permanently paralyzed by a bullet wound.

The leaders of AIM surrendered on May 8 after a negotiated settlement was reached. In a subsequent trial, the judge ordered their acquittal because of evidence that the FBI had manipulated key witnesses. AIM emerged victorious and succeeded in shining a national spotlight on the problems of modern Native Americans.

The troubles at Wounded Knee, however, were not over after the siege. A virtual civil war broke out between the opposing Indian factions on the Pine Ridge reservation, and a series of beatings, shootings and murders left more than 100 Indians dead. When two FBI agents were killed in a 1975 gunfight, the agency raided the reservation and arrested AIM leader Leonard Peltier for the crime. In 1977, Peltier was convicted of killing the two FBI agents and sentenced to life in prison. To this day, Peltier's supporters continue to maintain his innocence and seek a presidential pardon for him (History.com Editors, 2022; American Indian Movement Grand Governing Council).

Standing Rock - Protests of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)

Figure 4.5.2: No DAPL protesors outside San Francisco City Hall, 2016. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Pax Ahimsa Gethen via Wikimedia Commons)

Figure 4.5.2 is a photo of Dakota Access Pipeline protestors standing in front of San Francisco City Hall which has "NO DAPL" sign projected onto the building.

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a $3.78 billion dollar project to build a 1,200 mile pipeline, was announced to the public in June of 2014. In September of 2014, DAPL representatives met with Chairman Archambault and the entire Standing Rock Tribal Council to discuss the proposed project, which would cut through the Tribe's historic treaty lands, sacred sites, and cross the Missouri River just upstream of the reservation. The Tribe made its overwhelming objection to the proposal absolutely clear to DAPL representatives, and promised to fight them if they proceeded in the proposed location. Here is an excerpt from the transcript from that Sept. 30th meeting:

> And just before you get started on the project, I want you to know and understand that we recognize our treaty boundaries, our Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and 1868, which encompasses North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, South Dakota. Because

> of that we oppose the pipeline. We have a standing resolution that was passed in 2012 that opposes any pipeline within the treaty boundary. So just so you know coming in, this is something that the tribe is not supporting. This is something the tribe does not wish. Even though it's outside of our 1889 federal boundaries, we still recognize our treaty boundaries (David Archambault, Sept. 30th Meeting between DAPL and Standing Rock Tribal Council).

From the very start of the process, the Tribe repeatedly and vocally expressed its concerns about damage to sacred sites, risks of oil spills, and the Government's heightened responsibility to ensure that the Tribe's treaty rights were protected. DAPL construction began in June of 2016.

DAPL was designed to transport 470,000 barrels of oil a day underground from North Dakota to Illinois. The pipeline is buried nearly 4 feet deep in most areas under agricultural lands but is also situated under Lake Oahe which is one water source for the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and surrounding communities as well as the Missouri River. The Dakota Access Pipeline violates Article II of the Fort Laramie Treaty, which guarantees the "undisturbed use and occupation" of reservation lands surrounding the proposed location of the pipeline. The pipeline was completed in April of 2017 and became operational in May 2017.

What was unique about Standing Rock and the DAPL protests is that tribal members from all across the world came to be a part of this historic moment. Several hundred Water Protectors began to show up at the Oceti Sakowin camp. The North Dakota state police along with law enforcement from several other states militarized and moved in to forcibly remove protestors camped on tribal land.

Armed with batons, weapons and dressed in riot gear, law enforcement were flanked by US military tanks as they moved in to remove and arrest the Water Protectors. Water hoses were used in freezing weather, guard dogs, rubber bullets and tear gas were employed against non-armed, non-violent Water Protectors, many of whom were elders. The United Nations even called for a halt in construction of the pipeline arguing it could threaten the health and well-being of Native Americans. The United Nations further condemned the violent response to the Water Protectors by local law enforcement accusing them of unjustified and excessive force in their increasingly militarized response.

For fear of further risk of injury or death, it became clear to the Standing Rock tribal chairman that the Water Protectors needed protecting themselves and that this battle would be one for and won in the courts. He asked the Water Protectors to leave the camp and continue the fight from the safety of their homes. Water Protectors went home but many had sustained life long injuries and legal bills for warrants for their arrests that they will never be able to pay, so many are serving prison time instead, charged with felonies that will prevent them from voting in upcoming elections.

The Dakota Access Pipeline construction which was halted under the Obama administration due to public pressure, but was resumed and completed under the Trump administration, recently leaked 84 gallons of oil in April, 2022. The Standing Rock Sioux tribe is still fighting in court for the shutdown of DAPL before irreparable damage is done. To date, the Biden administration has done nothing to help shut down DAPL (Earthjustice, 2023).

Shasta Dam

Shasta Dam is the fourth highest dam in California and its 4.55 million acre-foot reservoir is the largest in the state. The dam captures water from three rivers; the upper Sacramento, McCloud, and Pit, blocking migratory fish access and affecting downstream flows in the process. Constructed and operated by the U.S. Bureau of

Reclamation, the Shasta Dam and Reservoir is the cornerstone of the giant Central Valley Project (CVP), which provides irrigation and drinking water for much of California's Central valley and areas just south of the San Francisco Bay Area.

In 2015, the Bureau of Reclamation identified a plan with the greatest level of National Economic Development (NED) benefits as one including an 18.5-foot rise of Shasta Dam, which would increase water storage capabilities behind the dam by about 13% (The Facts about Raising Shasta Dam, 2021).

This plan was advertised to improve conditions in the Sacramento River for threatened and endangered salmon and steelhead and increase the state's overall water supply reliability, but would have disastrous effects on the Winnemem Wintu and Hoopa Valley Tribes.

Tribal leaders warned that the dam raise will inundate many of the sacred cultural sites not already covered by the waters of Shasta Lake. They also oppose the dam raise because it is designed in conjunction with the Bay Delta Conservation Plan to build peripheral tunnels. The construction of the twin tunnels would hasten the extinction of Central Valley salmon and steelhead, Delta smelt, longfin smelt, green sturgeon and other species, as well as the salmon and steelhead populations of the Trinity and Klamath rivers. The "habitat restoration" proposed under the plan would also take huge areas of fertile Delta farmland out of production.

Winnemem Wintu Chief Caleen Sisk, referring to corporate agribusiness interests on the west side of the San Joaquin Valley, emphasized, “Farms in the desert are killing our water systems. The selenium pollution of the water is only the tipping point, only an indicator of what is coming. Everything is threatened if the water is not allowed to go to the sea. And the rainfall that falls in the desert is as the Creator has intended,” she said. She noted how the Bureau claims one of the two reasons for the dam raise is to provide a larger cold water pool to “restore” the salmon. “However, the cold water pool in place now hasn’t created more salmon,” Sisk said. Sisk emphasized that the loss of salmon will result in a huge catastrophe for fish, people and the planet (Winnemem Wintu say no to Shasta Dam Raise, Town Tunnels, by Dan Bacher September 27, 2013 - Center for World Indigenous Studies cwis.org).

David Martinez, Winnemem Tribal Member, pointed out the solution to restoring the salmon is not raising the dam and building the twin tunnels, but to provide passage over Shasta Dam so the winter run Chinook salmon can once again ascend the McCloud River to spawn. “A half mile channel between Dry Creek and Cow Creek can allow the salmon to migrate upriver for a lot less money than the billions it will cost to raise the dam and build the tunnels,” supposedly to “restore” salmon, he noted (Winnemem Wintu say no to Shasta Dam Raise, Town Tunnels, by Dan Bacher September 27, 2013 - Center for World Indigenous Studies cwis.org).

Sisk said, “We want our salmon back and we want access to participation in the process as a viable community. In their environmental impact report, they list everything we have as ‘archeological’ sites. However, that’s where we dance – that’s where we bring our girls across the river in the puberty ceremony. To make room for the reservoir, the BOR stole our lands, destroyed our salmon run, and submerged our burial grounds and sacred sites. Many Winnemem were left homeless, and we still have yet to receive the ‘like lands’ that were promised to us in the 1941 Indian Lands Acquisition Act, which authorized the stealing of our land” (Winnemem Wintu say no to Shasta Dam Raise, Town Tunnels, by Dan Bacher September 27, 2013 - Center for World Indigenous Studies cwis.org).

In November of 2020, the Trump administration finalized the Shasta Dam raise plan which has led to federal funding being released to the state of California to continue the work. Protests continue (Bahouth, 2020; Bureau of Reclamation, 2022).

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit Movement

Figure 4.5.3: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Protestor, 2018. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Lorie Shaull via Wikimedia Commons)

Violence against Native women contributes to the highest rates of assault, domestic abuse, sexual violence, abduction and human trafficking, murder and obliteration from society’s consciousness and collective memory. Native American/Indigenous women are assaulted, raped, abducted, trafficked, murdered on a scale unimaginable among any other ethnic group on this continent. The Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Movement (MMIW) or Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit Movement (MMIWG2S) is an Indigenous grass roots effort to restore identities in the public sphere, to show their faces and give them voice. It is a way to let them, their spirits, and their loved ones know that they are not forgotten, that they are remembered, they are loved, they are needed, they are missed and mourned.

- 1 in 3 Native women will be raped at least once during their lifetime which is more than twice the rate for any other ethnic group in the U.S.
- 86% of rapes of Native women are committed by non-Indian rapists (70%) who are white men.
- 84% of Native Women have experienced violence in their lifetime.
- 4 in10 Native women are subjected to violence by an intimate partner in their lifetimes.
- Murder is the 3rd leading cause of death among Native women.

- Native women, girls, sisters, mothers, daughters are being sold into sex slavery here in the US and Canada – Native women are being raped, beaten, forced into prostitution and worse on a daily basis in an organized way.
- sexual slavery is no longer confined to adult Indigenous women, young Native girls and boys and even babies are being sold as sexual commodities to be 'owned' and used.

The imprint of a red hand over the mouth has become the symbol of the growing MMIW movement. It stands for all the missing sisters whose voices are not heard. It stands for the silence of the media and law enforcement in the midst of this crisis. It stands for the oppression and subjugation of Native women who are now rising up to say #NoMoreStolenSisters (Native Hope, 2022).

In April of 2021, Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland announced the formation of a new Missing and Murdered Unit (MMU) within the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services (BIA-OJS) to provide leadership and direction for cross-departmental and interagency work involving missing and murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives. The MMU will help put the full weight of the federal government into investigating these cases and marshal law enforcement resources across federal agencies and throughout Indian country (U.S. Department of the Interior, 2021).

The BIA's MMU website posts critical information about missing and murdered individuals, including case profiles that can be easily shared via social media, as well as ways to submit tips that could help investigators solve cases and give families closure (Indian Affairs).

Landback Movement

LANDBACK is a movement that has existed for generations with a legacy of organizing and sacrifice to "get Indigenous Lands back into Indigenous hands" (LANDBACK, 2021). The LANDBACK Campaign is a mechanism to connect, coordinate, and amplify this movement and the communities that are fighting for LANDBACK.

The closure of Mount Rushmore, return of that land and all public lands in the Black Hills, South Dakota is the cornerstone battle. Not only does Mount Rushmore sit in the heart of the sacred Black Hills, but it is an international symbol of white supremacy and colonization. To truly dismantle white supremacy and systems of oppression, we have to go back to the roots. Which is putting "Indigneous Lands back into Indigenous hands" (LANDBACK, 2021).

LANDBACK is a political framework that allows us to deepen our relationships across the field of organizing movements working towards true collective liberation. It allows us to envision a world where Black, Indigenous & POC liberation co-exists. It is a political, organizing and narrative framework from which work is done with purpose and conviction. "It is bringing our People with us as we move towards liberation and embodied sovereignty through an organizing, political and narrative framework" (LANDBACK, 2021).

LANDBACK is about "reclaiming everything stolen from Indigenous peoples: land, language, ceremony, food, education, housing, healthcare, governance, medicines and kinship" (LANDBACK, 2021).

Did you know that you can purchase land and donate it to the local tribe whose land it initially belonged to and who may still reside on or near that land? The Secretary of the Interior will put that land in trust for the tribe. So what are you waiting for?

Indian Education

In 1975, the United States Congress enacted the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, Public Law 93-638. The Act declares that the Congress recognizes a Federal obligation to be responsive to the principle of self-determination through Indian involvement, participation, and direction of educational and service program. Prior to the passing of the Act, the Amendment of 1974 added two sections to Part B, to provide the authority to fund special teacher education programs and issue fellowships to Native American students in graduate and professional programs.

Sidebar - Laws and Acts

- 1971 - DQ University, in California, was one of the first six tribal colleges and universities in the United States, all of which were founded between 1968 and 1972.
- 1972 - Indian Education Act enacted - Congress enacted the Indian Education Act providing increased federal aid for Indian education.
- 1975 - The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act gives native American control in administering federal programs and services to their communities.

As stated earlier in this chapter, education for Native people in this country has been an act by the federal government of assimilation and genocide. Our communities and tribes are still grieving from the large numbers of murders and mass graves found at many of the Boarding School sites. Many tribes and Native Parents have advocated for and started their own Indian Education programs where they work in K-12 schools to support Native students. Besides providing for the physical resources of educational materials like notebooks, paper, pencils, backpacks, rulers, erasers, protractors, etc., tutoring, cultural programming, connection to traditional ecological knowledge and language revitalization programs are some of the resources Indian Education provides. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to be in community with other Native people whether it be from the same tribe or different tribes.

A report, "From Boarding Schools to Suspension Boards," written in 2019 by the Sacramento Native American Higher Education Collaborative and CCEAL Contributors Dr. J. Luke Wood and Mohamed Qas reveals the long term ramifications of the boarding schools (Springer, et al., 2019):

- The California statewide suspension rate for Native American children and youth is 7.2%, much higher than the statewide suspension average of 3.5%. Analyses indicated that Native American girls were suspended at a rate of 4.6%. Native American boys were suspended at a rate of 9.6%.
- Native American boys are expelled at a rate that is 4.2 times higher than the state average, representing the highest expulsion rate for any racial/ethnic or gender group. The rate has also been steadily rising over the past four years.
- Early childhood (kindergarten through third grade) is the area with the greatest suspension disparity. Native American boys are 2.5 times more likely to be suspended in early childhood education than boys in the same grade-range, while the rate is 3.7 times greater for Native American girls in comparison to the average for girls.
- The highest percentage of suspensions occurs in middle school (Grades 7 and 8). In middle school, Native American boys are suspended at a rate of 16.5%, while Native American girls are suspended at 9.1%.
- The top counties for suspending Native American boys were Modoc County, Mono County, and Lassen County. Modoc County was the top county suspending both Native American boys at 38% and Native girls at 26.1%.
- Kings County was the top expulsion county for both Native American boys and girls. Native American boys are more than 40 times more likely to be expelled in this county than the statewide average. For Native American girls, the rate is 20 times higher than the statewide average – these rates are egregiously high.
- The number one suspension district for Native American boys in California is Fortuna Union High in Humboldt County. This district suspends more than 71% of their Native American males. This is followed by Modoc Joint Unified in Modoc County at 42.5%.
- The top suspension district for Native American girls is Loleta Union Elementary in Humboldt County. In this district, 32.3% of Native American girls were suspended. This district has long struggled with its service to Native American students, having been the focus of a 2013 Office of Civil Rights investigation for its treatment of Native students.
- Lemoore Union High in Kings County was the number one expulsion district for Native American boys and the number one expulsion district for girls.

You can access the PDF of the report "From Boarding Schools to Suspension Boards: Suspensions and Expulsions of Native American Students in California Public Schools."

These high numbers of suspensions are horrendous; especially since we know that early experiences in education affect whether or not a student continues on to college and in California we have seen a massive drop, approximately 50% in Native student enrollment especially at the Community College level.

The Sacramento Native American Higher Education Collaborative of which the authors of this chapter are members, has been working since 2015 on obtaining funding to establish the Native American Student Support and Success Program (NASSSP) with the California Community College Chancellor's Office. This student services program is similar to Umoja and Puente, but focuses specifically on Native American College student recruitment, retention and success by providing services and guidance to Native students. The program was recently funded this year (2022) for five years, for up to 20 community colleges to participate.

Cultural and Language Revitalization Movements

Across Indian Country there are many tribes and Native organizations working to bring back Native languages from the brink of extinction, or as we like to say in language revitalization circles "wake them up from sleeping." It can be very difficult to find any living speakers for many of our tribal languages, let alone teachers to instruct our youth and their parents who want to learn. In California, for example, there is an organization called Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival (AICLS). This

organization has been essential for many tribal groups attempting to revitalize their tribal languages. AICLS developed and hosts the Breath of Life Archival Institute for California Indigenous Languages.

> Starting in 1995, AICLS has partnered with the University of California at Berkeley to run the one-week biennial Breath of Life Language Restoration Workshop for California Indians. The objective is to assist the participants in exploring and utilizing the vast archives of California Indian languages and materials for their own efforts in language reclamation. There are lectures and workshops on linguistics to help them learn how to understand the written materials and bring them back into spoken language.
>
> Each language group is paired with a linguist who works with them intensively throughout the week, and archivists in the museums, libraries and departments housing the materials are on hand to orient the participants and help them explore the archives. As they become familiar with the available materials, participants start focusing in on a project of their choice, which is presented to the group at the end of the week. Through social events during the week and staying together in the dorms, participants often find inspiration from fellow language activists and develop useful connections.
>
> The "Breath of Life" concept has spread. AICLS members helped organize the "National Breath of Life Archival Institute for Indigenous Languages" in Washington D.C., first partnering with the Endangered Language Fund, and later with the Myaamia Center and the Smithsonian Institution. Now there is a "Breath of Life 2.0," an advanced workshop for experienced Breath of Lifers to teach them how to make a database to organize and use efficiently the materials they found in university and museum archives or have in their own collections. This workshop was held at Miami University in Ohio in 2019, and was held at the University of Oregon in 2020 (AICLS, 2020).

One example (there are many) of a language program that has worked tirelessly and been successful in California is that of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation and the Patwin language. The Patwin language was spoken in many tribal communities in the southwest area of the Sacramento River. After acts of genocide and forced assimilation, it is considered one of the worlds most endangered languages. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation has focused extensively on learning the Patwin language. Their website describes this process:

> Language is beating heart of our identity and crucial to the survival of our culture. But for generations, our words and syntax were outlawed. Criminalizing the Patwin language was central to the strategy of challenging our people's existence.
>
> By 1997, with only one documented fluent speaker of Patwin, our language was listed as one of the most at-risk languages in the world by the United Nations Atlas of Endangered Languages. That one fluent speaker—the late Bertha Wright Mitchell (1936-2018), affectionately known to many as Auntie Bertha—is responsible, more than any other single person, for enabling us stay connected to our language and our culture today.
>
> Auntie Bertha was a basketweaver and a culture bearer for our Tribe, mentoring many of our citizens in traditional ways and ceremonies. Starting in 2006, she worked with the now-credentialed language teacher Leland Kinter to teach Patwin to our children at the Yocha Dehe Wintun Academy and to our adult citizens at the Cultural Department, planting the seed for the current language-learning programs.
>
> In 2012, our primary language teacher and current Tribal Treasurer Leland Kinter earned the American Indian Languages Credential from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Since then, the Tribe has published a Patwin dictionary and grammar book. Our iTunes database of Patwin words and phrases includes more than 8,000 entries. We launched a Patwin language website for Tribal Citizens, and we are now working on a history curriculum for the Academy, which we plan to share with other California schools. Just as the criminalization of our language was a weapon for denying our existence, the revitalization of our language is a powerful tool for the perpetuation of our sovereignty (Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, 2023).

Hip Hop and American Indians

Hip Hop is powerful; it carries healing gifts and magic. Native Americans use specific songs and dances in rituals to heal people, to define identity, and to understand relationships between people and the environment. When people do not have access to these songs and dances, they seek alternative songs and dances that heal, identify, and define relationships using different methods. Hip Hop reflects social changes and transforms society. For Native Americans, being able to negotiate your status in the United States is significant because there are so many stereotypes of who is Indian and who is not and what it means to be Indian. With music, especially Hip Hop, a person or a group of people can self- situate themselves and create new identities. When we look at Hip Hop with a critical gaze, we realize that its intentions are to show us where we come from and how resilient we are as people. Music,

dance, storytelling, and art are all aspects of Native American culture (and Hip Hop culture) that teach a person how to live in balance and how to make decisions for the future.

Hip Hop tells the story of people who have faced severe trauma, poverty, marginalization, genocide, slavery, and colonization and have survived it with eminence and pride. Native Hip Hop artists use Hip Hop in many ways but, more often than not, they use Hip Hop as a means to re-claim their history and to remember the strength of their people. The creators of Hip Hop, Black artists and youth from New York and the Caribbean developed a musical genre with elements that can be called "indigenousisms." Embedded in the kick and the snare, in the hip and the hop, we can see, feel, and hear their homelands (pre-colonial Africa and then even the colonial Americas). With this blood and body memory, they created what is now considered American music styles. As Amiri Baraka writes about the Blues, the same can be written about Hip Hop. What a marvelous amalgamation of sound and movement!

Indigenous Hip Hop artists use Hip Hop to express themselves and more amazingly, Hip hop has been used to revitalize language (check out Tall Paul's song titled Prayers in a Song) and fight against the exploitation of the land (check out the song Oil for Blood by Frank Waln). One of the most popular groups, Snotty Nose Rez Kids (based in Vancouver, Canada, originally from Kitamaat Village) have used Hip Hop to tell their tribal stories, share their language, give love to their matrilineal culture, and fight against the status quo. Snotty Nose Rez Kids remind us that all of those things that make us beautiful - indigenous "things" like beaded caps, shells, turquoise, and copper are more than just bling (check out the song Boujee Natives by Snotty Nose Rez Kids).

In California, we have multiple Hip Hop artists. Richie Ledreagle inspires youth and the community by collaborating with artists all over Turtle Island. His music tells us to smile and to love our lives but his real impact is in how he brings the American Indian music community and represents his Miwok culture (Check out the song "I will Remain" with fellow California Native (Pomo) Stewie G. featuring Calina Lawrence).

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4.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

Whatever you do in life, do the very best you can with both your heart and mind. And if you do it that way, the Power of the Universe will come to your assistance, if your heart and mind are in Unity. When one sits in the Hoop Of The People, one must be responsible because All of Creation is related. And the Hurt of one is the hurt of all. And the honor of one is the honor of all. And whatever we do affects everything in the universe. If you do it that way-that is, if you truly join your heart and mind as One-whatever you ask for, that the Way it's Going to be.

-White Buffalo Calf Woman

The authors have given the readers a snapshot, a different worldview that may challenge everything you may know about US history, Native peoples, the US federal government and its treatment of Native people and tribes. We have connected this to contemporary issues facing Native people and have revealed the resiliency of Native people in dealing with continued acts of genocide, assimilation and oppression today.

While other disciplines may "study" and teach about Native people, American Indian Studies (AIS) or Native American Studies (NAS) provides the voices, social struggles, contributions and lived experiences of Native people culturally, socially, economically, legally, politically, and academically.

AIS/NAS actively promotes the sustained and thriving existence of Native peoples and sovereign tribal nations with an emphasis on agency and group-affirmation. One could argue that NAS or AIS began way before the movements of the 1960's in that Native voices can be heard speaking about justice and equity, establishing laws and governing councils, as well as enacting sustainable land and environmental policies of sovereign nations, if one listens. It is our hope you have listened and will now take political and economic action. Support Native artists, musicians and writers by buying their products. Vote for laws that support tribal sovereignty, your local tribes and their economic development. Participate in the LANDBACK movement by purchasing and donating land to your local tribes.

For more information please take a look at the timeline throughout the chapter that we have provided of events that have shaped American Indian federal policy and have affected Native people.

Key Terms

- **American Indian, Native American:** These terms relate to Indigenous people across the United States and are used interchangeably with "Indian". Individuals who identify with ancestral or cultural ties and or Native American tribes or Alaskan tribes in the United States. These individuals can be enrolled or non-enrolled members within federally recognized tribes. This research uses both terms to refer to Native people and uses these terms interchangeably to reflect the generation differences.
- **Boarding Schools**: Another federal government assimilation initiative and prime example of cultural imperialism that was allegedly done for the 'benefit' of Native people was the creation of boarding schools. Over 100,000 Native American children were forced to attend boarding schools and thousands of them died because of the neglect and mistreatment at the hands of the religious organizations that ran these schools that were funded by the federal government.
- **Dawes Allotment Act**: The 1887 Dawes Allotment Act was a way in which the federal government could obtain reservation land, established through treaties. The Dawes Act authorized the President to break up reservation land into small allotments parceled out to individual Native Americans, encouraging farming while at the same time destroying the tribal communally held land base.
- **Decolonization:** Decolonization is active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, independence and power that originate from a colonized nation's own Indigenous culture. This process occurs politically and also applies to personal and societal, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression. Decolonization refers to fighting back against the ongoing colonialism and colonial mentalities that permeate all institutions and systems of government. Decolonizing actions must begin in the mind, and that creative, consistent, decolonized thinking shapes and empowers the brain, which in turn provides a major prime for positive change. Decolonization means a) creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate oneself, adapt to or survive oppressive conditions; b) restoring cultural practices, thinking, beliefs, and values that were taken away or abandoned but are still relevant and necessary for survival; and c) the birthing of new ideas, thinking, technologies, and lifestyles that contribute to the advancement and empowerment of Indigenous Peoples.

- **Historical Trauma**: Historical trauma is multigenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial or ethnic group. It is related to major events experienced by a particular group of people because of their status as oppressed, such as slavery, the Holocaust, forced migration, and the violent colonization of Native Americans.
- **Indian Reorganization Act**: The Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) passed by the U.S. Congress in 1934, encouraged tribes to take control of their "business and economic affairs" to insure a solid land base by putting a halt to the loss of tribal lands through allotment (Dawes). The IRA was a sharp change in direction in federal policy leaning towards tribal sovereignty, replacing assimilationist policies that had been in place since the late 1800's. The IRA prohibited any further allotment of reservation lands. It also provided a way for tribes to purchase land back and place it in trust through the Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs. The IRA of 1934 was meant to further establish tribal self-government politically and economically. Through the IRA, Congress authorized tribes to adopt their own constitutions and bylaws.
- **Indigenous Ways of Knowing**: This term relates to an alternate paradigm to occidental epistemology and ontology. According to Harris (2002), many Indigenous people view every aspect of creation as continuously interacting with one another.
- **Manifest Destiny and the Doctrine of Discovery**: Manifest Destiny, coined in 1845 by newspaper editor John O'Sullivan, is the idea that white, Christian Americans were divinely ordained to 'settle' (invade and steal) North America. This included a belief in the inherent superiority of white Americans as well as the conviction that they were destined by the Christian God to "conquer" the people and territories of North America. The ideology of Manifest Destiny was used to justify extreme measures to murder and decimate Native populations in order to "free" the land from its inhabitants, including forced removal and violent extermination. The Doctrine of Discovery established a spiritual, political, and legal justification for colonization and the seizure of land not inhabited by Christians.
- **Place-Based Learning**: A framework for incorporating cultural standards and related practices as the framework for integrating Indigenous knowledge and physical environment into Western education systems (Emekauwa, 2004).
- **Reservations and Rancherias:** Tract of land owned by a tribe or tribes held in trust status by the federal government for the Indians' benefit. Reservations were created by treaty, statute, executive order, judicial decision, or order of the secretary of the interior (Wilkins & Stark, 2011, p. 311). Often referred to as prisoner of war camps. Land set aside for homeless Indians. Unique to California.
- **Self-Determination** is an integral piece of sovereignty and the right of a people to decide upon its own form of government, without outside influence and relates to the freedom and free will of the people of a given area to determine their own political status and independence.
- **Self-Governance** is the inherent right to make decisions that affect your own people. Tribes have the right of self governance as nations.
- **Settler Colonialism** refers to an invasive group or culture that actively occupies and attempts to destroy through genocidal acts to replace/erase Native peoples and cultures (Wolfe, 1999; Wolfe, 2006).
- **Termination** occurred in 1953 when the U.S. Congress adopted an official policy of termination declaring that the goal was to, "as rapidly as possible make Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States" (House Concurrent Resolution 108). The real goal of termination was the theft of Native lands; and a companion policy was the "relocation" of Native people off reservations into urban areas.
- **Treaties** are considered the "supreme law of the land" (Article 6 of the U.S. Constitution), and are in effect forever and therefore equivalent to federal laws.
- **Tribal Sovereignty** is the right for tribes to govern themselves within US borders. The right of a tribe to make laws separate from the European and American governmental authorities, and Native American sovereignty existed long before the United States (U.S.) constitution came into existence (Wedding, Vega, & Mark, 2003, p. 131).

Discussion Questions

1. American political officials have often utilized the stereotype of 'Native people as children' who need to be 'looked after' to justify the taking of Native land and resources. In fact, the federal government successfully elevated itself to the position of 'guardian' establishing a patriarchal governing structure with an inherent authority and necessary 'obligation' to look out for their 'wards'. In a literal sense, Native people were legally defined and relegated to the status of 'children' under the tutelage of the US government as the parent. How did this 'relationship' impact the self determination and sovereign rights of tribes and Native people to identify themselves? How did this further impact treaties and land, water and mineral rights for Native people?
2. Dr. Michael Yellow Bird created a 'Conceptual Model of Decolonization', focusing specifically on action we can take to 'Decolonize our Minds' in that he defines decolonization as both an event and a process. Elaborate on what he means by this

and how you can use the ‘Conceptual Model of Decolonization’ to make changes in your community?

3. Explain how the ‘other’ or ‘othering’ is established and the ramifications of this on Native people and identity. How exactly are Native people made into the societal "other", if they are both ‘ignored’ and ‘highlighted’ in U.S. society? Use examples like Mascots, and images of Native people in film, and literature.
4. Explain how American Indian is not an Ethnic Group? Use examples from the text and other sources to differentiate between cultural and political identities.

Journal Prompts

1. Canary Effect Journal Entry
    1. The Canary Effect (2006) is a documentary film directed by Robin Davey and Yellow Thunder Woman that focuses on the horrors of genocide faced by Native Americans and the racist policies of the United States. The documentary premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival and won the Stanley Kubrick Award at the 2006 Traverse City Film Festival. This video was banned in the United States and could only be purchased in Europe when it first came out.
    2. Please make sure to watch "The Canary Effect" before you complete this Journal entry. [Writer's note: The site may not have the most accurate captioning to meets accessibility standards]
    3. Take a moment of self reflection and write 1-2 pages or record (audio/video) a short (3 minute or less) journal entry. Reflect upon the following:
        - **The definition of genocide** - How does the United Nations define genocide in the movie? Did you know that the United States government purposefully took actions and is still taking action to commit genocide against Native American people today? *Governmental policies, Executive (Presidential) Orders, and laws set precedence on how to unfairly take advantage of Native people and their resources (land, water and mineral rights).*
        - Discuss 2-3 specific issues that Native Americans have faced (both historically or in present day).
        - What are your reactions/thoughts about the treatment of Native Americans in the United States?
        - Connect direct examples to the theoretical framework to help you better understand the Native American Experience and how you can become an ally.
        - What actions must take place to right these wrongs?
        - What are the barriers you perceive and how can you help remove them?
        - Reflect on your reactions to the video and whether this information has changed you in any way.
2. American Indian Prior Knowledge Journal Entry (to be done at the beginning of the semester)

- Students will create a list of all of the things they know and/or have learned about American Indians. In addition to this list, they will also create a list of all of the films/tv shows that they have watched about or including Americans Indians.
- After creating both lists, students will do a quick Google search on the series "Reservation Dogs" and write a one paragraph summary about the importance of the show.
- This Journal Entry activity allows students to take a quick inventory of how/when/where they see American Indians in their everyday life and also how American Indians are being portrayed in the media dn introduces them to a show that has gained a lot of popularity for it's portrayal of American Indian youth.

Class Activities

Native Land Recognition Activity

Directions

1. First we acknowledge the land, and understand that the land we currently occupy is stolen land. But who is it stolen from? Do you know?
2. For this assignment, you will be doing research on and identifying the original past and present tribe(s) whose land on which you are currently living and working.
3. We must honor these caretakers through our actions in this space and we can do this by doing some research and learning about these Native nations.
4. You will access the following at Native Land Digital. [Writer's note: We acknowledge this site may not be accessible for students using assistive technology]
5. Once on the page make sure that the territories, languages, and treaties are all toggled to on or green.

6. Type in the town where you live or work or any town or city in California that you are interested in, in the search area (line where the image of the tiny magnifying glass is located) of the same box on the top left corner of the website.
7. Results will show up in the bottom left corner of the map that include the tribe(s), their languages and treaties that were ratified.
8. After you have identified the tribe, research key facts about that tribe and their land.

Answer the following questions:

- Can you find the original Native name of the city/town/location that you researched?
- What is the language spoken by the tribe? Learn a few words and share what you learned.
- What are 3 interesting facts about the tribe? You can use historical facts but try to find out contemporary information about the tribe today.
- Can you find any pictures or images of the people? Are they older images or pictures recently taken? Why is this important?
- Why is it difficult to find any treaties that were ratified in California?

Remember to cite your sources.

Social Justice and Hip Hop Activity

1. Watch the music video Stand Up/Stand N Rock and write down two messages that you hear or see in the video and why they are important.
2. Answer the following question - when Emcee One says "this is for the rock, with prayers we stand on it." What do you think he means?
3. Using the information that you have learned in this chapter, add another verse to this song.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

5: Asian American and Pacific Islander Studies

By Kay Fischer and Dr. Teresa Hodges

Learning Objectives

- Analyze and evaluate major social issues experienced by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders including racialization, orientalism, militarization, colonization, imperialism, immigration, and climate change;
- Critically analyze the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, class, citizenship, age/generation, and/or language in Asian American and Pacific Islander communities;
- Describe the historical and contemporary experiences of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States and assess the growth and diversity of this community;
- Recognize theories and knowledge produced by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders;
- Identify Asian American and Pacific Islander participation in resistance and social struggles, solidarity work, and/or other examples of their participation in social and institutional transformation for racial justice and equity.

5.1: Introduction
5.2: Who are Asian Americans?
5.3: Immigration and Exclusion
5.4: Wars and Imperialism
5.5: Pacific Islander Studies
5.6: Summary/Review
5.7: References

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5.1: Introduction

Introduction to Asian American Studies and Pacific Islander Studies

Asian American Studies is one of the core disciplines within the larger field of Ethnic Studies, that applies an interdisciplinary lens on the experiences of diverse Asian communities in the United States. Asian Americans played an essential role in the 1960s student-led Third World Liberation Front strikes of San Francisco State (1968) and UC Berkeley (1969) leading to the creation of the first Asian American Studies departments. Over fifty years later, Asian American Studies is still fighting for legitimacy at higher education institutions, and programs, courses, or departments are often only instituted upon student demand.

In response to a major demographic shift of the Asian American and Pacific Islander population after 1965, we've seen an addition of courses, course content and literature that focus on newer immigrant and refugee communities, especially Southeast Asian Americans from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Some programs also include a focus on Arab American, Pacific Islander, and Mixed Race Asian American populations as well. More consideration has been given to the diversity of national origin, class, immigration status (including undocumented Asian Americans), gender and sexual orientation, but there is still more work to be done to make sure Asian American Studies curriculum includes this increasingly diverse population.

In this chapter, the authors will introduce some key frameworks, theories, and topics typically discussed in the field of Asian American Studies, organized into four sections. In section 5.2, *"Who Are Asian Americans?,"* we will review the most recent Census data on who makes up the population and consider the ways Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have been grouped together. We will also introduce the theory of orientalism and how Asian presence in the Americas is rooted in Western colonialism and imperialism of Asia and the Americas. The section will also introduce key theories of racialization of Asian Americans and how they intersect with gender and sexuality. In section 5.3, *"Immigration and Exclusion,"* the authors will examine how various historic events, policies and laws have shaped Asian American communities throughout the past 500 years. Section 5.4, *"Wars and Imperialism"* will review key examples of when wars and imperialist actions shaped the lives and trajectory of various Asian American communities based in the United States. And finally, Section 5.5, *"Pacific Islander Studies,"* will introduce the burgeoning field sometimes located within Asian American Studies that center on the histories, cultures, and experiences of Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Tongan, Chamorro, Fijian, and other Pacific Islander communities.

Notes on Terminology:

- The authors may use Asian, Asian American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, or Asian Pacific Islander interchangeably.
- When writing about Asian Americans as a community or demographic, we are not referring to citizenship, but to a diverse Asian community based in the U.S., including members who are transnational who may also reside in another country part of the year. Asian Americans include people who may have been born in the U.S., hold American citizenship, are legal permanent residents, are undocumented, and people who either identify as American, immigrants, refugees, or undocumented, or in any combination of the aforementioned identities.
- Authors use Filipina/x/o to label what is traditionally known as Filipinos and recognize non-binary identities within the community. Some sources may use only one Filipina, Filipino, Filipinx and authors will cite according to how it is presented in the texts. Filipina/x/o can indicate any and all gender and non-binary identities just as Filipinx can as well and authors might use this interchangeably.

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5.2: Who are Asian Americans?

Asian American is Panethnic

When we teach our Asian American Studies courses, we tell students that Asian Americans are not homogenous; we are diverse and there is no one way of "looking" or "acting" Asian. As Asian Americans in California, our experiences growing up in the Bay Area, So Cal, or the Central Valley may be very different from Asian American communities throughout the West, East, Hawai'i, or increasingly Asian Americans in the Midwest and the South. Over 20 million Asian Americans were counted in the 2020 census and have origins in more than 20 different countries (Gebeloff, et al, 2021). Contrary to the "model minority" myth which we'll get into in a later subsection, Asian Americans represent an array of educational and socioeconomic backgrounds. Simply put, you can't put Asian Americans in one box.

Still, there have been significant historical events that have shaped the racialization of Asian Americans in the U.S. and in some ways forced or encouraged Asian Americans to come together as one. This is what **panethnic** means: when people of various ethnicities are grouped together, largely for political reasons. Since Asian immigrants faced fierce immigration restrictions from the 19th century into the mid-twentieth century, the population has remained small, and after the 1965 Immigration Act (Hart-Cellar Act), the population is now the fastest growing racial demographic in the U.S.

The following list highlights recent Census data on the diversity of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities:

- Previous decades showed that Asian Americans were concentrated in east and west coasts, however the 2020 Census revealed that the highest *growth* of Asian American populations included states in the Southwest and South (Gebeloff, et al, 2021).
- In 2020, it was reported that the two largest Asian ethnic groups are Chinese and Indian at 4.1 million each (Monte and Shin, 2022).
- They are followed by Filipino (2.9 million), Vietnamese (1.8 million), Korean (1.5 million), Japanese (768,985), Pakistani (≈500,000), Hmong (305,525), Cambodian (259,307), Thai (204,150), Taiwanese (194,263), Laotian (192,929), Bangladeshi (185,177), Burmese (169,915), Nepalese (162,993), Indonesian (76,873), Sri Lankan (51,735), Bhutanese (26,534), Mongolian (21,199), Malaysian (20,758), and Okinawan (3,526) (Monte and Shin, 2022).
- The Census counted 532,135 Asian Americans who counted two or more Asian ethnicities (Monte and Shin, 2022).
- And 4.1 million people identified as Asian in combination with another race (Monte and Shin, 2022).
- Over 1 million and 100,000 people identify as Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander (NHPI).
- The largest group is Native Hawaiians at around 620,000, followed by Samoan (212,000), Chamorro (156,000), Tongan (65,000), and Fijian (50,000) (Monte and Shin, 2022).
- In California, the Asian American population grew by 25% and now has more than 6 million people of Asian descent (Beam, 2021).

Anti-Asian Racism in the time of COVID-19

Figure 5.2.1: Rally to Stop Asian Hate, Washington, D.C. March 21, 2021. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Victoria Pickering via Flickr)

Stop AAPI Hate was established on March 19, 2020 by three Asian American organizers and professors after they were denied support from the California Attorney General's office in creating an anti-Asian discrimination reporting center. They launched their

own reporting center titled Stop AAPI Hate, which helped track and analyze anti-Asian hate at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor of Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley, Catherine Ceniza Choy pointed out that the swift thinking and coordination of the reporting center, "emerged from a legacy of six decades of Asian American activism as well as a response to contemporary anti-Asian violence" (2022, p. 19). A political infrastructure already existed. Asian Americanists and Asian American organizers grew concerned about the backlash that could be faced by the Chinese and Asian American communities when it was reported that the coronavirus spread in China, especially since president Donald Trump publicly referred to it as the "Chinese virus." They were right. Stop AAPI Hate received around 100 anti-Asian incidents a day in its first week alone (p. 20).

Professor Choy pointed out that while the more disturbing examples of anti-Asian violence made it to the news, less sensational incidents were still reported to Stop AAPI Hate, including: people being prevented from utilizing public transportation; being coughed at; being verbally harassed or harassed online; and vandalism (2022, p. 21). The data analysis also showed that Asian American women experienced discrimination at over twice the rate of men. They reported that although Chinese were the most targeted, 60% of respondents were of other ethnicities, including Korean, Vietnamese, Filipinx, Japanese, Taiwanese, Hmong, Thai, Lao, Cambodian, and those of mixed ethnicities, proving "the significance of 'Asian American' as a panethnic category" (p. 22). Often, the racialization of Asian Americans doesn't make distinctions between ethnicities, and Choy brings up the importance of collecting both aggregated and disaggregated data that helped to express the shared experiences among Asian Americans and distinct experiences of Asian ethnic groups.

Many Americans found anti-Asian hate during the pandemic as unexpected or surprising, but anti-Asian violence is not new in the United States. Historian, Dr. Erika Lee testified before Congress on the topic of "Discrimination and Violence Against Asian Americans" on March 18, 2021. She started out by affirming the rate of anti-Asian violence rising in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic that started in late 2019, early 2020. Lee testified,

> As shocking as these incidents are, it is so vital to understand that they are not random acts perpetrated by deranged individuals. They are an expression of our country's long history of systemic racism targeting Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. We've heard in the past 24 hours many describe anti-Asian discrimination and racial violence as unAmerican. Unfortunately, it is *very* American. This history, this *American* history, is over 150 years old (House Committee on the Judiciary, 2021, 01:22:48 - 01:23:25).

Lee informed the committee of one of the largest mass lynchings by a mob in U.S. history, happening in 1871 when seventeen Chinese men were lynched by a white mob of 500 in Los Angeles. She also shared that in 1886 a mob forced out all of Seattle's Chinese residents; similarly South Asian immigrants were attacked and driven out of their homes, and Japanese and Filipinx people were subject to beatings and other racially motivated attacks. She brought up the brutal 1982 killing of Vincent Chin, and the wave of anti-Asian violence in the 1980s that targeted Korean shopkeepers and Southeast Asian refugees from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. She reminded the committee that in the weeks after September 11, 2001, hate crimes against Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities increased by 1,600 percent. Lee continued, "As these incidents reveal, Asian Americans have been terrorized, we've been treated as enemies, we've been discriminated against. Today we are still viewed as foreigners, rather than U.S. citizens" (House Committee on the Judiciary, 2021, 01:24:17 - 01:24:31).

These historical and contemporary events are often not taught in our schools. Even our Asian American students often end up internalizing the "model minority" myth; that Asian Americans are successful and don't face racism, and even that Asian Americans are "honorary whites." We've read many essays by Asian American students who'll write that they've never faced racism, but follow up with examples of racial discrimination. Deceptively "positive," the "model minority" myth only works to divide people of color and ignore the long legacy of systemic racism and racially motivated violence against Asian Americans. The most recent expression of anti-Asian discrimination and hate is simply an extension of this legacy.

Sidebar: Varying Degrees of Pan-ethnicity

As a diverse group, Dhingra and Rodriguez (2021) explain how Asian Americans exhibit varying degrees of connection with other Asian Americans. For example, East Asian Americans (such as Japanese and Chinese Americans) display a stronger sense of pan-ethnicity as Asian Americans than South Asian Americans or Southeast Asian Americans. South Asian Americans (such as Indian and Pakistani Americans) "do not develop a pan-ethnic identity, possibly due to their distinct racialization and reliance on one another rather than on other Asian Americans (Schachter 2014)" (p. 126). A distinct racialized experience for South Asian Americans was during the post-911 Islamophobic attacks on South Asian, Muslim, Sikh, and South West Asian communities who were targets of hate crimes, harassment and racial profiling (South Asian Americans Leading

Together). Southeast Asian Americans (such as Vietnamese and Cambodian Americans) may not identify with the "model minority" stereotype and feel distinct because of their refugee experience. Dhingra and Rodriguez also point out how a focus on structural inequality may lead Southeast Asian Americans to "salient ethnic rather than pan-ethnic identities," such as in the case pointed out by Bindi Shah (2008) who argues that Laotian Americans center their ethnic rather than pan-ethnic identity in their social justice organizing when assisting refugees and low-paid workers (2021, p. 126).

Vincent Chin and the pan-Asian American Movement of the 1980s

The 1982 murder of Chinese American Vincent Chin in Detroit, Michigan, is considered an important landmark in Asian American history and panethnic political identity development. Asian Americans protested the fact that two white men, Ronald Ebens and Michael Nitz, were sentenced to probation and a small fine with no prison time for their manslaughter conviction. The case led to the development of a nationwide consciousness around Anti-Asian hate, and established some groundwork for continued civil rights and social justice campaigns (Tajima-Peña, 2014, p. 185).

Journalist and activist Helen Zia witnessed the collapse of the auto industry in Detroit, with hundreds of thousands of mostly Black and also white working class auto workers left to fend for themselves. Described as “a city in crisis,” people in Detroit lost their jobs, homes and cars, and “gloom turned to anger as they searched for the cause of their miseries” (2010, p. 36). Japan made an easy target. First, the oil crisis of 1978 essentially “killed the market for heavy, eight-cylinder dinosaurs made in Detroit,” leading to massive layoffs. Meanwhile, Japan’s auto industry was beginning to grow, meeting the demand for inexpensive and fuel-efficient vehicles. Zia continued, “They were easy to hate. Anything Japanese, or presumed to be Japanese, became a potential target” (p. 37). Unions sponsored events where they sledge-hammered Japanese cars. Zia reflected that living in Detroit at the time, “It felt dangerous to have an Asian face” (p. 37).

Vincent Chin, age 27, was out with his friends celebrating his bachelor party on June 19, 1982 at a local strip bar. Ronald Ebens, a Chrysler plant superintendent and his stepson, Michael Nitz, a laid-off autoworker, seemed annoyed that Vincent was receiving attention from the dancers. Vincent’s friend overheard Ebens say, “Chink,” “Nip,” “fucker,” and one of the dancers heard him say, “It’s because of motherfuckers like you that we’re out of work.” Vincent responded, “Don’t call me a fucker” and they fought. When both groups were kicked out of the bar, Ebens and Nitz drove around searching for Vincent. Once they found Vincent, Nitz held him down while Ebens swung a baseball bat into his skull four times. Vincent was mortally wounded and died four days later. Zia wrote, “His four hundred wedding guests attended his funeral instead” (2010, p. 38).

On March 18, 1983, it was reported that the two killers were charged for Vincent’s slaying. They pleaded guilty and no contest to beating Vincent to death, yet each received three years of probation and $3,780 in fines, with Judge Charles Kaufman defending his sentencing, stating, “These aren't the kind of men you send to jail” (Zia, 2010, p. 39). People were enraged and called out this obvious example of systemic racism, where the lives of two violent killers were valued above the life of an Asian American hate crime and murder victim, Vincent Chin.

As more and more Asian Americans heard about Chin’s slaying and the “slap-on-the-wrist” sentencing, they began to demand justice. They felt that what Vincent experienced could have happened to them and to anyone who “looked” Japanese. This was the start of another panethnic Asian American movement. Over 100 people came together to form a pan-Asian organization that could seek civil rights justice for Chin’s murder. They were called American Citizens for Justice (ACJ), and news on the efforts of ACJ spread across the country due to lobbying and press coverage. “It was the first time that an Asian American–initiated issue was considered significant national news,” wrote Zia (2010, p. 48). ACJ was naming anti-Asian violence as “present-day phenomenon” and they helped to create an organizing framework for Asian Americans.

Eventually, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) opened an inquiry and a federal grand jury indicted Ebens and Nitz for depriving Vincent Chin of his civil rights and conspiracy to do so. The jury found Ebens guilty of the civil rights charge, but not conspiracy. Nitz was found not guilty for both charges. Ebens was sentenced to 25 years, but he appealed and his conviction was overturned in 1987 (Tajima-Peña, 2014, p. 186). Mrs. Chin moved back to Guangdong Province in China. Ebens and Nitz never publicly expressed remorse, nor did they ever spend a full day in jail (Zia, 2010, p. 53).

Zia wrote that losing its first national campaign didn’t devastate the Asian American community, “instead, it had been transformed” (2010, p. 53). The legacy of the Vincent Chin case lived on through award-winning documentaries and as author and Ethnic Studies professor Yen Le Espiritu pointed out, as a result, Asian Americans are more willing to speak on anti-Asian racism, are better organized, and this era paved the way for building “pan-Asian unity.”

“Asian American” Panethnicity and “Third World” Solidarity:

Figure 5.2.2: "Yellow Peril Supports Black Power" Art in Oakland. Photo taken February 20, 2023. (CC BY 4.0; Photo by Jordan Burkart)

Inspired by various nationalist liberation movements of the 1960s such as the Black Power movement, second-generation Asian youth started to use the term “Asian American” to describe a panethnic identity rooted in solidarity. Asian Americans of diverse ethnic backgrounds attended a UCLA conference in the summer of 1968 to discuss issues of identity, power and the war in Vietnam. They rejected the term “Oriental” since it “smacks of European colonialism and imperialism,” noting that Asia is only east in relationship to Europe (Espiritu, 1992, p. 32). This forced students to consider Asian American as an alternative to “Yellow” and “Oriental” and the first organization to apply this term was the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) at UC Berkeley in 1969 (p. 33). Yen Le Espiritu, Ethnic Studies Professor at UC San Diego, wrote on pan-Asian ethnicity and explained how Asian Americans were also inspired by the success of anticolonial revolutions and “Third World” solidarity between Africa, Asia, and Latin America (such as “Afro-Asia” solidarity displayed at the Bandung conference in 1955).

Instead of cultural bonds, panethnic identity is a result of political and social processes. Espiritu emphasizes the political nature of the development of a panethnic identity for Asian Americans, with the purpose of struggling for power and resources (1992, p. 14). As Asian American Studies professor Diane Fujino, UC Santa Barbara, notes, this was a political strategy “to contest racial oppression” (2014, p. 1104).

The Asian American Movement focused on solidarity with Asia, and both global and internal Third World communities. Activist Amy Uyematsu wrote that the movement rejected their parents’ assimilationist goals and “turned the racial order on its head by asking Asian Americans to see a shared oppression with black Americans and to challenge the anti-black racism harbored by many Asian Americans” (2014, p. 1105). AAPA was anti-imperialist and organized the Third World Liberation Front strike at San Francisco State (1968) and UC Berkeley (1969), standing in unity with other students of color to demand Ethnic Studies in the longest and most violent student struggle in the U.S.

Espiritu adds that the development of Asian American Studies was perhaps the most important outcome of the Asian American Movement and the discipline continues to build on an Asian American heritage. Asian American Studies curriculum expresses both similarities and differences across diverse Asian American communities and helps Asian American students understand who they are (1992, p. 36). Standing in solidarity with other oppressed groups also highlighted the view “that their own liberation was intricately linked to the liberation of peoples everywhere” (Fujino, 2014, p. 1106).

Since these movements of the 1960s and 1980s, we’ve witnessed and participated in the development of Asian American Studies, panethnic non-profits, conferences, news, film festivals, political campaigns and voter drives that organize for better political representation across diverse Asian American and Pacific Islander groups.

Sidebar: Richard Aoki: an Asian American Black Panther

Figure 5.2.3: Richard Aoki. (CC BY 2.0; Davis Sasaki via Flickr)

Richard Masato Aoki (1938-2009) was only 3 years old when he and his family were incarcerated at Topaz, Utah during World War II for being Japanese. Afterwards, his family moved to West Oakland and Richard grew up in a segregated Black neighborhood, which he shared was "one of the best experiences I ever had" because he was immersed in African American society (Wang and Cheng, 2009, 11:54 - 12:03). He knew both the co-founders of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense (BPP), Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton. Newton asked Richard to join the party, as they were both politically engaged, and he became an early member. Richard shared that when Newton approached him, he replied, "Wait a minute now…I don't look exactly Black." Newton responded, "the struggle for freedom, justice and equality transcends racial and ethnic barriers" (01:22 - 01:51). As a "Field Marshall," Richard became the only Asian American panther member who had a leadership position.

As the call for freedom and self-determination were some of the core principles of the panther's 10-point platform, so was the right to self-defense. Richard Aoki helped to supply and trained party members on how to clean and break down guns. BPP leader Kathleen Cleaver strongly affirmed that Richard helped to start the organization because he witnessed "people being subjected to unfair, racist domination…and he knew it was wrong and so he was quite willing to help his friends fight against this" (Wang and Cheng, 2009, 44:10 - 44:24).

In 1968, Richard was a student at UC Berkeley and the chair of the Asian American Political Alliance. He helped organize the 3-month strike in 1969 with the Third World Liberation Front, helping to establish Ethnic Studies at the university. He was on the frontline being beaten by police, getting arrested, and physically fighting back. Richard became one of the first coordinators of Asian American Studies at UC Berkeley. Afterwards, he worked for the community college system and Diane Fujino noted that he would "go to bat" for first-generation college students, often students of color from working class and/or immigrant backgrounds. Fujino, who was also Richard's biographer, stated, "He would try to get them scholarships…try to encourage them to take certain classes…encourage them to stay in school" (Wang and Cheng, 2009, 1:20:20-1:20:33).

Later in life, he unofficially mentored various youth activists, college students, and community organizers, including author, Kay Fischer. Richard also spoke regularly at various campus and community events about his life as an activist and social change agent. He supported and advised the Ethnic Studies strike of 1999 at UC Berkeley.

Due to serious illness, Richard ended up taking his own life in 2009. Four years after his death, journalist Seth Rosenfeld came out with a book titled, *Subversives: The FBI's War on Student Radicals and Reagan's Rise to Power*. He claimed that Richard was an FBI informant, and although his book mostly focused on the FBI's covert operations on student movements during the 1960s, Rosenfeld benefited from sensationalist press coverage right before the release of his book that explicitly focused on outing Richard Aoki, a well-known activist. Progressives in the Bay Area were divided on the issue of whether they believed Rosenfeld's claim, or felt that there wasn't strong enough evidence. Fujino questioned the timing of the release of these documents and pointed out how revealing the identity of an informant was a "serious breach of FBI protocol" (Gonzales, 2012). She also stated that after reading Rosenfeld's book, she was surprised to find that there was very little information on Rosenfeld's claim, and simply put, the evidence was not substantial. Fujino continues that after evaluating the FBI documents herself, it's not clear whether he was an informant or the one being observed (Democracy Now!, 2012).

> Many of Richard's friends and life-long activists have also come out to defend Richard's legacy and integrity. The impact of Richard's revolutionary commitment to liberty and justice is not lost. Richard's narrative of fighting for Black Liberation and for Ethnic Studies at UC Berkeley was an important demonstration of interracial solidarity. Musician, writer and activist, Fred Ho, also wrote to rebut claims about Richard, stating that he must have been a "piss-poor" informant as he ultimately shaped the Third World movements of the 1960s. Richard's commitment to change continued into the 1990s and 2000s as he mentored and inspired the next generation of activists. Those who knew Richard remembered him as forward thinking, generous, principled, for the people, and consistent. As Ho pointed out, Richard "remained a revolutionary for life" (Ho, 2012).

Under Western Eyes: Orientalism

One idea that's remained a part of the way Asian Americans are racialized is that Asians, no matter how American, are "Forever Foreign." A common microaggression that Asian Americans face, for some on a daily basis, are questions or comments like

- "Where are you from?...No, where are you *really* from?"
- "You speak English so well."
- "Go back to where you came from!"

Although 71% of Asian American adults were born in another country (Budiman and Ruiz, 2021), Asian Americans have a 500-year-old history in the Americas starting with Filipinx sailors who traveled with Spanish colonizers on the Manila-Acapulco Galleon (Ding, 2001, 06:35 - 07:34). Ethnic Studies professor and ground-breaking Asian American documentarian, Loni Ding states in her documentary, *Ancestors in the Americas*: "People sometimes think Asians are only recent immigrants. But, actually Asians have been in North America even before America became a republic" (2001, 05:45 - 05:55).

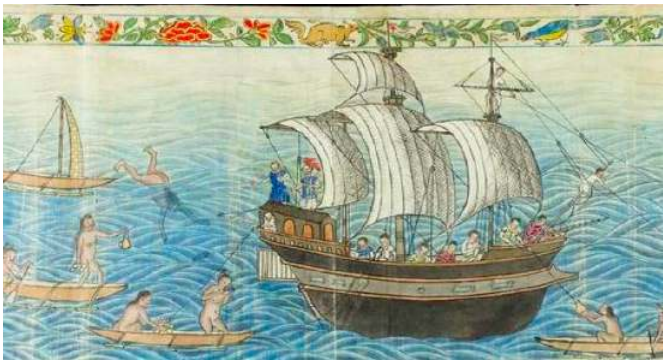

Figure 5.2.4: An illustration of a Spanish Manila Galleon in the Ladrones Islands (Mariana Islands) in the Pacific Ocean, 1590. (Public Domain; Artist Unknown via World History Encyclopedia)

In fact, when we dig deeper into *why* Asians began arriving to the Americas, we must actually start with Europe. Christopher Columbus, who for so long has been celebrated in American classrooms as the person to "discover" America, stumbled onto the territories of the Taino people in 1492, and thought he had landed in Asia! In fact, Columbus was commissioned by the Spanish monarchy to find another route to Asia or "the Indies," with hopes to grow their riches and power through trade. It wasn't Asians that came to the West, it was the West who came to Asia.

Orientalism: A Western Invention

Professor and author Gary Y. Okihiro wrote,

> Asians entered into the European American historical consciousness long before the mid-nineteenth century Chinese immigration to "Gold Mountain"...The "when and where" of the Asian American experience can be found within the European imagination and constructions of Asians and Asia and within their expansion eastward and westward to Asia for conquest and trade (1992, p. 7).

We can find examples of what Europeans thought of people from Asia even among the ancient Greeks from over 2,000 years ago. They made general statements about a people they didn't know well, enabling an "exotic, alienating construction of Asians, whether witnessed or simply imagined" (Okihiro, 1992, p. 9). For example, Greek philosopher Aristotle wrote in 4th century BCE that Asians were in a constant state of subjection and slavery, and Alexander the Great called Asians effeminate and "a nation of slaves" (p. 9). These baseless generalizations of a complex and diverse group of humans in a vast region were passed on from

generation to generation in a static, frozen manner, as if the stereotypes of Asia and Asian people never transformed or changed over the centuries.

This is what Palestinian American literary critic, author and professor, Edward Said described as **orientalism:** the European invention of Asians as "the Other," a system of ideas that supported a "Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority" over Asia (Said, 1979, Introduction). The European identity was based on how it contrasted from "the Other," helping to inform the West's desire to project itself as "a masculine, conquering Europe" as opposed to "a feminized Asia ripe for conquest" (Lee, 2015, p. 15). The function of these ideas were to "...substantiate Europe's identity rather than to understand Asia in an accurate or nuanced manner" (Sang-Hee Lee, 2014, p. 7). Orientalism was based on the idea of the European authority on the "Orient" and was never concerned with the actual ideas, thoughts, and experiences of people from this region. Orientalism was rooted in the "impulse to dominate, possess" and it was about setting Europeans apart as a people who are not only different, but *superior* to Asia. Over the centuries, these ideas persisted and became common sense, "the Orient was backwards because it was and people had been saying this for a long time" (p. 9).

Simultaneous Colonization of the Americas and Asia

Crusaders and European travelers described "bizarre creatures, alien plants, and strange customs of the 'East'" (Lee, 2015, p. 16), and by the 13th and 14 centuries, Asian goods started to appear. Marco Polo, who traveled to Asia and the Middle East, told narratives of fantastical creatures like unicorns and endless riches like "mountain streams flowing with diamonds" and "ample accounts of prostitutes, sex, and women" (Okihiro, 1992, p. 14; Lee, 2015, p. 16). Books like *The Travels of Marco Polo* became popular and influential. Europeans developed a taste for goods from Asia like spices, silk, and sugar, and cargo from Asia would yield massive profit. In 1615, Sir Walter Raleigh stated, "whosoever commands the sea commands the trade; whosoever commands the trade of the world commands the riches of the world, and consequently the world itself" (Lee, 2015, p. 17; Raleigh, 1829, p. 325).

Columbus was, in fact, inspired by Marco Polo and had his own well-worn copy of his book. Upon landing in the island of what's today called Cuba, his description of the land and the people was influenced by the ideologies of orientalism. Columbus described Indigenous people as "children" and the land in feminine and sexualized qualities, such as describing the mouth of the Orinoco River as shaped "like a woman's nipple" (Okihiro, 1992, p. 17). He died in 1506, still thinking the Caribbean was Asia.

Spanish colonizers followed and began growing their empire, *Nueva España*. And as the Spanish continued to search routes to Asia, soon "Asia and the Americas were linked in the Spanish imagination and became two parts of the New World, *ambas Indias*, both Indies, that could be conquered and converted to Christianity," claiming control of the Philippines archipelago starting in 1521 (Lee, 2015, pp. 18 - 19). Europeans colonized large swaths of land in Asia and by the early 20th century, Japan did the same. Soon, the U.S. expanded beyond the territories of the Americas and took over Hawai'i, Guam, and the Philippines. Colonial expansion extended to the so-called New World, with the British, Dutch, Portuguese, French, Russians, and Spanish drawing random boundaries that never existed before, displacing and killing tens of millions of Indigenous people through genocidal policies and with diseases.

Gary Okihiro states, "So if we think about the general spread and expansion, we can understand that Asia was always on the mind. They were always looking toward Asia" (Ding, 2001, 11:50 - 12:05).

Race, gender, and sexuality

From its inception, race has been used to categorize people into separate and unequal groups in a hierarchical manner. The physical differences we give meaning to are superficial differences, and our "race" has no determination over intelligence, athletic ability, or personality traits. Nor do people in one "race" have more in common genetically with one another than with people in different racial groups. Racist ideologies and the arbitrary categorizations that followed were developed to justify mass removal and genocidal policies against Indigenous populations and to rationalize and moralize the enslavement of millions taken from Africa. Since ideas of race "...emerged in the context of European colonialism, it is organized around the logic of white supremacy, that is, those who are considered white are considered intellectually and morally superior over those who are nonwhite" (Dhingra and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 26). For more on white supremacy and its origin in colonialism, see also Chapter 7, section 7.2 "Defining Whiteness and White Supremacy."

Furthermore, in the United States, notions of race are often limited within the black-white binary. The racial experiences of Asian Americans are not like either Black or white Americans, but they've been racialized as close to Black or close to white. Historically, Asian Americans have been legally defined as nonwhite, as they were excluded from nationality, land ownership and

marriage to whites. They've also been "stereotyped as morally deviant and explicitly compared to African Americans" (Dhingra and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 39). Yet, at other times, depending on the political and economic context, Asians have been described as "outwhiting" whites when it comes to education and household income. Additionally, Asian Americans are racialized as "forever foreign," no matter how long they've been in the U.S. Their exclusion is heightened during times of perceived threat from Asia. This subsection will review how Asian Americans have been racialized in a duality: yellow peril or model minority, and sometimes both.

Yellow Peril

Yellow Peril is an extension of Orientalism and frames Asians and Asian nations as a threat to the West: either economically, politically, sexually, or morally. Examples include white anxiety around Asian immigrant labor replacing white workers or Asian men soiling the "purity" of the white race by "going after" white women. Asian women in the context of yellow peril framing are presented as evil temptresses or prostitutes that manipulate white men. Asian American scholar, Robyn Rodriguez and Pawan Dhingra in their book, *Asian America (2nd Edition)* point out that the "yellow peril" stereotype typically only arises when the U.S. is at war or during a "crisis of capital" (Ong, Bonacich, and Cheng 1994, as cited in Dhingra and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 40). Dhingra and Rodriguez further point out that the U.S. doesn't have to be in a literal war for Asian Americans to be perceived as a threat, as in the case of the Vincent Chin murder in 1982. Similarly, when news of the coronavirus outbreak reached the U.S., Trump called himself a "wartime president." Americans blamed Asians and people perceived to be Chinese for the virus and anti-Asian discrimination, harassment, and violence grew exponentially in 2020 and 2021.

The term "yellow peril" is the exact translation of a painting commissioned by German Kaiser Wilhelm II who woke from a nightmare in 1895. He dreamt that the "great" nations of Europe were facing an invasion from the East. Convinced that this was what to come, Wilhelm commissioned a painting of his dream, titled it *Die Gelbe Gefahr* (The Yellow Peril) as seen under Figure 5.2.5 and sent reproductions to European leaders and president of the U.S., William McKinley. The painting centered female warriors representing European countries with the Christian cross hanging above them. Archangel Michael is pointing toward the threat: the supposed menacing Buddha riding a Chinese dragon headed toward Europe with dark clouds and lightning overhead, and a burning city right below (Lee, 2015, pp. 122 - 123).

Figure 5.2.5: "The Yellow Peril" - "Peoples of Europe, guard your dearest goods." 1895 (Public Domain; by Hermann Knackfuss via Wikimedia Commons)

This image helped popularize the term "yellow peril" and ended up being "the most influential political illustration of the late nineteenth century" (Lee, 2015, p. 123). This message found "a ready audience in the United States" merely a decade after the passage of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act.

Ironically, the Japanese Shogunate of the 17th century instituted a policy of isolation to protect Japan from European colonialism. Determined to expand its influence in Asia and frustrated with Japan's refusal to trade, it was the U.S.'s own gun-boat diplomacy that led to Japan restructuring its nation in order to compete with U.S. and European imperialism. U.S. Commodore Matthew C. Perry sailed 4 armed navy ships in 1853 to the shores of Edo (Tokyo) Bay and threatened to use force unless Japan opened its doors

to trade (Lee, 2015, p. 110). It was not Asian countries that invaded European nations or the U.S. for the purposes of empire building. For hundreds of years it was European nations that were threatening to Asia and other parts of the world, seizing land, exploiting resources, and displacing or stealing people in the continents of Africa, Australia, Asia, and the Americas, and the islands of the Pacific, all in the name of expanding their nations, power, and wealth.

The Model Minority

A seemingly opposing racialization of Asian Americans is the **"model minority" myth** or stereotype; that Asians and Asian Americans are culturally or biologically smarter, economically well-off, and successful, but also obedient and docile. Since the mid-20th century, U.S. media often highlight stories of Asian American success by focusing on their disproportionately high educational attainment, higher median income, and residential integration of Asian American families in traditionally white suburbs. Dhingra and Rodriguez point out,

> This apparently positive portrayal has more going on than a representation of imagined social trends. This stereotype has gained currency because, like all stereotypes, it fits various preconceptions and racialized ideologies. First, it works to denigrate Asian Americans, even as it purports to praise them. The "model minority" is cast as subservient and obedient. While the "model minority" appears highly valorized, s/he remains a foreigner (2021, p. 42).

Instead of examining structural factors or immigration policies that explain the data around educational attainment, the model minority myth proclaims that Asian culture or Confucian principles lead to their success. Thereby, Asian Americans can be considered successful, but still not "assimilated enough to be seen as everyday citizens, much less civic or corporate leaders" (Dhingra and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 42). In fact, the framing of this newer racialization of Asian Americans conveniently became popular during the Civil Rights Movement. African Americans and their allies were calling out the U.S. as a racist country, and to counter that and contain demands for social justice, the model minority myth worked to uphold ideologies of colorblindness and meritocracy. Asian American were "proof" that anyone willing to work hard enough could achieve the "American dream." To further elaborate, Robert G. Lee writes, "The elevation of Asian Americans to the position of model minority had less to do with the actual success of Asian Americans than with the perceived failure—or worse, refusal—of African Americans to assimilate" (2010, p. 256).

Starting with World War II, America was being called out for their blatantly white supremacist laws and practices, especially on a global scale. Germans, the Japanese, and later the Soviet Union and other communist movements around the globe were calling out the U.S.'s hypocrisy around fighting Nazism, yet incarcerating over 120,000 Japanese Americans (and Canadians and Latin Americans) simply for their heritage and their anti-Semitic policy of refusing to accept Jewish refugees from Europe. Lee explains that the U.S. had a strong motive to push the narrative of the U.S. as "...a liberal democratic state where people of color could enjoy equal rights and upward mobility" (2015, p. 257). The U.S. understood that the nation's legacy of racial discrimination impacted their relationships with other countries. During the Cold War, the U.S. engaged in a struggle for global influence and worked to promote an image of the U.S. as a multiracial and liberal democracy; to top it off, they claimed that U.S.-style capitalism meant anyone could "make it," including immigrants and racial minorities.

With the onset of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and '60s, biological racism and blatantly racist rhetoric was no longer socially acceptable. In its stead, ideologies around cultural racism tried to turn the blame of racial inequality away from structural and system reasons and toward African Americans for their own failures. In 1966, two major magazines *The New York Times* and *U.S. News and World Report* published articles centering on Asian American success stories. Lee notes how the media blatantly pit minorities groups against each other, with the *U.S. News* asserting, "At a time when it is being proposed that hundreds of billions be spent on uplifting Negroes and other minorities, the nation's 300,000 Chinese Americans are moving ahead on their own with no help from anyone else" (2015, p. 261).

Furthermore, during the Cold War, "homophobia and anticommunism went hand in hand" and homosexuality was seen as a threat to national security, going so far as banning gay men and women from federal employment in 1953 (Lee, 2015, p. 269). The nuclear family was valorized, and only offered a narrow approach to being a patriotic American family: middle-class, with the wife at home, and the husband providing for the family, with the added duty of reproducing children who would be faithful patriots of this great nation. The model minority stereotype highlighted Asian Americans who, for the most part, met this nuclear model. Asian Americans who didn't meet the "model minority" image were quickly forgotten and their problems ignored. This includes members of the LGBTQ, poor Asian Americans, those struggling in school, or Asian Americans who are disabled, struggling with mental health, facing abuse, or incarcerated.

Figure 5.2.6: Rally for Asian American Women in Chinatown. April 10, 2021. (CC BY 2.0; Andrew Ratto via Flickr)

Asian women have been portrayed as a sexual threat or perpetual sex workers. In fact, before the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed in 1882, Asian women were particularly targeted for exclusion in the 1875 Page Act. The act targeted Chinese and other Asian women suspected of prostitution from entering the United States (Schlund-Vials, Wong, and Chang, 2017, p. 38). This is an important example of how a gendered and sexualized framing of the yellow peril stereotype influenced policy that criminalized all Asian female immigrants as undesirable, causing "moral and racial pollution," and therefore excluded from the U.S. (Lee, 2015, p. 91).

The correlation between Asian women and hypersexuality or sexual deviance continued into the 20th and 21st centuries. One of the first Asian American actresses on the silver screen was Anna May Wong (1905-1961) who was type casted to play "Dragon Lady" characters: deceitful and cunning, but also exotic and sensual women who used their sexuality for foul play. Such representations continued into modern days, such as Lucy Liu's character on *Ally McBeal* (1997) and *Kill Bill* (2003).

When the "model minority" stereotype became prevalent, Asian men were asexualized and deemed effeminate, especially since they were depicted as undermining patriarchal gender roles for doing "women's work" (i.e. the prevalence of Chinese men doing laundry work). Meanwhile, Asian women were framed as a submissive "Lotus Blossom," eager to please white men in Hollywood films. Musicals, operas, and movies like *Madam Butterfly* (1904), *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), *Miss Saigon* (1989), *Kill Bill: Vol. 1* (2003), *The Last Samurai* (2003), *Memoirs of a Geisha* (2005), *The Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift* (2006), and more portrayed Asian female characters in hyper feminine and exotic manners. Asian women have been portrayed as quiet, passive, and subservient, willing to cater to a man's every whim. These images were rooted in U.S. expansion through wars in Asia, such as the post-WWII U.S. occupation of Japan, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

Hollywood films depicting interracial pairings were an endorsement of interracial relationships. However, media critic Dr. Ben Tong notes, "It was a certain form of miscegenation that was endorsed: white man, Asian women, not the reverse" (Gee, 1988, 21:10 - 21:17). These movies romanticized white male/Asian female relations and often overshadowed the very limited opportunities of rural and poor women. Living in the aftermath of the post-war economic destruction of their native countries, women had limited options for work, and were sometimes enticed by American pop culture. Some worked at U.S. military bases as clerks or servers and others entered sex work in order to survive or were tricked into it. Rest and Recreation sites surrounding U.S. military bases in Asia, supported by the U.S. military and local authorities, involved local women to cater to American soldiers. These sites were described as "Playgrounds...for American men fighting in the Korean War, and later camptowns in Korea and Thailand and the Philippines for soldiers fighting in Vietnam" (Kim, 2011, 06:59 - 07:19). In fact, camptowns continued even during peace times, "for today's American empire is an empire of military bases" (07:18 - 07:26).

The continued popular portrayal of Asian women as "spoils of war," particularly for American soldiers helped to conflate all Asian women with sex work and hypersexualization, as if it was in our very nature to be sexually alluring and pleasing toward Western men. This was a common portrayal in American films about the war in Vietnam. Movies like *Deer Hunter* (1978) reinforced the fantasy of the "sexually pleasing Asian woman." Such portrayals ignore the prevalence of rape, abuse, and killings amongst real

Asian sex workers, Asian women and girls who live near and around U.S. military bases, and Asian women married to U.S. servicemen. Some examples of such violence include:

- 1992, South Korea: camptown sex worker Yun Geum-i was sexually assaulted and murdered by private Kenneth Markle
- 1995, Okinawa: three US servicemen kidnapped a 12-year-old local girl, bound her, beat her and took turns raping her
- 2002, South Korea: two 14-year-old girls, Shin Hyo-sun and Shim Mi-seon, were struck and killed by an armored U.S. military vehicle
- 2015, Philippines: Lance Corporal Pemberton was convicted and later pardoned for killing Jennifer Laude, a trans Filipina

Furthermore, in Asian Women United's documentary, *Slaying the Dragon: Reloaded* (2011), Asian American Studies professor and author, Elaine H. Kim articulates,

> Part of the fantasy about Asian women is that they need to be saved from the East by the West. In fact, saving women from the oppression of Islam and Muslim men has been one of the U.S.'s justifications for invading the Middle East (12:02 - 12:16).

Such framing of Asian women's sexuality is related to the countless websites, porn sites, massage parlors, and online dating services catering to racist fantasies about sexualized and available Asian women. These prevailing images of Asian women can be connected to why Asian American women reported twice as many hate incidents after COVID-19. The March 16, 2021 slaughter of eight people in Atlanta, Georgia across three Asian massage parlors, with 6 of the victims being Asian American women, is an extension of the normalization of harm and violence toward Asian women that stems from Orientalism, misogyny, anti-immigrant sentiment, and the criminalization of sex workers. The names of the eight killed in the Atlanta mass shooting are: Soon Chung Park, 74; Hyun Jung Grant, 51; Suncha Kim, 69; Yong Ae Yue, 63; Delaina Ashley Yaun Gonzalez, 33; Xiaojie Tan, 49; Daoyou Feng, 44; and Paul Andre Michels, 54 (Nieto Del Rio, Sandoval, Berryman, and Knoll, 2021).

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5.3: Immigration and Exclusion

Immigration and Exclusion: Labor

Since the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, there have been laws enacted that correspond with anti-Asian sentiments. In the early 1900s, there were anti-Japanese sentiments and the fear of Japanese immigrants (Lee, 2015). This led to the 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement Act that restricted Japanese laborers from immigrating. In 1907, South Asian immigrants had to flee Bellingham, Washington when they were attacked without much warning (Lee, 2015). Ultimately the Asiatic Barred Zone in 1917 restricted Indians and others from immigrating. In the 1930s, Filipinx farmworkers were attacked in what was called the Watsonville Riots. Like some of the other Asian laborers, Filipinxs were seen as competition with white workers. Further, these white workers and community members didn't like the way that Filipinx men had relationships with white women. Anti-miscegenation laws strictly prohibited interracial marriage and sexual relations between whites and non-whites. California didn't overturn this law until 1948 and the last anti-miscegenation law to be struck down was through the Loving vs. Virginia case in 1967. While many of the Asian laborers were seen as competition, Chinese and Japanese immigrants were specifically feared based on the idea that China and Japan, and by extension Chinese and Japanese immigrants, were taking over the U.S. This is seen as "yellow peril." Yellow peril emphasizes the perceived foreignness and fear of invasion, getting rid of "American morals."

Chinese Exclusion Laws

The Page Act of 1875 is the first law created to exclude people on the basis of race, where Chinese women were forbidden from immigrating to the United States if they were deemed prostitutes. In practice, this was applied to all Chinese women and by extension all Asian women, whether they were sex workers or not. The **Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882** is a part of the group of first exclusionary acts on the basis of race, but this time banning all Chinese laborers due to the fears that they were taking over the country, and that they were taking jobs away from whites. Lee (2002) calls the 1882 act to be the first to function as a gatekeeper. Lee analyzes historical documents to connect how the 1882 Act paved the way for larger systemic gatekeeping through immigration. She claims this act served as "Precursors to the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service, United States passports, 'green cards,' illegal immigration and deportation policies can all be traced back to the Chinese Exclusion Act" (Lee, 2002, p. 37).

Since the exclusion acts against Chinese nationals, each major Asian immigrant group experienced exclusion, one after the other. At first, each group was brought in to fill the labor gaps from the group before. For example, after Chinese laborers were excluded, Japanese laborers were relied on more. In 1907, Japanese laborers were then also excluded because people feared Japanese people were taking over and also because Japanese laborers were seen as extreme competition to white workers.

In the late 1880s/early 1900s, immigrants from Asia were seen as a threat through the idea of Yellow Peril specifically targeting Chinese or Japanese laborers and countries.

1907 Gentlemen's Agreement and Picture Brides

The 1907 Gentlemen's Agreement closed the door to Japanese laborers from entering the United States but negotiations still enabled Japanese women to "emigrate as family members" (Wilson and Hosokawa in Takaki, 2008, p. 234). However, Japanese women didn't always meet their husbands before immigration and sometimes took part as "picture brides." As picture brides, families arranged single Japanese women with the help of go-betweens to find Japanese men in the United States to marry (p. 234). Thus, Japanese women would send pictures of themselves and they would have an arranged marriage. This became a more common way for Japanese women to immigrate during this time, as 20,000 Japanese "picture brides" between 1908 and 1920 emigrated to Hawai'i and to the U.S. (Lee, 2015).

Halting and Starting Immigration

The Asiatic Barred Zone halted immigration of Indians in the 1920s. The Immigration Act of 1924 then completely terminated immigration from all of Asia. It wasn't until the Immigration Act of 1965 that Indians began immigrating again and many "had high human capital and worked as doctors and engineers" (Basu, 2017, p. 5). Later, "the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act 1975 gave Vietnamese war refugees special status and Congress granted them relocation aid" (Basu, 2017, p. 5).

Figure 5.3.1: "Photograph of immigrants arriving at Immigration Station on Angel Island (ca. 1931)." (Public Domain; mákvirágok via Flickr)

1965 Immigration Act

The **1965 Immigration Act** went into effect in 1969 (Lobo and Salvo, 739, 1998). The law created immigration preference categories for family reunification and professional skills, allotted "170,000 immigrant visas" for the "Eastern Hemisphere" which was "Asia, Europe, Africa, and Oceania" and allowed only 20,000 visas per country (Lobo and Salvo, 1998, p. 742). Lobo and Salvo (1998) state that "besides physicians, a large number of Asian nurses, dentists, and pharmacists, scientists, and engineers entered during this period" (Lobo and Salvo, 1998, pp. 740 and 741).

Sidebar: A Closer look at the 1965 Immigration Act

From the period of 1972-1977, Asian immigration totaled an average of 136,827 yearly while the total of all immigrants yearly average was about 405,000 (Lobo and Salvo, 1998, p. 743).

For the types of visas, China's highest percent of immigration visas were allocated through employment preferences for the last period of 1992-1994 with about 53% (p. 743). India had their highest percent immigration visas in family during 1978-1991 with about 60% and highest for employment in 1972-1977 with 57%. The Philippines had their highest percentage of visas allocated from the immediate relatives category. Finally, Vietnam in 1972-1977 had the highest percent yearly allocations in the refugee category.

The 1965 Immigration Act ended the Immigration Act of 1924 "quota" based system that severely restricted immigration and therefore redirected immigration to include more Asian and other people of color immigrants unlike before (Basu, 2017, p.1). Basu writes, "Preference categories for admissions were created based on family ties, critical skills, diversity, and refugee status" (Basu, 2017, p.5). The initial Asian immigrants who came following this act "were employed in high-skill, high-wage occupations" (Basu, 2017, p. 2).

Chinese people, Indians, and Filipinx people are the largest Asian groups in the U.S.

Coolies

After slavery was abolished in the U.S., plantation owners needed workers to work on the land since Blacks were no longer forced to work for them. Latin America became a hotspot for indentured labor from Asia, and in particular Chinese and Indian workers. These indentured laborers who worked under contract were called **Coolies**. Women workers from India came later but only if they were deemed "moral" such as being "widowed" or "married" because "single women" were said to cause strife between male workers who would compete to have sex with them (Lee, 2015, p.4). Lee writes, "The first group of 396 Asian indentured laborers arrived in May of 1838… After reports of abuse of workers surfaced, the experiment ended the next year, but the system resumed in 1844, and from 1838 to 1917, 429,623 South Asians and 17,904 Chinese went to the British West Indies as indentured laborers" (2015, p. 3 ebook). Some of the places the laborers went included: British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica, Cuba, Peru, Panama, Mexico, Brazil, Costa Rica, and more.

Coolies was a term used in Latin America and especially in the United States to depict workers who were seen as job-stealing competition (Lee, 2015, p.1). Coolie labor was related to the slavery system as they were often mistreated like slaves (Lee, 2015, p.5) and sometimes held against their will. Some laborers under the coolie system were forcibly sent to work in Latin America and even tricked into doing so (Lee, 2015, pp.4-5). Lee documents instances where sometimes they were forced into labor even years after their contract ended (Lee, 2015, p.5).

Hawai‘i Plantation Labor

Hawai'i became a popular place for Asian immigrants who wanted to come to the United States. They worked on largely sugar plantations for low wages, they fought for better conditions in their work and home, they were pitted against one another in their struggle against the white plantation leadership. Besides Japanese laborers, there were others that were “Hawaiians, Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, Chinese… Portuguese, and Koreans” with an “overseer” that was usually “white” (Takaki, 2008, p. 240). Women laborers made less than men despite doing the same work (Lillian Ota Takaki in Takaki, 2008, p. 240). Lillian Takaki writes, “ ‘Female field hands, for example, received an average wage of only fifty-five cents per day in 1915, compared to the seventy-eight cents for male field hands’.” (Takaki in Takaki, 2008, p. 240). Laborers complained that working in the fields was very difficult and they “worked like machines” and were “watched constantly” (Takaki, 2008, p. 240).

Takaki states that Japanese laborers were stereotyped as not causing trouble because they are “accommodating” and didn’t make a lot of noise but in reality they constantly fought back about the conditions they faced at work especially through striking (Takaki, 2008, p. 242). What Japanese and other workers realized was that when members of their group fought for better working conditions, others would be used and pitted against them through a “divide-and-control” or divide-and-conquer technique. They would amplify and pit needs and advantages against the needs and disadvantages of others and therefore attempt to highlight differences through preferences in order to squash any semblance of commonalities that people would recognize across groups. Many times groups were able to see how they were being used against one another and came together to fight for better working conditions.

From the beginning, the workers camps were cramped. Later as laborers had families, “… [planters] wanted to ‘stimulate’ a ‘home feeling’ in order to make their workers happier and more productive” (Takaki, 2008, p.247). For some of the various ethnic groups including Japanese laborers, there were religious institutions, language schools, and sometimes for many the sharing of ethnic foods (p. 248). Pidgin was created and grew into popularity, with Pidgin being "a simple English that incorporated Hawaiian, Japanese, Portuguese, and Chinese phrases as well as their rhythms and intonations" (p. 249). Pidgin was spoken on the plantation amongst the workers who created this common dialect to speak with one another. Tagalog and Ilocano were also said to have influenced Pidgin but the earlier mentioned languages were said to have the biggest influence.

Sidebar: Philip Vera Cruz

Figure 5.3.2: A mural in Historic Filipinotown, L.A with Philip Vera Cruz on the top left. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Photo by Kenny Chang via Flickr)

Philip Vera Cruz became the second vice-president of the United Farm Workers union (UFW) until his resignation in 1977. He was the highest-ranking Filipinx officer in the UFW. Before helping to form the UFW and leading the grape strike, Vera Cruz was an officer in the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), AFL-CIO which combined with the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) led by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, to form the UFW (Scharlin and Villanueva 2000, 31). For Vera Cruz, participating in the UFW changed his life, stating that joining the union gave him “the opportunity to

participate in the political struggles of this country…as a worker struggling along with my fellow workers for our constitutional rights" (p. 33).

Vera Cruz was a farm laborer, and when he joined the AWOC, he also studied the history of labor movements. He understood the value in multiethnic strikes, while a majority-white led Teamsters union tried to convince Filipinx workers from merging with Mexican workers. Vera Cruz, along with others in the AWOC, including Larry Itliong, understood that "we must unite all the races so we'll have one strong union that represents all workers. We explained how in the past you could see that because the workers were divided they were weak" (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000, p. 46), also pointing out that growers would play one group off another in order to maximize their profits. Vera Cruz noted that Itliong had reservations about merging with Mexican workers, fearing that Filipinx workers would be pushed out, but ultimately he felt that his primary goal was to improve the conditions for all farm workers. On August 1966, a year into the grape strike, the AWOC and NFWA merged and turned into one union: the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFW), vastly supported by both Filipinx and Mexican farm workers. Vera Cruz also pointed out the role that Teamsters played to "fan the flames" between whatever disputes existed between Filipinx and Mexican farm workers, eager to bring Filipinx members over to their union (p. 49). See also Chapter 11, section 11.5 on the agricultural labor movement in California.

From Colonization to Nursing

Catherine Ceniza Choy (2019), writes that "U.S. colonization" greatly contributed to the high amount of Filipinx nurses in the United States due to "Americanized professional nurse training," English being one of the main languages for exams, and the presence of other types of medical nursing courses to students. Choy further writes, "According to the 2016 Survey of California Registered Nurses, Filipinos make up the second largest group of the state's active RN workforce, nearly 18 percent. Among younger nurses, they're even more predominant, with Filipino nurses representing nearly a quarter of nurses between ages 35 to 44 years and more than one-fifth of RNs 45 to 54 years old" (2019). However, "from Covid, Filipino nurses are just 4 percent of the nursing workforce in the United States, but constitute nearly one-third of nursing deaths due to Covid-19, according to a research study conducted by National Nurses United last fall" (Ocampo, 2021).

Choy (2019) writes,

> Filipino immigrant nurses also bring experience with Philippine traditional therapies such as hilot, faith healing, and the use of medicinal plants. Hilot is a traditional form of massage therapy or chiropractic manipulation that relieves aches and pains. This knowledge of Philippine healing modalities is important not solely because the use of alternative therapies in the U.S. has become more mainstream, but also because a growing number of Americans are of Filipino heritage. Between 1980 and 2016, the Filipino immigrant population in the United States nearly quadrupled. California is home to the largest Filipino-American population in the nation with over 1.6 million of Filipino descent (Choy, 2019).

Race and Asian American Space

Little Manila

Filipina American historian, the late Dawn Mabalon (2013) discusses the Filipinx American movement in Stockton, CA from 1967 to 1972 in her text *Little Manila is in the Heart: The Making of a Filipina/o American Community in Stockton, California*. She writes, "Galvanized by anger over displacements of urban renewal and freeway construction, these seemingly disparate groups drew on their community development to forge a formidable alliance that challenged the white and Filipina/o power structure in Stockton, as well as the notion that Filipinas/os should remain second-class citizens" (p. 300).

Mabalon (2013) recognized that contrary to popular belief about Filipinas/xs/os, a lot of conflict that made organizing the community difficult wasn't due to regionalism (i.e. differences between being from Luzon, Visayas, or Mindanao) but instead language differences, whether Tagalog, Visayan languages, Ilocano, and others (p. 103). Mabalon (2013) recalls the discrimination and segregation that Filipinxs faced.

As mentioned earlier, some of the impetus for fighting was due to the idea that Filipinx Americans were considered "second-class citizens." The following memory from a Stockton resident during that time shows the discrimination and treatment of Filipinas/xs/os in regards to basic needs. This discrimination dehumanized them and is also reminiscent of Civil Rights Struggles in the 1960's. Mabalon (2013) writes,

> The only place Filipinas/os were allowed to live and congregate in downtown was south of Main Street, in the Oriental Quarter. Most institutions, businesses, and gathering places outside of the campo and the streets of the West End were strictly

forbidden to Filipinas/os. Many hotels in the downtown West End refused to rent rooms to them. Immigrants recalled seeing the signs that warned Filipinas/os not to let the sun set on them in the city. "I personally saw signs on some hotel stairways on El Dorado Street, openly discriminating against Filipinos saying ‘Positively No Filipinos allowed’ or ‘No Filipinos or dogs allowed,’ " remembered by Anita Bautista, a second-generation Pinay (p. 113).

Japantown

Figure 5.3.3: Peace Pagoda in Japantown, San Francisco. (CC BY 4.0; Photo by Jordan Burkart)

What was once a comfortable Japantown in San Francisco became a place that completely changed when Japanese Americans were forced to leave West coast cities during World War II due to Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 signed two months after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. When Japanese American residents of Japantown in San Francisco came back to their homes after living in the camps, they sometimes came to find new ownership and establishments, as well as sometimes losing their homes. Upon returning, they found that a lot of the area had been targeted for redevelopment. Some residents were able to come back and those who were able have been fighting against redevelopment ever since, a common occurrence amongst communities of color in urban spaces.

To “Save Japantown,” they formed a committee that included “designated city planners, local community, merchants, homeowners’ associations, and residents.” (Takashi, 2014, p. 6). Efforts to “Save Japantown” have faced the difficult challenge of balancing various interests and prioritizing cultural preservation or economic revitalization. One issue included whose interest did the initiative serve? For example, Japanese Americans may be fighting to preserve Japanese culture but others argue that Japanese Americans used to be against Japanese (as in Japan) investments and are now fighting against outside investments (Takashi, 2014, p.10). Another issue was what exactly did preservation look like (p. 8)? As with other ethnic neighborhoods, they fought gentrification, fighting against outsiders redeveloping the area and taking away their ethnic ties and local establishment. Further, Takashi writes,

> Interviewee C : Business owner and community leader (Sansei male):
>
> I think most of the property owners are Nisei and … don’t always like governmental intervention. They are like “let me do whatever I want on my property” … “let me control my own destiny” … “I don’t want government to tell me what to do” … it’s typical Nisei. I’m sure all the experience they’ve had through the Depression, the War and discrimination and redevelopment … Everything has affected their decisions (2014, p. 9).

As expressed in this quotation, there is a lot of history impacting the way that the different groups involved are navigating how to “Save Japantown” including within the Japanese and Japanese American community. One white community planner called the presence and impact of history “an open wound” within the community and efforts to save the community (Takashi, 2014, p. 9).

Figure 5.3.4: "Dragon Gate" in San Francisco. (CC BY 4.0; Photo by Jordan Burkart)

Shah (2001) writes,

> nineteenth-century San Francisco health officials and politicians conceived of Chinatown as the preeminent site of urban sickness, vice, crime, poverty, and depravity; furthermore, “health authorities readily conflated the physical condition of Chinatown with the characteristics of Chinese people. They depicted Chinese immigrants as a filthy and diseased “race” who incubated such incurable afflictions as smallpox, syphilis, and bubonic plague and infected white Americans” (San Francisco Board of Health, 1876-1881 in Shah, 2001, pp. 1-2).

These attributes contributed to the idea of who is an “acceptable” kind of immigrant, who is healthy and desirable.

Shah (2001) writes that during the 19th century, “Chinese Americans found it impossible to move outside the boundaries of Chinatown. Attempts to move encountered resistance from white real estate brokers, who refused to show Chinese Americans houses in exclusively white neighborhoods, and from white landlords, who turned down Chinese tenants (p. 230). Shah found various sources that demonstrate this that includes a Survey of Race Relations collection and interviews as a part of *Combined Asian American Resources Oral History Project*. Because of this, Chinese Americans lived in segregated Chinatowns before being able to slowly find housing in white neighborhoods in the twentieth century when they proved they could be trusted to be clean, “adapted to American living styles and standards in furnishings and decor and by Chinese families who conformed to idealized nuclear-family social dynamics” (p. 230). Such heteronormativity contrasted with the historically bachelor societies in Chinatowns and other ethnic neighborhoods that were said to harbor disease and promote uncleanliness amongst same-sex housing (p. 230).

In their quest for humanization, middle-class Chinese Americans fought laws and went to court to challenge their treatment, and gained media visibility and sympathy from many. Shah (2013) remarks that this helped shift perceptions of Chinese Americans, but sometimes at the cost of others. For example, fighting for middle-class Chinese Americans and making the claim that they are upright and moral, clean citizens and that their wealth and status proves it, often came at the detriment of those who lived in bachelor societies (p. 230). Many of these bachelor societies existed because of the limited immigration allowable for Asian women and thus the settling and homemaking often done by longer-term immigrants.

Undocumented Asian Americans

Tracy Buenavista (2018) states, "more than one million are undocumented Asian immigrants, or 12 percent of the total undocumented population" out of a total of about 11 million undocumented people in the U.S. (p. 79). Buenavista argues that because Asian American undocumented students are more so seen as "silent", she claims it "prevent[s] them from seeking support networks and resources among the larger undocumented immigrant community" and that even though they refrain from seeking support, they still achieve "academic mobility like college access" (p. 80).

Enriquez (2019) compares some differences between Latinx undocumented students and Asian undocumented students. One Asian undocumented immigrant recognized how they were seen differently from Mexican undocumented immigrants and how it enables them more access. “Edith Oh, a Korean [undocumented immigrant] student, noted, ‘They would probably think you’re legal here [Asians] and you followed all the laws…I guess just [because] Asians are obedient. Since they were little they listen to their parents. And they follow the laws [and] regulations' ” (p. 265). Enriquez specifically states how such assumptions about Asian undocumented immigrants helped keep them safe as people didn’t assume they were undocumented and so people were less likely to question them about lacking documentation (p. 265). There were markers that indicate a lack of foreignness to people or a status

attributed to something else. “Anna Kwon, who arrived at the age of ten, explained, ‘They assume that I’m Korean American since I speak [English] fluently. So it’s like, they don’t assume that I’m undocumented’ ” (p. 266). However, she adds that if not documented, “they would think I’m an international student” (p. 266).

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5.4: Wars and Imperialism

Studying the Impact of Wars and Imperialism in Asian American Studies

Asian American Studies professors, Wei Ming Dariotis and Wesley Ueunten remind us that due to the “model minority” myth and the general lack of knowledge about Asian American history, most Americans don’t realize how issues of war impact today’s Asian American communities. They point out that “Asian Americans of all generations are affected by the ghosts of wars in Asia, the Pacific, and Europe in myriad ways that vary distinctly by community” (2010, p. 747). Dariotis and Ueunten emphasize how many of these issues are related to the “overarching logic in the construct of Orientalism” or the construction of the collective “Orient” (Asia and the so-called Middle East) as foreign, feminized, and "othered" in order to justify years of Western colonization (p. 748).

This section of the chapter will review just a few examples of how U.S.-involved wars and imperialism have shaped the racialization of Asian Americans and continue to impact their lives today. We will center the narratives of silenced Asian American stories, often misrepresented in mainstream media. Dariotis and Ueunten (2010) also point out how focusing on contemporary Asian American issues related to war contributes to understanding Asian American history and migration as related to U.S. militarism and expansionism; for, “Most of Asian America would not exist if it had not been for the push-pull effect exerted by the destabilization of Asian homelands through U.S. military actions, pushing Asians out of Asia…and the related increased wealth the U.S. enjoys that pulls Asians to the United States” (p. 749).

Forgotten Wars: the Philippines and Korea

Dariotis and Ueunten (2010) point out how the U.S. tends to reinforce the message of being victims of attacks on U.S. soil, as “they provide an impetus to war” (p. 750). Contrary to this, we are just as quick to forget or hide U.S. military actions that work to minimize its impacts and reduce the number of years involved or people killed. These examples of U.S. involved wars or imperialism are not commonly celebrated, nor are they given a significant time in history textbooks. These are the “Forgotten Wars” of the U.S.

Philippine-American War and U.S. Imperialism

One such example is the Philippine-American War between the U.S. and Filipinx revolutionaries. After 400 years of Spanish colonization in the Philippines, the U.S., in its desire for global domination, took the opportunity to go to war with Spain as Cubans were fighting for independence. In the Philippines, Spanish domination had already been weakened by hundreds of years of resistance by Filipinx people who wished for nothing more than to be able to govern themselves and dismantle Western occupation. Thanks to these liberation efforts, the U.S. was able to come in at a crucial moment and help defeat the Spanish in four months. It was uncovered fairly quickly that the real motive by the U.S. was not about supporting independence in Cuba or the Philippines, but about expanding the U.S. empire. In the 1898 Treaty of Paris, the United States was “given control” over the Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.

This move was an extension of the Manifest Destiny ideology, that the U.S. was destined to expand their empire. Americans began to construct a narrative that justified their occupation of the Philippines, proclaiming that “it was their duty to expand both Christianity and democracy in the word” (Parks, 2013, p. 264). It’s important to note that not all Americans believed this and in fact there was a strong force of anti-imperialists who opposed the U.S. occupation of the Philippines. People of the Philippines also opposed U.S. control and resisted. The Philippine-American War (1899 - 1901) ensued, with Filipinx revolutionaries led by Emilio Aguinaldo. The war was claimed to have ended upon Aguinaldo’s capture, but rebellions continued into 1913.

“White Man’s Burden”

A poem by famous British writer, Rudyard Kipling, “**The White Man’s Burden**: The United States and the Philippine Islands” was first published in 1899 at the start of the Philippine-American War. Kipling was “a staunch advocate of Western imperialism” (Parks, 2013, p. 265). The poem proclaimed that it was the moral obligation of the “superior” white race to guide their “little brown brothers” into the light of Western civilization. This white supremacist ideology only worked to justify U.S. imperialist and military actions in the Philippines as then-President William McKinley welcomed this poem. “White Man’s burden” became “a euphemism for Western imperialism” (p. 265).

Many scholars agree that white supremacy reinforced a unifying principle of whiteness, a shared racial identity that cut across class lines. White supremacy allowed white Americans to unite as one race and feel superior to others (Strain, 2003, 44:04 - 44:34). Multiple racial projects throughout the 19th century sent the message to poor whites that at least they’re better than non-whites.

This allowed them to feel united with land-owning, upper-class whites who actually wielded power over them and distracted them from class-based inequalities through narratives of white supremacy. White man's burden and the U.S. occupation of the Philippines were racist projects that reinforced the ideologies of white supremacy.

Figure 5.4.1: "Igorot Sining Lessons. [Philippine Reservation in the Department of Anthropology at the 1904 World's Fair]". (Public Domain; Jessie Tarbox Beals via Missouri Historical Society)

The 1904 St. Louis, Missouri World's Fair was another of these racial projects to "showcase America's achievements." They featured human exhibits of "savage" peoples in their "natural habitats" in order to demonstrate their contrast with U.S. superiority. White fair-goers took pictures next to "savage" people in order to physically demonstrate "how civilized they were." One organizer described it as "a practical illustration of the best way of bearing the white man's burden" (Strain, 2003, 49:09 - 51:30). These human exhibits attempted to demonstrate "a bucolic view of slave life" and Geronimo, an Apache warrior, signed autographs. The Philippine Exposition was one of the fair's largest exhibits, attempting to indicate the benefits of U.S. influence on one of the empire's newly conquered peoples (51:37-52:31). Author Scott Malcolmson stated, "White people saw their advance as being historical," giving them "enormous motivation to see the lives of people who were not white as being outside of history and not part of this progressive advance" (53:40-53:54).

Korean War

Figure 5.4.2: A war weary Korean girl by a stalled tank at Haengju, Korea. June 9, 1951. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Maj. R.V. Spencer, UAF. (Navy) via Morning Calm Weekly Newspaper Photo Archive - Flickr)

The Korean War is often recorded to have lasted from 1950 to 1953, however many scholars, activists and survivors of the war in the Korean peninsula recognize that we are still technically at war today with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK

or North Korea). No peace treaty has ever been signed and military drills still happen at the 38th parallel, which has divided the land and families for over seventy years. Still, what is recognized as the Korean War with active combat and bombings between the USSR-occupied North and U.S.-occupied South is also known as “The Forgotten War” by many Americans.

Korea was colonized by the Japanese empire from 1910-1945. For 35 years Koreans suffered under Japanese repression, forced to speak the Japanese language, use Japanese names, and bow to the Japanese emperor. Koreans were left hungry and sometimes forcefully removed from their homes and land. Koreans resisted the Japanese for decades and Kim Il Sung, soon to be the “father” of the DPRK, was one of many Korean guerilla fighters who fought for Korean liberation. These class-based revolutionaries in the North were communists backed by the Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China. Fearful of the spread of communism, United States became involved in Korea in order to exercise their Cold War policy of containment. The U.S. military occupied the South and divided the Korean peninsula into two at the 38th parallel and a civil war ensued between the “South” and “North.” The nation is still divided 70 years later and the U.S. military continues to operate in South Korea.

The war devastated Korea, killing four million and displacing over nine million people. Eleven million families were separated due to division and war, and many children were left orphaned. Asian American Studies professor Grace J. Yoo writes that “No Korean family was untouched by this war” (2012, p. 63). Yoo highlighted Korean women impacted by the war, discussing how 300,000 women became widows forced to peddle in order to survive and care for their families. In Hee Kim had no money or place to live, and started a shrimp selling business. Others sold sweet potato or rice cakes on the road (pp. 71-72). Yoo summarizes that decades later, the women are still haunted by the memories of war. But they shared their stories via hundreds of pages of handwritten notes in hopes that the next generation of Korean Americans won’t forget the war (p. 73).

Mass Incarceration of Japanese in the Western Hemisphere

Japanese Americans have a long history in the United States. Today, Japanese popular culture and food are quite recognizable in the U.S. In combination with the push for the “model minority” myth, the image painted may be that Japanese Americans have fully assimilated and don’t face any discrimination. Yet by now, we hope the reader recognizes that such broad generalizations of the Asian American community often overshadow important aspects of U.S. history that prevents us from fully comprehending the impact of Orientalist, White Supremacist, and Anti-Asian ideologies that justified extended acts of violence and legalized discrimination against Japanese Americans. One of these major instances was the legalized mass incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans, Canadians, and Peruvians during World War II.

In the Aftermath of Pearl Harbor

By the time the Japanese army bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States government had already made steps toward increasing surveillance of the Japanese American community. For decades before, Yellow Peril and Orientalist ideologies pushed the narrative that Japanese immigrants were to take over the West. The 1940 Alien Registration Act made all alien residents register and provide their fingerprints to the federal government. Agencies like the FBI had already been collecting information about Japanese American communities, including the names of people who led cultural organizations, language teachers, martial arts instructors, or anyone suspected by the U.S. government to be too “Japanesey” (Lee, 2015, p. 212; Kochiyama, 2001, p. 344). Within just a few hours of the Pearl Harbor bombing by Japan, the U.S. government initiated so-called security measures targeting Japanese, and some German, and Italian nationals. Martial law was established in Hawai’i, and the FBI began arresting individuals they suspected were spies for the Japanese government. Over one thousand Japanese were arrested within two days, largely community leaders on the government’s list. By February of 1942, over 2,000 Japanese people were held in U.S. Department of Justice camps (Lee, 2015, pp. 215 - 216).

This included the now famed and respected Japanese American activist, Yuri Kochiyama’s father. Kochiyama was only nineteen when the bombs were dropped, and her father, who owned a fish market in San Pedro, CA, had just come home after a surgery. On the very day Pearl Harbor was attacked, Kochiyama’s father was taken by the FBI and detained in a federal prison. He was released and allowed to return home on December 20, but he was extremely frail and could not talk. He died 12 hours later (Kochiyama, 2001, pp. 343-344).

Historian Erika Lee explains that the arrests and other government actions like freezing bank accounts created a catastrophe among the Japanese American community (Lee, 2015, p. 216). Hysteria against the Japanese continued with baseless claims in newspapers and among U.S. politicians and military personnel who believed Japanese Americans were spies for the Japanese military. Lieutenant General John L. DeWitt was convinced that Japanese Americans were enemies and stated, “a Jap is a Jap” (p. 217). Ironically, the Japanese government *did* place spies in the U.S., but the nineteen Americans arrested for spying were all white (p. 213). In fact, two U.S. government surveys confirmed that Japanese Americans were overwhelmingly loyal to the United States.

Curtin B. Munson informed President Roosevelt in 1941 that there was “no Japanese problem” and that up to 98% of second-generation Japanese Americans were “pathetically eager to show this loyalty” (p. 213).

Figure 5.4.3: "Members of the Mochida Family Awaiting Evacuation Bus." Hayward, CA. May 8, 1942. Records of the War Relocation Authority. (Public Domain; Photographed by Dorothea Lange via National Archives Catalog)

Despite this data, on February 19, 1942, only two months after Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, authorizing the secretary of war to set up military areas where they could restrict the movement of people considered “enemy aliens,” particularly Japanese nationals and Japanese Americans (Schlund-Vials, et al, 2017, p. 138). Lee reminds us that the ultimate responsibility rests with Roosevelt who signed this order, ignoring reports from the FBI, the Office of Naval Intelligence, and his own investigators who reported that a mass removal and incarceration was not necessary (Lee, 2015, p. 222).

Under the guise of “military necessity” all people of Japanese ancestry were forcefully removed from Washington, California, Oregon, and parts of Arizona. Exclusion orders were posted all over cities and towns, also stating where Japanese Americans were now banned. Japanese Americans had one week to pack and bring with them only what they could carry (Lee, 2015, pp. 229 - 230). Many families had no choice but to sell or abandon their homes, farms, and businesses. Japanese Americans were ordered to assemble on their “evacuation” days when they were met with armed soldiers who gave them ID tags. Monica Sone wrote, “From then on, we were known as Family #10710” (p. 230).

They were first sent to “assembly centers,” such as the one Kochiyama’s family was sent to in Arcadia, California. Most assembly centers were on fair grounds or race tracks and people were forced to sleep in horse stalls. She explained, “...for mattresses they gave us muslin bags, and told us to fill them with straws” and pointed out how it was especially challenging for families with young children since they couldn’t carry much besides their children and babies (Kochiyama, 2001, p. 345).

Sidebar: Fred Korematsu

Figure 5.4.4: Fred Korematsu at a press conference with member of his *coram nobis* legal team. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Courtesy of the family of Fred T. Korematsu via J Curnow, Flickr)

Fred Korematsu, born in Oakland, CA, attempted to avoid the removal order by undergoing plastic surgery. He went into hiding, but was arrested and sent to jail. Ernest Besig, with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), approached Korematsu and asked him if he was willing to challenge the legality of mass removal and detention of Japanese Americans. Korematsu said yes as he "intended to fight for the civil rights of Japanese Americans as a whole" (Okihiro, 2013, p. 94).

Korematsu's lawyers charged that the mass relocation was unconstitutional because it denied Japanese Americans their due process protections, but Korematsu was found guilty of violating a military order. When Korematsu filed an appeal, his case moved up to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1944, the majority decision on *Korematsu v. the United States*, was that due to "real military dangers," the detainment of Korematsu was justified. Korematsu was sent to Topaz camp until the end of World War II, and then moved on with his life, married, and had two children.

In the 1980s, it was discovered that the government lied to the Supreme Court about Japanese American wartime cases, including *Korematsu*, and this finding allowed for a *coram nobis* appeal. Korematsu went to court again, testifying, "I would like to see the government admit that they were wrong and do something about it so this will never happen again to any American citizen of any race, creed or color" (Irons, 1989, pp. 25 - 26; cited in Okihiro, 2013, p. 95). Finally in 1988, the U.S. Congress passed the Civil Liberties Act, signed by Ronald Reagan, and issued a national apology to Japanese Americans for mass removal and incarceration. The government also paid $20,000 each to living survivors who were US citizens or legal residents. Korematsu was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1998 by President Bill Clinton, and continued to advocate against the racial profiling of Muslim, Arab, and South Asian communities who were targeted after September 11, 2001. Korematsu passed away on March 30, 2005 and is buried in Oakland, CA where he grew up (Okihiro, 2013, p. 95).

Mass Incarceration

Figure 5.4.5: Winter at Manzanar. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Don Graham via Flickr)

Starting in the summer of 1942, Japanese Americans were moved again to ten newly constructed War Relocation Authority (WRA) camps in various desolate and hostile locations throughout the country (Lee, 2015, p. 236). The WRA provided housing, medical care, and education, and inmates did various jobs at the camps. They were not paid at first, but eventually earned some wages, usually at mere fractions of what people were normally paid, such as $8 or $12 a month for full-time work (Okubo, 2014, p. 62). Yuri Kochiyama and her family were sent to the Arkansas swamplands, assigned to sleep in army barracks with more than 200 people per block. Their camp was surrounded by barbed wire and armed soldiers. She described the ways Japanese Americans had to come together and organize in order to survive, writing,

> Just before we went in to the camps, we saw that being a Japanese wasn't such a good thing….But when I saw the kind of work they did at camp, I felt so proud of the Japanese, and proud to be Japanese...(2001, p. 347).

Incarcerated Japanese Americans tried their best to live life and did so in a communal way. They built vegetable gardens, a silkscreen poster shop, and a tofu factory. Children still attended school, though materials were in short supply. The curriculum emphasized "Americanization," yet the irony was that children were taught about being a free American and to live in a democracy behind barbed wires (Lee, 2015, p. 237). Since cameras were not permitted at the camps, Miné Okubo, a young college student at the time, decided to record everyday life at the Tanforan Assembly Center and Topaz concentration camp, through sketches, drawings, and paintings. She attempted to record the "Crazy things" that happen when you have ten thousand people confined to one square mile with no privacy (Okubo, 2014, p. xxvi). Her illustrations uncovered challenges like when camp police would surveil the premises (p. 60), the stinging sand storms in Utah (p. 127), and the time an elderly man was shot and killed by a guard from one of the watchtowers (p. 180).

Okubo also illustrated scenes of resilience and how Japanese American inmates survived the years of uncertainty during their incarceration. Such as how people created art out of wood, toothbrush handles, and peach seeds (Okubo, 2014, p. 169); and how recreation halls offered ping pong, basketball, and baseball to pass the time (p. 170). Over time, however, Japanese Americans grew angry, frustrated and restless. Conflict grew within camp communities between those who wanted to cooperate with the government and those who wanted to express dissent. At Manzanar, the arrest of a man who beat someone he suspected to be an informant resulted in riots, martial law, and soldiers firing into an unarmed crowd. Two people were killed and nine were injured (Lee, 2015, p. 238).

Sidebar: Mine Okubo Collection

Check out the online collection of drawings by Miné Okubo, illustrating life in the Tanforan assembly center in California and Topaz concentration camp in Utah during World War II. These drawings served as the basis for her renowned book, *Citizen 13660*, which was printed in 1946 and was the first personal account published on the camp experience.

Japanese Americans who fought in the war and those who resisted

In 1943, the U.S. wanted to recruit detainees to fight in the war. The War Relocation Authority initiated a loyalty review program and made any Japanese American male aged seventeen and older fill out a questionnaire that they thought would determine their loyalty to the United States. There were two questions that were the most concerning:

- Question 27: "Are you willing to serve in the armed forces of the United States on combat duty, wherever ordered?"
- Question 28: "Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States of America…and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, or any other foreign government, power or organization?" (Lee, 2015, pp. 238 - 289; Lee, J.H.X., 2018, p. 88).

Most answered "yes" to both questions. Some *Nisei* shared that it was easy to respond "yes" since they were eager to get out of the camps. They were soon issued draft notices in 1944. Thirty-three thousand Japanese American men fought in segregated units: the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and the 100th Infantry Battalion, later called the "Purple Heart Battalion" for their many losses and 900 Purple Hearts (Lee, 2015, p. 242). The 442nd became one of the most decorated units with 3,600 Purple Hearts, and hundreds of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, 47 Distinguished Service Crosses, and one Congressional Medal of Honor (p. 243).

Others who questioned the government's motives found the questionnaire to add insult to injury. After having lost his family business and incarcerated, Dan Harada stated that the government now asking for his allegiance and to serve in combat duty "didn't just sound right" (Lee, 2015, p. 239). He answered "no" to both questions. In fact, approximately 12,000 men answered "no" to both questions, later known as **"no-no boys"** and as a punishment were sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center where they were met with various atrocities (p. 239). This was the largest camp and turned into "a maximum security center with additional barbed wire,

increased guards and tanks, and an eight-foot-high double 'man-proof' fence" (p. 240). Deplorable work conditions led to a death, and 800 inmates went on strike in 1943. They were beaten and the army initiated martial law at Tule Lake. No-no boys also met backlash from fellow Japanese Americans, like the leaders of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) who criticized them as draft dodgers and dishonorable (Lee, J.H.X., 2018, p. 89).

Another three hundred and fifteen Japanese Americans resisted the draft. The Fair Play Committee at Heart Mountain camp in Wyoming asserted their loyalty to the U.S. and the core principles of freedom and justice, but first demanded that civil rights be restored before complying with the draft. They were convicted of a felony and incarcerated for their actions (Lee, 2015, p. 243; Lee, J.H.X., 2018, p. 89). This community was also shunned and vilified by the JACL.

Japanese Latin Americans

Detention of people of Japanese descent extended to Canada and Latin America as well. Viewing the entire Western Hemisphere as a sphere of interest under the Monroe Doctrine, and in the interest of hemispheric security, the U.S. pressured Latin American nations to send Japanese people to the U.S. to be used for hostage exchanges for U.S. prisoners of war held by Japan (Okihiro, 2013, p. 85). Roughly 2,300 Japanese Latin Americans, about 80% from Peru, were expunged from their homes and interned on U.S. soil. The U.S. government took their passports and labeled them as "illegal aliens." More than 800 were forced to participate in prisoner exchanges with Japan. After the end of the war, over a thousand Japanese Latin Americans were deported to "war-devastated Japan" since the Peruvian government refused to readmit Japanese Peruvians (Shimizu and Ueunten, 2010, pp. 816-817). The 300 or so who remained in the U.S. fought for legal residence status and many became U.S. citizens.

Even though Japanese Latin Americans were removed and detained because of the U.S. government, they were excluded from redress granted to Japanese Americans in the 1980s. For several decades now, internees, their descendants, and supporters have sought redress and justice for Japanese Latin Americans through lawsuits and legislative efforts. Additionally many have helped to educate the public about this "little-known wartime history and the ongoing struggle" (p. 818).

The Vietnam War, "The Secret War," and the Cambodian Genocide

U.S. Intervention in Southeast Asia: A Failed Attempt to Contain Communism:

U.S. strategy of containment in response to the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1949 led to a series of U.S. interventions in Asia, including the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the "Secret War" in Laos, and the civil war and genocide in Cambodia. All these actions resulted in a new wave of Asian immigration to the United States. Displaced from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, 1.2 million Southeast Asian refugees fled the destructive and deadly effects of war and political turmoil (Choy, 2022, p. 33).

As Catherine Ceniza Choy points out,

> ...just as American wars and policies have indelibly impacted Vietnamese, Laotian, Hmong, and Cambodian peoples and their homelands, so too have Southeast Asian refugees, their descendants, and immigrant generations transformed the U.S. landscape with their labor and ingenuity, and their community organizing and creativity (2022, p. 32).

The story of Southeast Asian refugees is one of the least understood narratives in U.S. mass media. As Vietnamese American graphic novelist Thi Bui writes in her family memoir, *The Best We Could Do* (2018), "I think a lot of Americans forget that for the Vietnamese the war continued, whether America was involved or not" (p. 209). Many Hollywood movies focused on the point of view of American soldiers and an oversimplified story of American heroes and Viet Cong communist enemies. The silenced background characters were of screaming Vietnamese people who were brutally killed or sexualized bar girls and prostitutes as side pieces for American GIs. Choy writes,

> The plethora of controversial issues contributes to a US-centric history that has reduced Vietnam to a story about war and a consequence of the failed US strategy to contain the spread of communism ….This narrative erases the meanings and memories of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos as homelands, the beauty of their landscapes, and the diversity and humanity of their peoples (2022, pp. 33-34).

Choy (2022) also importantly underscores how the histories of this group have been deleted in large part because U.S. military actions were covert. The U.S. was already involved in Vietnam as early as the 1950s. France colonized Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos since 1859, calling it "French Indochina," but for decades Vietnamese nationalists organized for their liberation. One of these people was Ho Chi Minh, whose call for independence was ignored by the West and he turned to communism and fought the French in the First Indochina War. Eventually, France let go and the 1954 Geneva Accords divided Vietnam along the seventeenth parallel and the North was led by Ho Chi Minh and the U.S. backed the southern government (Lee, 2015, pp. 315-316).

Figure 5.4.6: A U.S. Navy McDonnell F-4B Phantom II of Fighter Squadron VF-111 Sundowners drops 227 kg Mk 82 bombs over Vietnam during 1971. (Public Domain; U.S. Navy National Museum of Naval Aviation via Picryl)

President Dwight Eisenhower sent 1,000 U.S. military advisors to Vietnam by the time he left office, and Kennedy continued to support the southern regime by sending in the special forces and more U.S. military into Vietnam. President Johnson escalated U.S. involvement. The 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution allowed the U.S. to bomb North Vietnam and deploy U.S. troops, starting the Second Indochina War (Lee, 2015, p. 316). By 1967, there were 540,000 U.S. soldiers in Vietnam, and more than a million tons of bombs were dropped in North Vietnam and four million tons of bombs in South Vietnam, destroying buildings, roads, waterways, and more infrastructure that people depended on (p. 316). The tonnage of bombs dropped in Southeast Asia was greater than the total tonnage dropped on Nazi-occupied territories during the whole of World War II. In addition, the U.S. used chemical warfare including napalm and agent orange that displaced 12 million people from South Vietnam (p. 317).

By 1973, another U.S. President was in charge, Richard Nixon, and due to U.S. troops losing, and increasing pressures to end the war in Vietnam, a peace agreement between the U.S. and North Vietnam was signed on January 27, 1973 (Lee, 2015, p. 317). But the U.S. never withdrew from Southeast Asia, continuing to carpet bomb Cambodia and Laos in covert operations that completely destroyed and destabilized both nations. Laos and Cambodia were both under communist regimes by 1975 and the people there today are still contending with the effects of war in the form of millions of land mines left in the region (p. 317).

The CIA's "Secret War" in Laos

Figure 5.4.7: Bomb shells left over from the U.S.'s secret bombing campaign, lined up in a village outside Phonsavan, Laos. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Lorna via Flickr)

Award-winning Hmong American author, Kao Kalia Yang starts her family memoir, *The Latehomecomer: A Hmong Family Memoir* (2008) with this line: "The world that they were living in could no longer hold them safe. It was 1975 and the Vietnam War, as the world knew it, was over" (p. 7). U.S. bombings of Laos helped to destabilize the nation, where there was a civil war between the communist Pathet Lao and the anticommunist Royal Lao government. When the Pathet Lao won a majority of seats in

the coalition government in the 1958 elections, the U.S. took secret action against this political shift in Laos. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) "set its sights on recruiting Hmong soldiers to take on covert actions on behalf of the United States" (Lee, 2015, p. 318).

As an ethnic minority originally from China, Hmong people have lived in the mountains of Laos since the early 1800s. They were fairly isolated from the rest of the Lao population, often discriminated against by the government. Vang Pao helped the CIA recruit Hmong soldiers to attack the North Vietnamese traveling through Laos in exchange for military and humanitarian aid. Many Hmong also believed that the U.S. promised a "long-sought Hmong homeland or sanctuary" (Lee, 2015, p. 318). The death rate was high in America's "Secret War," as an estimated 50,000 Hmong were killed, and by 1970 the CIA began recruiting boys as young as 10. Laos became the most heavily bombed country in the world and with the "most displaced population in the world" (p. 319).

When communist Pathet Lao came to power in Laos in 1975, they announced: "It is necessary to extirpate, down to the root, the Hmong minority" (Yang, 2008, p. 7). The CIA and the Americans had abandoned the Hmong. Yang wrote, "the Hmong knew that the only thing coming for them was death" (p. 8). Many fled to the thick jungle in order to escape imprisonment, starvation, torture, hard labor, and executions, including both of Yang's parents who were teenagers at the time. For three years they foraged in the forest, constantly moving to escape nearing North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao soldiers. Yang wrote:

> They were hungry and dirty. They had gotten used to the scabs on their backs from the heavy packs, the gnawing hunger, the feeling that there was air in their stomachs all the time, and the bombs that fell from the sky destroying green canopy and shattering the bodies of old men and women who could not run fast enough (2008, p. 10).

Yang's young parents met while scavenging for food and they married in a clearing, no more than "three to four banana-leaf-covered lean-tos around a small fire" (Yang, 2008, p. 15). Yang's mother was given an embroidery that told the Hmong peoples' story, and a heavy silver necklace that symbolized "being a Hmong woman" (p. 17). A month into their marriage, Yang's parents visited Yang's maternal grandmother, which ended up being the last time she ever saw her family in person.

Yang's mother was separated from her husband while pregnant, captured by Lao and Vietnamese soldiers. Yang's father and his brothers hatched an escape plan and snuck them away from capture in the middle of the night months later. Yang's mother had already given birth to their first-born, Dawb. The extended family ran as dogs barked and soldiers chased after them, firing their guns. They decided to cross the Mekong River and head for refugee camps in Thailand.

When they reached the Mekong, Yang described it as "raging and wild and high," as the Mekong River is the "twelfth longest river in the world…known in both Laos and Thailand as the mother river" (2008, p. 35). As soldiers started to approach the shore, Yang's mother buried pictures of her family that she carried on her, telling herself that "One day, she would find the pictures again" (p. 37). Yang's father cut and tied bamboo strands to himself, his mother, his wife and baby. He couldn't swim, and instead dragged his family across the river. The silver necklace Yang's mother was given on her wedding got lost in the undertow of the river. Yang's family made it across as soldiers on the other side were firing guns and they walked until some Thai soldiers guided them toward the United Nations compound where they could register as refugees. They lived in under-resourced, crowded, and unsanitary conditions in the refugee camps for years.

Yang was born in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp in 1980, a year and five months after her family crossed the Mekong River. Tens of thousands of Hmong refugees lived in these camps, located in hot and arid places. Rations of old grains of rice and hard to digest fish came only three times a week and families had to find whatever else to eat on the other days of the week (2008, p. 61). Yang's grandmother was a respected medicine woman and allowed to travel into the mountains with armed guards to find herbal remedies (p. 69).

Yang's family remained in the camp for years until leaving in 1987 (2008, p. 88). They settled in the housing projects of St. Paul, Minnesota, along with many other Hmong families. The city later became known as the "Hmong Capital of the World." Yang's grandmother came later, eventually settling in Minnesota. Yang spent many years with her grandmother, listening to her tell stories of life in Laos. When her grandmother passed away, Yang promised her they would meet again, writing: "We will become Hmong, and we will build a strong home that we will never leave and can always return to. We will not be lost and looking our whole lives through" (p. 268).

Cambodian Genocide (1975-1979)

Figure 5.4.8: Cheung Ek Killing Fields site, near Phnom Penh, Cambodia. May 2009. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Adam Jones via Wikimedia Commons)

The U.S. led a covert bombing campaign in Cambodia from 1965 to 1973, targeting eighty-three sites and carpet bombing with B-52 bombers. This pushed Vietnamese communists deeper into the nation, radicalizing more against their government. An estimated 250,000 Cambodians were killed from U.S. destruction. This combined with the U.S. leaving the region contributed to the ascent of the Khmer Rouge's power. Choy (2022) writes,

> The Khmer Rouge attempted to create a classless society made up of rural agricultural workers by destroying culture and traditions. The regime's leaders called this idea "Year Zero" and put it into practice by shutting down schools and universities, evacuating people from cities and moving them to rural areas, separating children from their parents and placing them in labor camps, abolishing money, and banning music (p. 34).

"Class enemies" affiliated with wealth, education, or in any way with the West were targeted for execution or re-education. Cultural leaders, including singers, artists and martial artists were persecuted, along with members of religious and ethnic minorities. An estimated 1.5 to 3 million Cambodians were killed in the genocide under Pol Pot's regime from 1975 to 1979, having to endure, "forced labor, starvation, disease, and mass executions, after which the sites of these atrocities became popularly known as the 'killing fields'" (Choy, 2022, p. 34).

Many fled Cambodia secretly like Bun Thab, a Cambodian refugee who published his story under a pseudonym. Bun fled with two friends, but witnessed one of them get brutally killed. He hid underwater as a soldier jumped over his head. They walked for days without anything to eat until reaching the border of Thailand, where an old man fed them rice. Even after settling in the U.S. Bun was haunted by the trauma he experienced stating, "I still have nightmares of that Khmer Rouge jumping over my head, and I wake up shivering with fear" (Welaratna, 1993, p. 127; cited in Choy, 2022, p. 36).

Southeast Asian Refugee Life in the U.S.

These newer communities of migrants didn't have any "long-established ethnic enclaves." Due to the inability to bring material wealth and our government's dispersal policy, Southeast Asian refugees mostly ended up living in neglected and impoverished areas of the U.S. (Dariotis and Ueunten, 2010, pp. 751-752).

It's important to note the use of the term **refugee** and how it differs from immigrant. Immigrants generally are able to make a plan of departure, and may bring resources including material wealth, and even family members. Overall, immigrants in many cases have more agency in deciding to migrate to a new nation, and once in the new place of residence, they are more likely to come into a more stable situation and have support from family and extended ethnic enclaves that have settled previously. Refugees, on the other hand, have no choice when fleeing their homeland, often torn away from family, and may not have the ability to bring much with them. Refugees are either fleeing war or political situations that are deadly or very dangerous in the least.

Figure 5.4.9: Fall of Saigon - Refugees hanging onto a Supply Helicopter in Xuan Loc, Vietnam. April 14, 1975. (CC BY 2.0; manhhai via flickr)

April 1975 marked the “Fall of Saigon,” also called Liberation Day in Viet Nam, and U.S. troops began to withdraw. U.S. officials described scenes of “absolute chaos” as those most vulnerable to persecution under communist leadership scrambled to leave Vietnam. Around 7,500 people were evacuated a day by U.S. airplanes, and 73,000 left by sea on South Vietnamese Navy vessels. One person who fled early on a U.S. military transport plane realized that he may never see Vietnam again, sharing, “My heart had shattered to pieces. I lost not only my country but also everything I have loved” (Chan, 2006, p. 104-112; cited in Lee, 2015, p. 321). Later called the “first wave” of refugees from Vietnam, this group were from elite or middle-class backgrounds, educated and had come with some English or French fluency. They may have already had some relationships with Americans in Vietnam which of course helped their relatively faster transition to their new lives in the United States (Lee, 2015, p. 321).

Lee reminds us that the resettlement effort of Southeast Asian refugees was “cloaked in the heady rhetoric of U.S. humanitarianism” (2015, p. 325). For example, “Operation Babylift” was one of these “humanitarian” efforts to airlift 1,700 “orphans” to the U.S., mixed-race babies fathered by U.S. military personnel. Ford claimed it was America’s “moral obligation” to help refugees and 130,000 Southeast Asians were admitted in the first wave by the end of 1975. Another 433,000 came from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia until 1980 due to political persecution and economic restructuring (p. 325). For example, ethnic Chinese people in Vietnam were targeted by the communists. This second wave of refugees were left to their own devices to flee under the cover of night, typically on boats to nearby Southeast Asian countries where they could find temporary refuge. This group of refugees was less educated and had fewer resources. They were called “boat people” (p. 326).

In *The Best We Could Do* (2018), Bui illustrates her parents' experience working as teachers under the new communist government. They were careful to wear humble clothing so as to not stick out. They noticed that people started to disappear and hatched a plan to leave in secret with their three young children. Under the cover of night, Bui’s parents, including her pregnant mother, left Vietnam with their children on a boat. Bui remembers getting nauseous, and how they were almost followed by pirates. They arrived in Malaysia after three days, and her mother gave birth at the Pulau Begar refugee camp in 1978. Life was not easy, as they had to gather and boil their own drinking water, and they missed basic necessities like toilet paper, but Bui also described how for the children it was like a vacation, an escape from regular life, and that there was no school. The Buis were lucky as they only stayed at the camp for a few months, sponsored by her mother’s sister and her husband already in America (pp. 268 - 274).

After surviving months, sometimes years in refugee camps, Southeast Asians continued facing challenges in the United States. For example in many families, “parent-child hierarchies flipped as children grasped the English language with more proficiency than their elders” and helped to pay a bill or translate at school (Choy, 2022, p. 39). Furthermore, refugees were haunted by the trauma and memories of war and in the 1980s, many Southeast Asians, mostly Laotian and Hmong men, would die in their sleep for unexplainable reasons. They also faced anti-Asian violence, hostility and racial tensions. Choy explains that, “These racial hostilities partly stemmed from the way that Americans lumped Southeast Asian refugees with other Asian American groups who, in the 1960s and 1970s, were increasingly portrayed as successful immigrants and model minorities” (pp. 39 - 40). Americans also resented that Southeast Asian refugees received public assistance.

When her family moved to San Diego, Bui told how she and her father were called “Gook” and spit on, explaining, “San Diego was a naval and marine corps base, where the wounds of the Vietnam War were still fresh and not everyone welcomed our presence” (2018, p. 66). In 1990, Cambodian American, Heng Lim was struck on the head by a piece of wood by Timothy Meitzler and later died from head injury. Meitzler called him a “fucking Chinese.” Attacks against this community was common across the

country in the '80s and '90s, including “campaigns of violence…in the Boston area,” the beating death of Cambodian, Bun Vong in 1985, and a 1989 shooting rampage at Cleveland Elementary School in Stockton, California by Patrick Purdy who killed five children: four Cambodian and one Vietnamese (Choy, 2022, p. 41).

Southeast Asian youth were left to fend for themselves in impoverished neighborhoods rife with gang violence, as their parents were still navigating a new life in America. Some sought kinship in gangs. Cambodian American Billy stated that his parents were too traumatized from the war to realize what was happening with the kids.

> I was a good boy at home…so they didn’t know anything about gangs. We just got into gangs to protect ourselves. We were just kids, thrown into the inner city with Mexicans and Blacks. We’re the product of the American system (Lee, J.H.X., 2015, p. 408).

Many Cambodians who ended up in prison turned their lives around, like Karney who got his GED after dropping out of school in seventh grade. Despite this, Karney was taken by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), now Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to a detention center when he finished his sentence in state prison. He was detained for 12 months and then sent to Cambodia, separated from his daughters (Lee, J.H.X., 2015). The Southeast Asia Resource Action Center reported that 2,000 Southeast Asian Americans have been deported out of the U.S. since 1998, and currently 15,000 live with a final order of removal; 80% of removal orders are based on past convictions (Choy, 2022, p. 41). The 1996 passing of the Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act and the Illegal immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act led to increased deportations of immigrants for crimes they committed even before the laws were passed. Many of these were nonviolent offenses, as the new laws extended the list of deportable crimes and wouldn’t allow judges to prevent deportations. Some crimes that didn’t qualify as felonies under state law were listed as “aggravated felonies” under immigration law (Cengel, 2018, p. 10). After September 11, the U.S. pressured Cambodia into receiving deportees, including system-impacted individuals and did so beginning in June of 2002.

Figure 5.4.10: Protest outside ICE for the release of Cambodian refugees in St. Paul, Minnesota. January 17, 2017. (CC BY 2.0; Fibonacci Blue via Flickr)

Many were deported or face deportation despite having completed their prison sentences. Most had never spent time in their homelands or left when they were still very young, and hardly spoke the language. Karney luckily did speak Khmer and had relatives in Cambodia. He still missed his family and children sharing, “It’s hard on them, hard on their families. The kids end up growing up with no dad. And they can’t support them” (Lee, J.H.X., 2015, p. 409). He ended up marrying a Cambodian woman and had three children with her. But not everyone is able to adjust to life in Cambodia, as some deportees turn to drugs, end up back in prison, and a few have committed suicide. Asian American Studies professor, Jonathan H.X. Lee wrote, “There was no system of assistance that was planned for these Cambodians” (2015, p. 410).

Back in the states, activists and communities have come together to organize against deportations. The Asian Prisoner Support Committee (APSC) led anti-deportation campaigns and supported more than thirty individuals receiving gubernatorial pardons, post-conviction relief, and administrative actions to prevent and reverse deportations. APSC successfully advocated for the release of Bounchan “Boun” Keola from ICE custody. Boun was an incarcerated firefighter and was granted a pardon from Governor Newsom in 2021 (APSC, 2022). They are currently lobbying for the passing of the VISION Act (Voiding Inequality and Seeking Inclusion for Our Immigrant Neighbors) in California, or AB 937, which would end the transfer of refugee and immigrant prisoners eligible for release from state or local custody to ICE. It would also ensure protection from inhumane and unsanitary conditions in

immigration detention centers, and deny state and local agencies and courts from using their immigration status to deny access to various programs (Vision Act, AB 937, Fact Sheet).

Choy (2022) points out how Southeast Asian Americans have transformed the landscape through ethnic enclaves like Little Saigons in Orange County and San Jose. With distinct temples and Buddhist statues, the Vietnamese American community have physical places that may remind them of what they were forced to leave behind. For Vietnamese Americans born in the U.S., they make yearly pilgrimages to Little Saigon for the Tet festival, or Lunar New Year, and such sites serve "deeper social and spiritual meaning" for the community (p. 43). Countless restaurants and shops offer food that remind many of home, like banh mi and pho.

Ted Ngoy fled Cambodia with his wife and settled in California. He survived by working at a gas station and as a church custodian. One day he tasted a donut, reminding him of the Cambodian *nom kong*. He eventually opened his own donut shop and "sparked what would become Cambodian predominance in California's donut industry…a 'pink box' revolution" (Choy, 2022, p. 45).

Hmong American political leaders have emerged since the 1990s, starting with Choua Lee, who gained attention when becoming the first Hmong American to be publicly elected when winning the race for a position on the St. Paul School Board (Lee, 2015, p. 346). Olympic gold medalist, Sunisa Lee became the first Hmong American to join a U.S. Olympic team at only 18-years-old and elated Hmong Americans and Asian Americans across the nation during the 2021 Tokyo Olympics (Diaz and Chappell, 2021). Pictures and video of her family and the Hmong American community cheering her on in Minnesota went viral that summer.

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5.5: Pacific Islander Studies

People and Place

Chamoru (Chamarro from Guahan or Guam) Poet and scholar Craig Santos Perez (2016) writes,

> We belong to Oceania. We belong to a diverse sea of moving peoples, cultures, languages, and ecologies. We belong to navigation that teaches us how to read the stars, waves, winds, and horizons. **Pacific Islanders** peopled Oceania thousands of years ago and developed complex societies based on the values of interconnection, harmony, balance, sustainability, and respect. We named and recognized the sacredness of waters and lands (Perez, 2016, p. 373).

In naming his people, Perez (2016) recognizes the relationship to the land, to the Earth, to the seas, to one another. He recognizes cultural philosophies and values, and generational longevity. In doing so, he amplifies the persistence and presence of Pacific Islander peoples to this world and beyond and calls attention to the wholeness and oneness. This section will use longer block quotations to help amplify Pacific Islander voices.

Sidebar: Definition of Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Wright and Balutski (2013) share the official categorization by the Office of Management and Budget of the White House. They share, "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander is defined as the following:

> A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. (The term "Native Hawaiian" does not include individuals who are native to the State of Hawaii by virtue of being born there). In addition to Native Hawaiians, Guamanians, and Samoans, this category would include the following Pacific Islander groups reported in the 1990 census: Carolinian, Fijian, Kosraean, Melanesian, Micronesian, Northern Mariana Islander, Palauan, Papua New Guinean, Ponapean (Pohnpean), Polynesian, Solomon Islander, Tahitian, Tarawa Islander, Tokelauan, Tongan, Trukese (Chuukese), and Yapese (OMB, 1997 in Wright and Balutki, 2013, p.97).

This definition shares who is Pacific Islander and includes who is not by explaining that people are not "Native Hawaiian" just because they are born in Hawai'i. Furthermore, the definition shows the vast cultures and peoples included, as well as some that aren't as recognized in the mainstream. This also dispels the notion that Pacific Islanders are only made up of a few groups.

Place and People

The late Teresia K. Teaiwa (2017) wrote this as part of her introduction about teaching Pacific Studies,

> How does one begin to describe the enormity of the Pacific Ocean? The most prominent geographic feature on this planet, it occupies one-third of the Earth's surface area. How does one begin to describe the history of the first peoples to settle this watery region (p. 265).

Teaiwa and others put the Pacific Ocean at the forefront of identity and culture. The description of the ocean helps to provide more prominence to it especially as an overlooked aspect of the planet by those who may not come from the Pacific. She pays homage to the ancestors from which they came.

Figure 5.5.1: "Pacific Ocean Sunrise" (Guam). (CC BY-SA 4.0; Jonathan Miske via Flickr)

Teves and Arvin (2018) show the expansiveness of Pacific Islanders:

> The Pacific Ocean contains upward of 25,000 islands, extending from the Arctic to Antarctica and from the coasts of the Americas to the coasts of Asia. What are often referred to as the "Pacific Islands" number into 30,000, home to 2.3 million people and 1,500 languages, constituting a third of the earth's surface and nearly 50 percent of its water (p. 108).

This also expands the understanding that Pacific Islands are not confined to a small space with little diversity and that this population is significant to our world. Finally, we see Pacific Islanders in the diaspora, with a sizable population on the west coast. Camacho (2021) writes, "According to the 2010 census, 150,749 Pacific Islanders now dwell in California, with more than one-third residing in Los Angeles" (p. 23).

Amplifying Pacific Islander Voices

Henderson discusses stereotypes about big sizes of Samoans such as Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson playing a Samoan character in book to film *Be Cool* (1999) and "[his] character is still marked in the text by his size and propensity for violence" (Henderson, 2011, p. 282). These two tropes of big size and being violent are two common stereotypes Henderson finds in many works and cultural representation about Samoan men. Further, she points out that part of the problem is that stereotypes have material consequences at "stake" (p. 289). Two "ramifications" that she mentions are within education and law enforcement; notions about Samoan men

1. mediate a lot of their career or educational pathways into athletics as the "only expected pathway to success" (Henderson, 2011, p.289);
2. and have high rate of incarceration and a lot of claims of police profiling.

Because of the misconceptions about Pacific Islanders, this section aims to show a glimpse of who Pacific Islanders really are.

Tamaira and Fonoti (2018) share an important piece about how Pacific Islanders have worked hard to influence the way their stories are told, especially to the general public. Their work discusses the collaboration between "academic and nonacademic" Pacific Islanders (called Oceanic Trust) and Disney to create the movie *Moana* (2016). One of the things they discuss is the way that Pacific Islanders interjected to show more accurate displays of culture within the film and how there were actually transformed outcomes. For example, the Trust grappled with Disney's Moana wearing tuiga, or Samoan ceremonial dress, in different scenes for various occasions but they argued that it should only be worn ceremonially (p. 316). In spite of the hard work the Trust put into the film, they still experienced naysayers from the community that believed they shouldn't have collaborated with Disney. The work the Trust did to embody authenticity in *Moana* shows so much power in cultural representation. This section, as mentioned elsewhere, leaves a lot of "showing" to Pacific Islander scholars and I recognize my ability to amplify their voices.

Differences between Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders

Teves and Arvin make clear distinctions between Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and call for the clear need to distinguish between them and not combine them. Although there are points of relation, there is a deep marginalization amongst the community where even Asian Americans sometimes commit sub-oppression onto Pacific Islanders. They explain similarities but emphasize the

points of departure in order to express a marginalization that stems from how power dynamics operate, not just within each group or between them, but also within the larger society. They write,

> We share simultaneous struggles against U.S. imperialism and settler colonialism, white supremacy, and the expectations that our communities will simply "assimilate" into whiteness—all structures that are deeply gendered and thus wreak violence on Asian American and Pacific Islander women in particular ways. We also share analogous struggles within our own communities to decenter heteropatriarchy and anti-Blackness in the many ways that we have internalized such ideals. But the call we have put out in this essay is clear. To advance our important common work, Asian American feminists must recognize and change the ways they participate in Pacific Islander erasure and cultural appropriation, and commit to being our allies in decolonization (Teves and Arvin, 2018, p. 133).

Further, Hall points out that much of the use of API/AAPI/APA refers to connections solely to Hawai'i and not to other Pacific Island groups. This can be problematic because whereas Asian American do not represent Pacific Islanders, Native Hawaiians don't represent all Pacific Islanders (Hall, 2015, pp. 738-739).

General Education

Dropout rates show another reason why Asian American and Pacific Islander statistics and naming should be disaggregated. In the following quote, more than 20% of Pacific Islanders are affected in stark contrast to Asian American and white students.

> According to a report released in 2008 by the University of California Asian American and Pacific Islander Policy Multicampus Research Program (Education Work Group), Pacific Islanders' dropout rates are much higher than their Asian American (7.9%) and White (11.5%) peers—more than one-fifth of Pacific Islanders drop out of school between grades 9 and 12 (Chang et. al 2010 in Saeula et. al, 2017, p.123).

Studies show that culturally relevant pedagogies greatly aid in student success. However, Saeula et. al. (2017) find that this and other elements are missing from Pacific Islander student experiences. They write, "The literature that does exist on Pacific Islanders offers a stark landscape, noting achievement gaps, limited access to resources, and the need for more culturally relevant material" (Ah Sam & Robinson, 1998; EPIC, 2014; Hune & Yeo, 2010; Kawakami, 1990; UCLA Asian American Studies Center, 2006; Takeuchi & Hune, 2008; Tran et. al, 2010; Tsutsumoto, 1998; Vakalahi, 2009) (in Saeula et.al p.124).

Higher Education

Statistics on Pacific Islanders show a huge gap in educational opportunity whether in K-12 or in higher education, "…according to the U.S. Census, only 18% of Pacific Islander adults (Age 25 and older) hold a bachelor's degree, a rate lower than the national average (28%) and identical to African Americans" (Saelua et. al., 2017, p. 124).

A model for culturally relevant and community responsive education can be seen in Hawai'i not only for the university and students, but for all Native Hawaiians. Wright and Balutski (2013) explain,

> On May 16, 2007, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents approved the establishment of the Hawai'inuiākea School of Hawaiian Knowledge (HSHK), the only college of Indigenous knowledge in a U.S. research Institution…[which was guided by] a report of recommendations and research compiled by a task force of Native Hawaiian faculty and staff in the UH system (Wright and Balutski, year, p. 100).

It is significant that a Research Institution recognizes the significance of Indigenous knowledge and it is also significant that the efforts of "Native Hawaiian faculty and staff" research materialized.

Race, Gender, and Stereotypes

There are racialized and gendered experiences that also distinguish Pacific Islanders from Asian Americans. The hypersexualization of Asian American women and the emasculation of Asian American men is often broadly and wrongly applied to Pacific Islanders. Hall writes, "In my 2009 essay 'Navigating Our Own 'Sea of Islands' I noted:

> Geisha girls, dragon ladies, and delicate flowers are not the stereotypes Islander women battle. The sexualized stigmatization of "promiscuous" native women is about a perceived lack of civilization, not the orientalism that creates stereotypes of decadence and sexual artifice. . . . On the continent, large-bodied and dark-skinned Islander men are gendered/ racialized as black men, with the attendant prejudice and danger of stereotypes of hyper-masculinity, not feminized with the stereotypes Asian American men face. The police violence experienced by Samoan and Tongan men in southern California, for example, has everything to do with their perceived blackness and savagery, not their emasculation. Neither set of stereotypes is "worse" than the other, but they are not the same." Text originally found in: Lisa Kahaleole Hall, "Navigating Our Own 'Sea

> of Islands': Remapping a Theoretical Space for Hawaiian Women and Indigenous Feminism," Wicazo Sa Review 24.2 (2009). (in Hall p. 742).

Perez (2016) comprehensively compiles stereotypes about Pacific Islanders and reiterates how "Pacific poetry" resists these stereotypes.

> The Pacific Ocean has been viewed as an empty, virgin space awaiting American exploitation and power. Our islands have been seen as tropical paradises, stepping stones, unsinkable military bases, Hollywood sets, or scientific and agricultural laboratories. Pacific Islanders have been represented as violent, primitive, hyper-sexual, exotic, childlike, cannibalistic, dependent, noble, athletic, hyper- masculine, uncivilized, and hospitable. Much of Pacific poetry aims to challenge these stereotypes and humanize (Perez, 2016, p. 376).

These stereotypes relate to and often reflect the Manifest Destiny of colonizers, and stereotypical characterizations especially of Native Americans and Black Americans mostly from the 16th century to the 20th century. But unlike these groups, the relationship between the Pacific Island peoples, their land, and the Pacific Ocean conveys a deeper connectedness amongst them that these stereotypes miss and wrongly characterize, not recognizing the richness and wisdom that actually exist.

Ethnicity, Age, and Generation

Scholar Camacho (2021) complicates the relationship to culture with age and generation. While within a culture, one may uphold generational practices but Camacho problematizes such treatment amongst those who are expected to follow but not benefit. He says,

> Across the region, many societies uphold their elders, knowing that they embody the chiefly, genealogical, material, sacred, and supernatural worlds of the lands, skies, and seas. In Sāmoa, for instance, the children acknowledge the prestige bestowed upon their elders. Very seldom, though, do the children receive such accolades and authority. As one Sāmoan put it, "Children are not heard, nor seen." Text Originally from Frances King Espiritu, "From Childhood to Chief," in Pacific Voices Talk Story: Conversations of American Experience, 4 vols., ed. Margo King Lenson (Vacaville, CA: Tui Communications, 2007), 4:57. (in Camacho, 2021, p.12).

But Camacho also illustrates how others are able to draw from their positionalities to promote culture and facilitate access by saying,

> ...they show how the youth develop new terms about the media in Bislama, the lingua franca of Vanuatu. As in other areas of Melanesia, the youth of Port Vila have been the trendsetters in communicating and mainstreaming novel ideas, stories, and technologies across diverse ethnolinguistic groups. Text originally found in: Christine Jourdan and Johanne Angeli, "Pijin and Shifting Language Ideologies in Urban Solomon Islands," Language in Society 43, no. 3 (2014): 268. (In Camacho, 2021, p.72).

Race, Ethnicity, and Generation

In considering literature, McDougall highlights a writer who is from a famous lineage and demonstrates the intersections of his identities.

> John Dominis Holt was among the first major writers in English to publish in the 1960s in Hawai'i. Born in 1919, Holt was descended from ali'i (chiefly) lineage and was the grand-nephew of Queen Lili'uokalani, Hawai'i's last reigning monarch (McDougall, 2015, p. 40).

McDougall writes about Holt's work by saying,

> Similarly, in Waimea Summer, the young protagonist Mark Hull is urbanized, light skinned and hapa (half-Hawaiian, half-haole), but the keeper of family mo'olelo (stories), who is, therefore, more sensitive to the ancestral. In visiting relatives in Waimea, and coming from Honolulu, he is, however, fearful of being given ancestral knowledge and ultimately turns away (McDougall, 2015, p. 41).

The protagonist Hull being mixed race is representative of many Pacific Islanders who are mixed race. The focus of ancestral knowledge in this mentioning helps to demonstrate the presence and grappling of generational knowledge and epistemology, or the way we understand knowledge. McDougall also highlights the cultural divide between the city and the smaller town, at least for the way the protagonist interprets different types of knowledge and ways of being.

Militarization

Wright and Balutski (2013) explain what it's like to have military testing done in the Pacific Islands:

> During the 12-year period between 1946 and 1958, a total of 66 atomic and hydrogen bombs were tested in the Marshall Islands. Robie (1990) explains, "Many islanders claimed they were used as guinea pigs for the experiments. Now, more than 40 years after the first Bikini tests, many islands are still uninhabitable because of the high radiation levels while the Bikinians and Rongelap islanders remain exiled people (p. 2)" (in Wright and Balutski, 2013, p. 99).

Not only does their land become "uninhabitable" but the occurrences go largely unnoticed by the general public. Using the land for testing also shows the disregard for Pacific Islander lives.

Settler Colonialism

Haunani Kay Trask (1993) illustrates what it's like when Native Hawaiians are seen as exoticized commodity as a part of **settler colonialism**,

> Thus Hawai'i, like a lovely woman, is there for the taking. Those with only a little money get a brief encounter, those with a lot of money, like the Japanese, get more. The state and counties will give tax breaks, build infrastructure, and have the governor personally welcome tourists to ensure that they keep coming. Just as the pimp regulates prices and guards the commodity of the prostitute, so the state bargains with developers for access to Hawaiian land and culture… Permits are fast-tracked, height and density limits are suspended, new groundwater sources are miraculously found...Our people who work in the industry-- dancers, waiters, singers, valets, gardeners, housekeepers, bartenders, and even a few managers-- make between $10,000 and $25,000 a year, an impossible salary for a family in Hawai'i. Psychologically, our young people have begun to think of tourism as the only employment opportunity, trapped as they are by the lack of alternatives (Trask, 1993, pp. 144-145).

Those with more money have more access. Governmental policy will favor tourism and initiatives that bolster tourist entities. There is a fight for more land and entities will do whatever they can to make it happen. Trask further states that the workers make a little per year and is not enough to live on. She importantly mentions that "young people have begun to think of tourism as the only employment opportunity" so they don't see any way out or 'alternative' pathways for jobs."

Figure 5.5.2: "Honolulu Pride Parade 2012". (CC By 4.0; Daniel Ramirez via Flickr)

Climate Change

Brown Pulu (2013) brings to attention "Tonga's Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Lord Ma'afu" and his "plea" to the "international" community.

> Snared in the small island, uncertainty of rising sea levels was the inevitability, climate change refugees might need another place to live (Bedford and Bedford, 2010; Fagan, 2013). Where would they go? Who would take them in? What countries would help the Pacific Islands? (Pulu 2013).

Bryant-Tokalau (2018) shows us what it's like when "Indigenous Knowledge Systems" are accessed as a way of knowing especially in this time of extreme climate change. The author explains ways of knowing when predicting occurrences of "cyclones"

“such as very hot and wet weather, the high abundance of mangoes and breadfruit, an increase in land crabs and changes in the flight paths of sea birds”. Text originally in Brookfield 1977 (in J. Bryant-Tokalau, p. 68).

Sidebar: Climate Change in Northern Mariana Islands

Climate change in the Pacific Islands is a huge issue. Check out some of the sources that explain more about the crisis in this post titled: "Climate Change in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands: Indicators and Considerations for Key Sectors."

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5.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

As we can see from this chapter, Asian American experiences are diverse and have long histories in the United States. The relationship between the U.S. and Asia have been influenced by race relations in the United States such as within immigration, labor, and war. One of the most perplexing conundrums facing Asian Americans is the myth of them being "perpetual foreigners" when in reality their collective history is long. This idea of perpetual foreigners contributes to the outcasting, scapegoating, and fear-based attacks that continue to impact the community and has for centuries. When the histories of Asian Americans are known, this serves as resistance to the forgotten struggles that are masked by model minority myths. To understand Asian American experiences is to recognize the U.S. presence in Asia, the panethnic identity used to promote collective power, the long and still-existing struggles surrounding who is a citizen, and confront the ways Asian Americans must contend with the sub-oppression inflicted towards Pacific Islanders. This chapter not only sheds light on the many stories and perspectives from Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPIs), but it also contributes to healing wounds that counter the violent and painful past.

Key Terms

- **Panethnic** is when people of various ethnicities are grouped together, largely for political reasons. A panethnic identity for Asian Americans came out of struggles for power and resources such as resisting racial oppression
- **Orientalism**, as described by Edward Said (1978), is a "Western style of dominating, restructuring, and having authority" over Asia. Since European identity was based on how it contrasted from "the Other," Orientalist ideas framed the West as "masculine, conquering" in opposition of the East as "feminized" and "ripe for conquest." Orientalism was rooted in the "impulse to dominate, possess" and it was about setting Europeans apart as a people who are not only different, but *superior* to Asia.
- **Yellow Peril** is an extension of Orientalism, framing Asians and Asian nations as economical, political, sexual, or moral threats to the West, or European and American nations. An example of yellow peril is white anxiety around Asian immigrant laborers replacing white workers. Racist rhetoric related to yellow peril comes out when the U.S. is at war, during economic crisis, or when Asians/Asian Americans are the target of a perceived threat, such as the rise of anti-Asian hate upon news of the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **"Model Minority" Myth** is a racialized stereotype of Asians/Asian Americans as culturally or biologically smarter, economically well-off, successful, obedient, and docile. These deceptively "positive" generalizations of Asian Americans as "model minority" help to reinforce imagined social trends while marginalizing Asian Americans who don't meet this perception. The myth also casts Asian Americans as subservient and still, "a foreigner." The model minority myth functions as a way to divide Asian Americans from other oppressed communities of color, helping to push a narrative that the U.S. is a meritocracy and colorblind. It also helps to denigrate challenges to systemic racism and minimizes demands for social change and according to Robert G Lee, the "model minority had less to do with the actual success of Asian Americans than with the perceived failure—or worse, refusal—of African Americans to assimilate" (2010, p. 256).
- **Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882** is one of the first immigration acts in the U.S. that excluded people based on race. It was one of the first of other acts that excluded Asian immigrants. This is in part due to fear that Asians were taking jobs away from white laborers and also connected to Yellow Peril, fears that Asians were taking over not just economically but also morally, and more.
- The **1965 Immigration Act** opened up immigration after restrictions especially against African and Asian groups. The act prioritized certain classes of laborers (i.e. "high-skilled"/high demand) and preferences family who were already in the U.S.
- **Coolies** are often attributed to Chinese and Indian laborers especially in Latin America/the Caribbean, but in particular lower wage laborers.
- **"White Man's Burden"** is the title of a poem by British writer, Rudyard Kipling who purported the west's moral obligation to "uplift" the "savage" "little brown brothers," or Filipinos. He wrote the poem at the start of the Philippine-American War, and this ideology justified American imperialism in the Philippines, the phrase and poem becoming "a euphemism for Western imperialism."
- **"No-no Boys"** is the nickname given to the approximately 12,000 Japanese American men who answered "no" to two questions in the loyalty questionnaire handed to them while incarcerated during World War II. The questions asked if the men would serve in the U.S. armed forces on combat duty and if they would swear unqualified allegiance to the U.S.A. and forswear allegiance to the Japanese emperor or any other foreign government. The men who answered "no" did no because they questioned the U.S.

government's motives and found that the loyalty questionnaire added insult to injury. The "no-no boys" were sent to Tule Lake Segregation Center as punishment, a camp that was turned into "a maximum security center with additional barbed wire, increased guards and tanks, and an eight-foot-high double 'man-proof' fence." No-no boys also met backlash from fellow Japanese Americans, like the leaders of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) who criticized them as draft dodgers and dishonorable.

- **Refugee** is used to describe people who often have no choice but to flee their homeland due to war or in order to escape dire political situations. Refugees differ from immigrants in that they're often unable to make a plan of departure and may not bring as many resources with them, including material wealth. Refugees may also experience being separated from family members during or before their journey to a place of sanctuary.
- **Pacific Islanders** are a vast group of people from islands in the Pacific Ocean. The Office of Management and Budget states, "A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. In addition to Native Hawaiians, Guamanians, and Samoans, this category would include the following Pacific Islander groups reported in the 1990 census: Carolinian, Fijian, Kosraean, Melanesian, Micronesian, Northern Mariana Islander, Palauan, Papua New Guinean, Ponapean (Pohnpean), Polynesian, Solomon Islander, Tahitian, Tarawa Islander, Tokelauan, Tongan, Trukese (Chuukese), and Yapese" (OMB, 1997 in Wright and Balutki, 2013, p.97).
- **Settler Colonialism** is when people settle in lands in which they are not indigenous and create institutions, enact policies, and build settlements that displace and erase indigenous people and cultures. This is done for the benefit of the settlers and settler communities.

Discussion Questions

1. Define and compare "yellow peril" and "model minority" myth and how they both work to racialize Asian Americans.
2. Considering immigration laws and histories, describe Asian immigration to the United States.
3. Summarize 2-3 examples of how Japanese Americans resisted and/or persevered mass incarceration during World War II.
4. Explain the perceived stereotypes about Pacific Islanders and counter with the way Pacific Islanders express who they are themselves

Journal Prompts

1. Think about your racial/ethnic group(s) or about yourself as an individual. Part I: Has there ever been a time when you were seen as a "model"? Or on the other side, have you been seen as "non-model"? What kind of privileges/benefits came with being "model"? What kinds of disadvantages came with being "non-model"? Part II: What are the differences with being seen as model/non-model as a group vs. as an individual? How might this relate to being seen as "model minority" as an Asian American stereotype, including the model minority sub-section of this chapter and undocumented Asian American students sub-section? Write at least a paragraph for Part I and write at least a paragraph for Part II.
2. Studying AAPI history is a chance for recollecting forgotten memories. Memories of war, life in homelands that older generations hold but younger generations don't know, histories that are clouded by colonialism and other structural violence. What are some memories that your family holds and shares? What are some things you want to ask about or know a little about but want to know more? What are some memories that you carry that you want your family to know? What are some things you've studied that you want your family to know you've learned?

Class Activities

In-person activity - Four Corners

It is suggested to conduct this activity before students read this chapter and learn about Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. "Four Corners" is an activity that allows students to move around the classroom and discuss their opinions or share their experiences with different classmates in response to general statements read by the instructor. The statements may be generalizations or based on stereotypes related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Materials:

- 4 pieces of paper
- Tape
- Statements (use ones below or write your own)

Instructions:

1. Write the following words on a piece of paper (one per paper) and tape in the four corners of the classroom: “Agree,” “Disagree,” “Strongly Agree,” and “Strongly Disagree”
2. Instruct students to gather in the center of the classroom and listen to each statement (see samples below) read by the instructor. Once a statement is read, students will quietly decide which corner they move to. For example, if a student “agrees” with the statement read by the instructor, they will move into the corner labeled “Agree.” Students must choose a corner - if they are stuck between two, ask them to move to a corner that’s the closest to how they feel about the statement.
3. Once students choose a corner, they may discuss the following with people in their corner:
    1. Why did you choose this corner?
    2. Why do you think others chose their corners?
4. After giving students 5 minutes or so to discuss in smaller groups, the instructor can ask a representative from each corner to share a summary of what was discussed in their respective corners. A healthy debate may ensue after students hear each of the corners’ responses and individuals may decide to move if they’ve changed their minds based on what is shared by their classmates.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 until for each statement.
6. Once completed, you may have students debrief on this experience

Sample Statements:

- Asians or Asian Americans are generally successful, get good grades, and have money or high-paying jobs, especially when compared to other people of color
- Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders are the same
- I don’t know much about the Vietnam War and how Asian American communities today are impacted by it
- Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II. So were people of Japanese descent from Canada and Latin America
- Filipinx workers were also involved in the farmworkers movement
- Asian Americans tend to be quiet and not get involved in political struggles
- Asian Americans are diverse
- The Pacific Ocean plays a key role in the culture of various Pacific Islander peoples
- I learned a lot about Asian American and Pacific Islander history, culture, and experiences in high school
- Asian Americans don’t generally experience racism

Online activity - Panethnicity

This activity can be completed through discussion boards or online learning platforms like Canvas. It can be completed in groups or by individual students. For group work, you can assign discussions to groups on Canvas, or have online students collaborate on a Google Slide or Jamboard.

Instructions:

1. Instruct students to create a T-chart (on Canvas discussion, Google Slide, Google Jamboard, or any other online learning resources)
2. On one side, have them brainstorm when it might be useful for Asian Americans to use a panethnic label. They may pull evidence from this chapter and examples from their own experiences, observations, or what they’ve seen on social media. For example, a great historical instance of when organizing under a panethnic label was useful was the justice for Vincent Chin campaign. This was a time when Asian Americans organized under a panethnic identity since they could be mistaken for a different Asian ethnicity, as Chin was. This made sense since anti-Asian violence often conflated all Asians as one racialized group, with anti-Asians not caring to distinguish between ethnicities or nationalities. Or, perhaps when Asian American students went on strike for Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies at SF state and UC Berkeley.
3. On the other side of the T chart, students can brainstorm when it might be useful for Asian Americans to use an ethnic-specific label. For example, when campaigning to end deportations of formerly incarcerated Cambodian Americans, it may be more useful to point out the unique experiences of Cambodian Americans as refugees of a war and genocide in Cambodia as it relates to their struggle for justice. Or, advocating for Ethnic Studies classes that focus specifically on Pacific Islanders, so that they aren’t marginalized under the larger Asian American Pacific Islander banner in some programs and classes. Examples might even include smaller scale instances, such as when Asian Americans share their ethnic background, it might make more sense

for some to identify as Korean American, for example, pointing to their specific heritage, language, culture, family dynamic, and food.

4. Once the chart is complete, have students debrief on the comparisons and why it's important to recognize how Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders may go back and forth between utilizing a panethnic identity and ethnic/nationality specific identity, depending on the context.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

6: Chicanx and Latinx Studies

By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick and Ulysses Acevedo

Learning Objectives

- Recognize theories and knowledge produced by Chicanx and Latinx communities to describe critical events, histories, traditions, and social struggles, emphasizing agency and group affirmation.
- Identify and assess how struggle, resistance, racial and social justice, solidarity, and liberation among Chicanx and Latinx people are relevant to current and structural issues such as immigration, settler-colonialism, multiculturalism, and language policies.
- Identify how historical and contemporary Chicanx and Latinx movements have enacted equity, self-determination, liberation, decolonization, sovereignty, and anti-racism as analyzed.

6.1: Introduction
6.2: Roots and Resistance- The Development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies
6.3: Contested and Competing Meanings in Chicanx and Latinx Studies
6.4: Racialization and Identity
6.5: Migration and Immigration
6.6: Special Topics in Chicanx and Latinx Studies
6.7: Summary/Review
6.8: References

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6.1: Introduction

Introduction to Chicanx and Latinx Studies

People living in the United States and around the world with family roots in Mexico, Central America, and South America have varied and complex experiences and identities. However, the shared historical context of these groups has created a common basis for understanding and analysis. The impulse to analyze social and cultural conditions is the grounding principle of Chicanx and Latinx Studies. This chapter will explore how Chicanx and Latinx Studies have formed and developed. There are shared histories with a broader movement for Ethnic Studies, and particular dynamics that characterize this area of study and create opportunities for students and scholars to use the analytical tools of Chicanx and Latinx Studies.

In this chapter, the term Chicanx is used to refer to all people who identify as Chicana, Chicano, or Chicanx. These terms refer to communities whose family and lineage are rooted in Mexico and that live in the United States. The term Chicana refers to women and girls, while Chicano refers to boys and men. Chicanx is a gender-inclusive term that can refer to people who identify as non-binary and also inclusive to people of all genders. When placed in the plural, Chicanxs refers to multiple Chicanx individuals.

Similarly, the term Latinx denotes people whose lineage is rooted in Latin America, which includes Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, and South America. Some groups, including the U.S. Census, social science researchers, and journalists, primarily use the term Hispanic. This term literally refers to individuals who speak Spanish or are from a country where Spanish is the primary language, which includes Mexico, Central America, and most of the Caribbean and South America, as well as Spain. It notably excludes Brazil, where Portuguese is the dominant language, and erases the prevalence of Indigenous languages and groups throughout these regions. In this chapter, Hispanic is used only when referring to data sources that explicitly use this term.

In the next section, you will have the opportunity to explore the formation and development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies as a historically rooted academic field of study and area of activist practice. This helps to establish some of the key concepts that are the subject of debate and contention among scholars and practitioners of Chicanx and Latinx Studies. This leads to the next two sections, which detail multiple complexities and nuances when understanding identity, community, and culture through a Chicanx and Latinx Studies lens. Finally, the remaining two sections delve more fully into the topics of immigration, health, and political representation.

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6.2: Roots and Resistance- The Development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies

Establishing Chicanx and Latinx Studies in Higher Education

The development of Chicanx and Latinx Studies programs within existing institutions of higher learning has been imperative because there was no existing system of Latinx-controlled universities. As Laura E. Gómez explains in her book *Inventing Latinos: A New Story of American Racism*:

> Unlike African Americans, Latinos did not face *de jure* segregation, and they never developed a segregated education system they themselves controlled. The system of higher education institutions today known collectively as historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) has produced generations of college graduates, teachers, professors, and attorneys, including many of the most elite African American professionals of the twentieth century. For Latinos, aside from Puerto Rico, which developed a substantial system of higher education, there has been no sizable college-educated Latino middle class until recently (2020, p. 102).

For Mexican Americans and Latinos in particular, the Chicanx and Latinx disciplines became a place where students could feel at home in college and university campuses that have historically served only white students, scholars, and disciplines. Moreover, these spaces on university campuses are also centers of student and faculty collaborations, student retention, and also spaces where student-led movements begin and are informed by both their disciplines and their off-campus communities.

But establishing and maintaining Chicanx and Latinx Studies in institutions that were not created for them, and which were often openly hostile to them, was and is not easy. Space, funding, resources, power, culture, and even academic credibility were not, and in many cases are still not, easily conceded. The first Mexican American Studies program was established in the fall of 1968 at CSU Los Angeles (CSULA) or Cal State L.A. in the same year as the Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) strike at San Francisco State University (Sleeter et al., 2019, p. 9). There was a large cluster of other departments added around this time. This chapter also explores in more detail the events that led to the formation of these departments. Over time, some departments widened their disciplines to include all Latinx communities, and other specialized studies within the larger discipline have also been developed with their own nuances, such as Puerto Rican Studies and Central American Studies.

However, these same challenges have been in many ways also the strength of Chicanx and Latinx Studies, because it means the programs germinated directly within Chicanx and Latinx communities both inside and outside of academia, their content and pedagogies were created with intentionality, and their visions and purposes were refined through many years of activism.

This section will touch on four major moments of organizing within Chicanx and Latinx communities during the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s that produced the self-determined educational philosophies and demands which would go on to become the foundation of the disciplines of Chicanx and Latinx Studies.

Little School of the 400

> We shall leave behind our second-class citizenship… bitter resentments… corrosive hates… These were the goals that LULAC… set for itself and the Latin American people of Texas in 1957
>
> -Tijerina, 1962, p. 4

In 1957, during a time when the purpose of education in the United States was to assimilate children in the dominant English-speaking language and culture, the Little School of the 400 of Texas played a role in supporting Latinx students. The Little Schools of the 400 was created and funded by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), a nationwide group committed to advancing the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health, and civil rights of Latinxs through community-based programs.

LULAC established the schools after conducting a study that found Spanish-speaking students were being left behind due to language barriers, resulting in illiteracy. It was called the “Little School of the 400” because the main purpose of the school was to teach 400 “indispensable” English words to mostly Spanish-speaking children in efforts to align them with entering the public school system (Quintanilla, 1976). By 1959, there were 13 schools in Texas. The schools were unique in that they reinforced the children’s culture, rather than diminishing it, in order to build confidence in learning English. By 1962, there were over 18,000 children enrolled in the program (Tijerina, 1962, 8). The schools also recognized the power of having parents participate in the children’s transition to public schools. Overall, the schools were successful in educating children in basic English vocabulary and,

as a result, influenced programs including bilingual education, Head Start, and child migrant programs (Quintanilla, 1976). But perhaps even more than demonstrating that bilingualism could be a strength, the Little School's model of teaching with culturally relevant curriculum and community-connectedness became a powerful model for the discipline within higher education.

The East L.A. Blowouts

> As the bell rang for the kids to go to school, into the classroom, out they went. With their heads held high, with dignity. It was beautiful to be a Chicano that day.
>
> - Sal Castro (Olmos, 2006)

The East L.A. Blowouts, also known as the East L.A. Walkouts are widely regarded as catapulting the Chicano Movement forward in the late '60s and through the '70s. The Blowouts were a series of walkouts carried out in 1968 by Mexican American students in protest against the educational inequality they faced in their schools and classrooms. Students were frequently being punished for speaking Spanish, including corporal punishment such as physical whacking with a paddle. Other issues that students faced at the time included but were not limited to not having enough teachers who shared a similar ethnic, racial, or socioeconomic background or came from the same neighborhoods as them, resulting in class content that did not reflect their communities. Among the many grievances by the students, bathrooms were often locked, and students were left to their own devices to find where to relieve themselves, which was dehumanizing and a major distraction from learning.

The East LA Blowouts were initiated and driven by students themselves, but they were also influenced by Sal Castro, a civics teacher at Lincoln High School.

Sidebar: Saul Castro

Sal Castro **(10/25/1933 to 4/15/2013)** was a Mexican American Civics teacher at one of the high schools where the East Los Angeles Blowouts were originally organized. After learning of the students' plans to demonstrate against the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) he was the first to ask the students to organize themselves better and to create a list of demands to let others know why they were walking out of their schools and how their district can make things right. Sal Castro was the only teacher to be arrested in the case of the "East LA 13." As a result, he was not able to teach upon being released from jail until all charges were dropped in 1972.

When he heard that students might walk out due to many issues in their school district, Sal Castro stepped in to help organize the youths' efforts, urging them to fight for justice beyond their immediate needs. In his book, *Racism on Trial: The Chicano Fight for Justice*, Ian Haney López shares Sal Castro's words to the students organizing the walkouts:

> Before you even think about blowing-out, why don't you write your grievances, all these things that are wrong in the school, not only the things that are wrong in your school, but the things that you remember were wrong in the elementary schools because, you see, you don't want to change things just in the high schools; you also want to think about your little brothers and sisters… (2003, 19).

Soon a committee was formed, resulting in the creation of 26 demands to be met in order to stop the walkouts. The first blowout was unplanned when about 300 students walked out of Wilson High on March 1, 1968 (Lopez, 2018). On March 5, about 2,000 students walked out from Garfield High School holding demonstration signs. On March 6, 2,700 students from various high schools in LAUSD walked out of their classrooms (Haney-López, 2003, p. 21). Walkouts continued through March. Sal Castro was arrested during the March 31, 1968 walkout, the only teacher to be. Protests and sit-ins continued through the fall until he was reinstated to his teaching position. Acclaimed author Oscar Zeta Acosta wrote colorfully about his efforts to get Castro and others arrested in the walkouts acquitted, and this time in the movement in his book, *Revolt of the Cockroach People* (1973).

Sidebar: Oscar "Zeta" Acosta

Oscar Acosta **(4/8/1935 to 5/27/1974)** is famously known for two books: *An Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo* (1972) and *The Revolt of the Cockroach People* (1973). Many people have been introduced to Acosta through mainstream media, who's simply known as "Dr. Gonzo" or the attorney of the famous gonzo journalism style creator Hunter S. Thompson in the film and book Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas. In the book Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (and the film), Thompson racializes Oscar Acosta as Samoan, "He doesn't look like you or me, right? That's because he's a foreigner. I think he's probably Samoan. But it

doesn't matter, does it? Are you prejudiced?" (Thompson, 1998, p. 7). Some background to their trip to Las Vegas is that Hunter S. Thompson was writing an investigative piece on the Chicano Moratorium in L.A. case for Rolling Stone Magazine, and he flew down to L.A. to interview Oscar Acosta. They ended up driving to Las Vegas for another article Thompson was going to write for Sports Illustrated. For Chicanx people, Acosta is widely known as an important lawyer who represented the East L.A. 13 who were arrested for their involvement in the 1969 East LA walkouts. Acosta also represented other Chicanx defendants in court during a time when others would not pick up such cases.

The students themselves would become inspiration for future generations of Chicanx activists, but they themselves were deeply influenced by the organizing of the farmworkers, the Alianza, and the Crusade. "When students first marched in protest outside of Garfield High School in March 1968, their chants included not just salutes to Mexican revolutionaries such as Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata but also shouts of ¡Que Viva! To the names of César Chávez, Reis López Tijerina, and Corky Gonzales" (Haney López, 2003, p. 160).

Sidebar: Cesar Chavez

According to Ian Haney Lopez, César Chávez **(3/31/1927 - 4/23/1993)** was a great influence to spark the Chicano Movement in East L.A., in particular Chávez's work in organizing agricultural worker unions (Haney-López, 2003, p. 158). Chávez along with Dolores Huerta and farmworkers in Delano began to strike in 1965. Additionally, Chávez joined forces with Filipinx labor leaders such as Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz so that Mexican labor and Filipinx labor would not be used against each other in the fields. During this time, the United Farm Workers Union (UFW) was the largest Mexican movement in US history, although the organization was not only ethnically Mexican. Chávez did influence a lot of activism in Los Angeles by widespread political action. Although the UFW was not only a Mexican organization, symbols such as La Virgen de Guadalupe were used in marches and political action (Haney-López, 2003, p. 158). Three weeks before his assassination L.A. Times reporter, Ruben Salazar, stated, "César is our only real leader… [Gonzales and Tijerina] rant and rave and threaten to burn the establishment down. That's good because most people won't listen unless you rant and rave. But this provides the community with little more than emotional uplift; nothing palpable" (Mariscal, 2005, p. 140). Chávez was different from other Chicanx leaders because he was non-violent but also because he put his own body on the line through hunger strikes, his longest lasting 36 days without food. In 2014, President Barack Obama named March 31 César Chávez Day.

The full list of the original 26 demands, which included a wide range of needs, including academic, administrative, facilities, and student rights, can be viewed at the link below.

The Original 26 Demands of the East L.A. Walkouts

The following are portions highlighting some of the 26 demands (emphasis added):

- **No student or teacher** will be **reprimanded or suspended for** participating in any efforts which are executed for the purpose of **improving or furthering the educational quality** in our schools.
- **Bilingual-Bi-cultural education will be compulsory** for Mexican-Americans in the Los Angeles City School System where there is a majority of Mexican-American students. This program will be open to all other students on a voluntary basis.
- In-service education programs will be instituted immediately for all **staff** in order to teach them the **Spanish language** and increase their understanding of the **history, traditions, and contributions of the Mexican culture**.
- **All administrators** in the elementary and secondary schools in these areas will become **proficient in** the **Spanish** language.
- **Administrators and teachers** who show **any form of prejudice** toward Mexican or Mexican-American students, including failure to recognize, understand, and appreciate Mexican culture and heritage, **will be removed** from East Los Angeles schools. This will be decided by a Citizens Review Board selected by the Educational Issues Committee.
- **Textbooks and curriculum** will be developed to show Mexican and **Mexican-American contribution** to the U.S. society and to show the **injustices** that Mexicans have suffered as a culture of that society. Textbooks should concentrate on **Mexican folklore** rather than English folklore.
- **All administrators** where schools have a majority of Mexican-American descent shall be of **Mexican-American descent**. If necessary, **training programs** should be instituted to provide a cadre of Mexican-American administrators.
- Every teacher's **ratio of failure** per students in his classroom **shall be made available to community groups and students**. Any teacher having a particularly high percentage of the total school dropouts in his classes shall be rated by the Citizens

Review Board composed of the Educational Issues Committee.(*Proposals Made by High School Students of East Los Angeles to the Board of Education*, n.d.)

Beyond providing a model of effective organizing for change, many of the 26 demands became a foundation for goals of Chicanx and Latinx Studies in institutions of higher learning, including incorporation of community language, culture, and knowledges into the discipline, the development of textbooks and curriculum by Latinx writers taught by Latinx instructors and led by Latinx administrators. Equally as impactful, the Blowouts helped forever embed a tradition of activist practice within the discipline of Chicanx and Latinx Studies.

El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán

In March 1969, the first National Chicano Youth Liberation Conference took place in Denver, Colorado, and was hosted by Crusade for Justice, a civil rights and educational organization led in part by Corky Gonzales, concerned with the problems of the city's Chicano youth. During this convening, the El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán, which translates to The Spiritual Plan of Aztlán, was produced (NCYLC, 2006).

Sidebar: Rodolfo "Corky" Gonzales

Corky Gonzales **(6/18/1928 to 4/12/2005)** was a professional boxer who became politicized and participated in Colorado politics and eventually got involved in organizing Mexican American students. In the mid-sixties he founded the Crusade for Justice, which focused on working with Mexican American youth in Denver, Colorado (Haney-López, 2003, p. 159). Crusade for Justice impacted the local community, for example, promoting bilingual education and involvement at a local food bank. According to Haney-López, Gonzales was the first Mexican American activist to reinvent the term Chicano and instead of this term demeaning lower-class and darker-skinned Mexicans, the term Chicano would be used as an identity of empowerment (p. 160). Besides organizing, Gonzales was also a poet and penned the poem “I am Joaquin."

El Plan functioned as the North Star for Chicanx students in community colleges, including how they should locate higher education for themselves, but also for their communities. *El Plan* had many influences that reimagined the lessons learned from previous generations. For example, the document states that “Aztlán belongs to those who plant the seeds, water the fields, and gather the crops.” This passage is referencing the quote that General Emiliano Zapata is famously known for saying during the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to 1920,“La tierra es para quien la trabaja" or “the land is for those who work it” (Rosales, 1997, p. 26).

Although at the heart of the Mexican Revolution was agrarian reform, the Chicano Movement used agricultural concepts metaphorically. Rather than seizing the literal means of agricultural production, the Chicano Movement was concerned with creating space for Chicanos within the U.S. social fabric for those laboring here, including fighting for equitable education, bilingual education, teachers who shared a similar background, housing, jobs, the end of police brutality, immigration, among many other causes.

“The following are the organizational goals of El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán:

1. Unity
2. Economy
3. Education
4. Institutions
5. Self-Defense
6. Cultural
7. Political Liberation

The following are the Actions to fulfill the organizational goals of El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán:

1. Awareness and distribution of El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán.
2. September 16, Mexican Independence Day, a national walk-out by all Chicanos of all colleges and schools, this must be sustained until the complete revision of the educational system.
3. Self-Defense against the occupying forces of the oppressors at every school.
4. Community nationalization and organization of all Chicanos.
5. Economic program to drive the exploiter out of our community and controlling our peoples own production.

6. Creation of an independent local, regional, and national political party.

El Plan de Aztlán is the plan of liberation!" (NCYLC, 2006).

This document was an effort to find a common direction for all Chicanxs in the U.S. Southwest in the fight for justice and liberation. This movement to organize Chicanxs happened naturally because of the long history in the Southwest and population size. Fast forward to 2021 and "Hispanic/Latinos" are the largest ethnic group in California at 15.8 million or 40.2 percent of the population (*California Population by Year, County, Race, & More*, 2022).

M.E.Ch.A. and **El Plan de Santa Bárbara**

A month later, in April 1969, a Youth Conference was held at UC Santa Barbara by the Chicano Coordinating Council on Higher Education (CCHE) (Rosales, 1997, p.183). As stated by Carlos Muñoz Jr. in his seminal book, *Youth, Identity, Power: The Chicano Movement*, the students who participated in the conference had no idea that they were at a historical Chicanx student event (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p.95). One of the main goals at the conference was to build from El Plan de Aztlán by creating a roadmap for the creation of Chicanx curriculum and resources in higher education (p. 95). This higher education roadmap that would promote the growth of Chicano studies was called El Plan de Santa Barbara (Rosales, 1997, 183).

As a result, there was a consensus that in order to gain power and direction, the various California and national Mexican American student groups should drop their names and adopt El **Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (M.E.Ch.A.)** in order to have a united front (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p.96). M.E.Ch.A was created because of the need to unify Chicanx and Mexican American student organizations at various campuses (Rosales, 1997, p. 183).

Sidebar: Ana Nieto-Gómez

Anna Nieto-Gómez **(b. 3/30/1946)** emerged as a Chicana feminist through her experience as a leader in MEChA. At the time, she was one of two Chicanas who served as chairs of the organization in California (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 107). She was also the founder of Hijas de Cuauhtémoc newspaper and the Chicana Welfare Right Organization and typically does not get the credit she deserves as a committed and influential activist intellectual (Mariscal, 2005, p. 54). The purpose of her organization was "to put sterilization and the welfare rights of single mothers on the movimiento agenda" (Rosales, 1997, p. 259). One of her critiques of nationalism and patriarchy included, "Cultural nationalism is against women… and men who aren't chauvinistic… it also separates us from other oppressed peoples" (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 107).

Nieto-Gómez faced opposition from the male-dominated leadership in Chicano organizations, which was a common problem within the Chicano Movement. Through her activism and poetry, such as "Somos Chicanas de Aztlán," Nieto-Gómez provided a groundwork for Chicana militancy (Rosales, 1997, p. 259). In 1975, Nieto-Gómez was a keynote speaker for an event by the organization Las Mujeres del Movimiento. In 1976, Nieto-Gómez was denied tenure from the Chicano Studies department at CSU Northridge. Muñoz explained in his book that "her firing became a divisive issue within many Chicano Studies programs. Women supporting her case saw the issue as a manifestation of Chicano reaction to Chicana feminism" (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 190).

M.E.Ch.A. chapters on campuses were to be "independent and autonomous" from faculty and administrators to avoid being absorbed by the institutions (p. 99). A political consciousness was to be embodied by Chicanx students involved in educational liberation, and as a result, Chicanismo ideologies were adopted in particular by student leaders. For example, "the liberation of his people from prejudice and oppression is in his hand, and this responsibility is greater than personal achievement and more meaningful than degrees, especially if they are earned at the expense of his identity and cultural integrity" (Rosales, 1997, p. 184).

Even though M.E.Ch.A. chapters were independent from colleges and universities, student activists on campuses strategically used their positionality to protect the professors and administrators who were supportive of their movement. For example, "M.E.Ch.A. would mobilize community support on behalf of those faculty and staff members, who, because of their demonstrated commitment to student interest, might jeopardize their own jobs" (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 100).

According to Muñoz the purpose of the newly-formed organization was two-fold. On one hand, M.E.Ch.A. would be rooted outside campuses, being community-oriented and responsive by remaining involved in Mexican American communities and in communication with Mexican American organizations. On the other hand, they would be present on college campuses, finding ways to provide resources to Chicanx students and helping them find success in reaching their educational goals.

This aligned with the creation and expansion of Chicano Studies. Both of these organizational goals were to be fundamentally liberatory for the Mexican American community (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 97). Furthermore, “if political and educational change were to be won on campus, the community outside the campus would have to be mobilized,” to achieve these goals, students were to be taught to utilize Chicanismo as an ideology (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 98).

M.E.Ch.A. has persisted for over 50 years. The roots of this organization intersect with the rationale of Ethnic Studies and have deeply shaped the discipline of Chicanx and Latinx Studies. One of the major goals of M.E.Ch.A. has always been to bridge the gap between higher education, Chicanx students, and their communities.

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6.3: Contested and Competing Meanings in Chicanx and Latinx Studies

Nuances in Chicanx and Latinx Studies

Since its inception, Chicanx and Latinx Studies has maintained its interdisciplinary nature, incorporating perspectives of history, political science, psychology, and others (Cal State LA, Department of Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies, n.d.). Chicanx studies are common in the U.S. Southwest such as in California, Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico due to the area's long standing large Chicanx population sizes. A small portion of this Mexican population in the Southwest predated the land seizures by the U.S. due to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Puerto Rican Studies is more visible in states with larger populations of Puerto Ricans, such as New York. Latinx Studies is a broader discipline that overlaps and covers all Latinx groups in the United States. There are many nuances to the use of these terms and the two approaches to the discipline, which will be discussed below.

Figure 6.3.1: Chicano Legacy 40 Años. (CC BY 2.0; Jay Galvin via Flickr)

Just because Chicanx and Latinx Studies launched as a discipline rooted in well-considered principles stemming from the Chicano Movement, one cannot understate the vast diversity, complexity, and nuance of identity that exist within the umbrella of Latinx. While identity, community, and culture are sites of commonality within the discipline, they are also sites of contention.

What follows are some of the key concepts subject to debate amongst scholars and practitioners of Chicanx and Latinx Studies:

Chicanismo

What is it?

Chicanismo is an ideology applied to what it means to identify as Chicana/o/x:

> Chicanismo involves a crucial distinction in political consciousness between a Mexican American and a Chicano mentality. The Mexican American is a person who lacks self respect for his cultural and ethnic heritage. Unsure of himself, he seeks assimilation as a way out of his "degraded" social status. Consequently, he remains politically ineffective, in contrast, Chicanismo reflects self-respect and pride in one's ethnic and cultural background… The Chicano acts with confidence and with a range of alternatives in the political world (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p. 97).

Why is it controversial?

Because Chicana/o/x signifies a Mexican American who is political and takes action to further a specific agenda, there are Mexican Americans who are apolitical and/or who are explicitly conservative who object to the term and what it represents.

Chicana/o/x and Xicana/o/x

What does it mean?

The term, **Chicanx,** is commonly accepted as "connoting political awareness or consciousness and refers to U.S.born persons of Mexican descent" (Vargas, 2017, p. xxi). There are numerous origin stories of the term, but according to Juan Gonzalez in his book *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*, students at Texas A&M started calling themselves Chicanos in the early '60s. Gonzalez attributes university students identifying as Chicanxs to the fact that they were one of the biggest demographic

groups on campus and because they gained control of the student government. They started using the term Chicano in order to reclaim a word that was originally pejorative towards those that were born north of the Rio Grande border, inverting it by rooting it in the positive of their existence within Aztlan, or the place stories claimed was the Homeland of Aztec peoples. In this way, Chicanx became a way for them to connect with their Indigeneity and heritage South of the Border (Gonzalez, 2022, p. 117). Please see the section on Aztlan for more of the origin story and controversy around it.

In his book *Brown Eyed Children of the Sun: Lessons from the Chicano Movement, 1965-1975* (2005), George Mariscal expands on the tension inherent for those of Mexican origin residing in the United States. The following quote helps us further understand a Mexican perspective on the Chicano identity:

According to Mexicans, the word "chicano" was born from a corruption. It is a corruption of "mexicano: Small Mexican? Chicano? On the contrary, the word has no fixed origin and surfaced among the people to name a reality: the intensification of mestizaje [mixture] … But the chicano is like the tide in the sea of history, like a shore that never ends, in perpetual movement, it frees itself from the Mexican ocean, arrives on the American beach, and although something remains, the rest returns to the open sea but before it can arrive, as in a cyclical return, it rises again. Thus the chicano is an instability (and has been for more than a century), an anomaly… like the Rio Bravo and Rio Grande, the wall between two culture. Thus the chicano is a human "no man's land," the border in living flesh (Mariscal, 2005, 29).

Xicana/o/x is generally understood to mean the same thing as Chicana/o/x, with the spelling variation used to pay homage to indigenous roots by using the letter X, which is a sound found in the Nahuatl language.

Why is it controversial?

Colleges and universities with a history of Chicanx Studies courses and departments, especially in the Southwest, have had to choose whether to keep the name of Chicanx Studies or build on the work of Chicanx Studies and, in the spirit of inclusivity, change the name to Latina/o Studies or Latinx Studies.

One case in particular that can be examined is La Raza Studies at San Francisco State University. Although La Raza Studies was the genesis of the fight for Ethnic Studies and creation of it, the Department of La Raza Studies was renamed Latina/o Studies in Fall 2011. Perhaps one flaw in the name La Raza Studies is that it translates to English as "the race studies." In the spirit of inclusivity of University students from Spanish-speaking backgrounds, the College administrators and faculty decided to move forward with Latina/o studies. There are additional critiques of La Raza, see that section below. However, as of 2016, the Mexican American Studies department at CSULA has changed its name to the Department of Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies (CLS), presumably also as a gesture of increased inclusivity of non-Mexican Latinx communities. Many other universities have similarly shifted their name to include Latina/o/x studies.

Chicanx is not only contested in the context of academic disciplines. According to an article on remezcla.com titled "Why student group M.E.Ch.A's proposed name change has set off a fierce, multi generational debate," by Aaron E. Sanchez, "Several chapters voted in favor of removing the terms 'Chicanx' and 'Aztlán' from its designation. While there is currently no final decision on the change or what the new name would be, many are putting forth words that are more inclusive of Afro-Latinos, Indigenous Latinos, Queer Latinos, Latinos from different Latin American countries, and more" (Sanchez & Martinez, 2019).

Reis López Tijerina (9/21/1926 - 1/19/2015)

He was probably one of the leading experts on the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo out of necessity. According to his memoir, *They Called Me King Tiger: My Struggle for the Land and our Rights* (2000), Tijerina "organized Spanish-speaking families across the Southwestern US to seek repatriation of land obtained by North American anglos in violation of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo" (Tijerina, 2000, p. vii). Tijerina is seen in contradiction to César Chávez's peaceful protest efforts and was in favor of more violent, sometimes armed opposition (Haney-López, 2003, p. 158). He organized under La Alianza Federal de Mercedes or The Federal Land Grant Alliance and argued that the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo guaranteed Mexican property rights. In June 1967, Tijerina stormed a courthouse in Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico to make a citizen's arrest of an abusive district attorney with an ensuing gunfight and twenty held hostages. As a result, Tijerina was convicted to two years imprisonment (Haney-López, 2003, p. 159). Tijerina formed alliances across ethnic boundaries, specifically with African American Militants such as the Nation of Islam (NOI) (Mariscal, 2005, p. 187).

Latina/o/x/e and Hispanic

What does it mean?

The term **Latinx** is a pan-ethnic identity that includes many people whose origins are from Latin America, including Mexico, Central America, the Caribbean and South America. It is not a purely linguistic distinction - people with origins in countries where Haitian Creole, French, Portuguese, English, and many indigenous languages, such as Haiti, Brazil, Jamaica, and many others, are included, whereas someone from Spain would not be.

Latinx first emerged from online LGBTQIA+ discussion forums around 2004 (Yarin, 2022). One reason the term was developed was to drop the traditional heteronormative patriarchal dichotomy of identifying simply as a male or female. Furthermore, Latino is based on Latin languages; it is a gendered identifier. The “o” at the end of the word in Spanish signals a male identifier, in contrast to Latina, which because of the “a” at the end signifies female.

According to an article titled *The Word Latinx IS a Betrayal to Latinidad, That’s Exactly the Point* by J.A.O. the use of “x” in Latinx

> ... was a conscious decision. It was an homage to Indigenous Nahuatl languages, and functioned as a linguistic visibilization of the communities most directly impacted by colonial violence, and the land theft, enslavement, and blanqueamiento that go along with stamping out Indigenous lives. By abandoning the “o” in favor of the “x”, the word “Latinx” achieves a true neutrality, rather than embracing the masculine default as neutral (J.A.O., 2021).

Furthermore, J.A.O. states that Latinx became mainstream after the 2016 Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando, Florida after a shooter targeting queer and trans Latinx killed 49 people and wounded 53 more.

Additionally, Latinx is an identity that has provided a self-identifier in order to combat anti-Blackness and anti-Indigeneity, in turn, because Latinx is not a racial or national signifier. “I would never really be Puerto Rican so long as my Blackness was unambiguous to most people....The word 'Latina' also felt wrong because femininity felt wrong....I only knew discomfort, alienation, and isolation. So when I finally found the vocabulary, it was a relief....‘Latinx’ is a protest against those who are willing to go down with the ship: the people who are hellbent on maintaining the oppression of the most marginalized among us in Latin America and the diaspora (J.A.O.)

Although Chicanxs fit under the umbrella term of Latinx, not all would identify themselves as being Latinx. In the US, Latinx studies emerged in higher education in order to provide a pan-ethnic area of study for Mexicans, Central Americans, the Caribbeans, and South Americans. The term Latinx has also been used as it has been developed to describe college courses.

Why is it controversial?

Although Latinx and Latine have found a place in higher education and in the media, these terms have received backlash, especially online. On social media platforms, some claim that they will never adopt the term, that it is linguistic imperialism and that the term doesn't make any sense linguistically. Furthermore, some who oppose Latinx claim that “Latino” is not offensive to anyone and that it should not change because it is linguistically accurate.

A recent discipline that has emerged at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) is Central American Studies (CAS). According to the UCLA library website, "Central American studies (CAS) is an interdisciplinary field that bridges ethnic studies and area studies. Because it does not fit neatly into disciplinary and institutional categories, CAS inhabits different spaces in each of the institutions where it has emerged. Central American Studies goes beyond the borders of the U.S. although in Ethnic Studies we usually focus within the U.S." In *Harvest of Empire* (2011), Juan Gonzalez states that Central Americans did not have a “collective desire for the material benefits of U.S. society; rather, vicious civil wars and the social chaos those wars engendered forced the region’s people to flee" (p. 129). The Central American civil wars that caused hundreds of thousands to flee and end up in the U.S. were military and political interventions fabricated by the US. Lastly, Central American Studies refers to the perspectives and study of issues affecting nations and communities of the Central American Isthmus” (Osorio, n.d.).

Aztlán

Figure 6.3.2: Flag Of Aztlan used by La Raza Unida and other Chicano activists. (Public Domain; Sukanara via Wikimedia Commons)

What does it mean?

According to Gloria Anzaldúa in her book *Borderlands / La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Aztlán was the "Edenic place of origin of the Aztecs" and that the "Aztecs left the US Southwest in 1168 A.D." (Anzaldúa, 2012, p.4). The Aztecs leave Aztán in search of a new homeland. Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec hummingbird deity (and the God of War), guided them, until they found their omen of an eagle eating a serpent on a cactus (p.5). Anzaldúa states that

> The eagle symbolizes the soul (as the earth, the mother). Together, they symbolize the struggle between the spiritual/celestial/male and the underworld/earth/feminine. The symbolic sacrifice of the serpent to the "higher" masculine powers indicates that the patriarchal order had already vanquished the feminine and matriarchal order in pre-Columbian America (p. 5).

The Aztecs kept on course until they found their omen on a small island, on what was Lake Texcoco. They would eventually build the capital of their empire, Tenochtitlan, in the middle of Lake Texcoco and expand the city using chinampas (floating gardens). During the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and '70s, Aztlán was said to be in the Southwest United States, including Colorado, California, Arizona, Texas, Utah, New Mexico, Oregon and parts of Washington State. Aztlán served as a powerful symbol to Chicanos because it positioned them not as foreigners to the Southwest but instead as tied to the land through indigeneity.

Why is it controversial?

Some scholars believe that Aztlán is purely mythical, although others believe it is a historical account of a major migration. Not all Mexicans or Chicanos are of Aztec heritage or any indigenous heritage at all, and there are indigenous peoples and nations pre-existing in the lands of the Southwest United States.

La Raza

What does it mean?

La Raza is a term used interchangeably with Mexicans, Hispanics, Hispanidad, Latinx, and Chicanx, and it can connote a broad community of Latinx peoples united in their experience of Spanish colonization and racial mixing. During the Chicano Movement the term was used widely to emphasize shared heritage.

Why is it controversial?

La Raza is derived and shortened from the phrase "La Raza Cósmica." *La Raza Cósmica* or The Cosmic Race was a book and an ideology published in 1925 by Jose Vasconcelos, an intellectual, philosopher, and at one point Mexico's Minister of Education. His racial ideology is widely accepted as being an ideological project promoting "mestizaje" (or the racial mixing of European, Asian-descended, Native Americans, and Africans) as a means to a utopian society. La Raza Cósmica "condones a biopolitical order that, despite its decolonial intentions, ends up reproducing the Western racial hierarchy" (Quintana-Navarrete, 2021, p. 85). Furthermore, one problematic aspect of La Raza Cósmica ideology is that it promotes the notion that race is biological and that it is also spiritual and "arguing that they prove the fact that hybridization between antithetical types [races] tends to create better individuals" (p. 85). In other words, only by diluting indigenous racial and spiritual characteristics could indigenous communities be improved and absorbed into Mexico's mainstream culture. As a result of this theory, Vasconcelos did promote racial

miscegenation as a method to hybridize racially and create a fifth race or the “cosmic race” building from theories used to uphold eugenics policies that were used in the U.S. and Germany (p. 85).

However, the Chicano Movement did appropriate Vasconcelos’ concept of the fifth race as a way to unite under a shared identity deemphasizing European heritage and emphasizing Indigenous heritage rather than following Vasconcelos' implication that Indigeneity is improved when mixed with something better. However, others argue that this, and contemporary uses of mestizaje, still enable narratives that erase the existence of blackness and racism.

Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x/e Feminism

What does it mean?

In the same way that there is no single definition or history of “feminism,” Chicanx feminism cannot be confined to a single definition. Women of varied races, classes, sexualities, and ideologies have always organized in many ways for many different goals (Gershon, 2022). It is no different or perhaps even more pronounced for Latinx feminists, because of the pronounced racial differentiation within its communities. But the most basic goals of Chicanx feminism have been the ability to fully participate in and lead the Chicanx Movement and the Chicanx academic discipline, and for the experiences, histories, needs, goals, and lens of Chicanx feminists to be centralized within that of Chicanx as a whole.

Chicanx feminists have often sat within multiple movements simultaneously, the Chicanx movement, the feminist movement, the feminist of color movement, the LGBTQ movement, and others. This multifaceted movement orientation gave Chicana feminists a unique position from which to push other activists to be more thoughtful (Gershon, 2022). In "The Foundations of Chicana Feminism," Livia Gershon distills the work of feminist and lesbian writer Cherrie Moraga’s into three calls: for white feminist movement to examine its own racism, for the Chicano movement to address its sexism, and for both to challenge their homophobic tendencies (Gershon, 2022).

Chicanx feminism can be traced back to the Chicanx Movement of the 1960s; however, many Chicanx scholars have uncovered the roots of Chicanx herstories winding back through Spanish colonialism of the Caribbean, North, Central, and South American. In her foreword to “The Chicana Motherwork Anthology,” Ana Castillo firmly roots the Latinx woman and her activism in her experience of, and resistance to, colonization:

> The blood on these lands - South, North, and Central America and the attendant islands near and around- the sweat and tears of original peoples; the buried placentas and ombligos of newborns; the wails of madres sufridas and the war cries of guerrilleras; the prayers of sacerdotas, brujas’ incantations, remedios de curanderas, y el hecho y en resumen, echoed or muffled, have all served as the foundation of . . . all the action produced by women of consciousness, day in and day out (Caballero, 2019, Foreword).

Why is it controversial?

Chicanx feminism has always created space in the community and in higher education, but it has simultaneously always faced individual or group suppression to Chicanx machismo. Many male Chicano activists expressed that they felt Chicana feminist groups were either trivial or harmful to the broader movement. Even when Chicanas were participating in “Chicano” groups within the Movement, they faced delegitimization. For example, although Ana Nieto-Gómez was elected president of M.E.Ch.A. in 1969, the year the group was formed, an effigy of her was hung by male students who felt a woman should not represent their organization (Ruiz, 2006). Another example of this in popular culture is the amount of media attention and accolades Cesar Chávez received for decades in comparison to Dolores Huerta, his co-founder of the National Farmworkers Association (which later became the United Farm Workers or UFW). However, in more recent years, Dolores has been given more mainstream recognition.

Sidebar: Dolores Huerta

Dolores Huerta **(b. 4/10/1930)** was born in New Mexico and before she was the right hand person of Cesar Chávez and the UFW, she was a schoolteacher. Huerta met Cesar Chavez while they both worked at Community Services Organization (CSO) where they gained labor organizing experience, even when CSO did not fully support that work (Rosales, 1997, p. 132). Huerta “was assigned to lobbying the California Legislature for pro-migrant worker legislation” and through that work CSO demonstrated that it could register and organize Mexican Americans to vote as a group (p. 132). After Chavez resigned from CSO, he recruited Huerta to help build the efforts of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). Huerta was at the side of Chavez when the UFW organization was in its infancy and the main support Chavez relied on was his wife Helen Chavez

and Huerta (p. 134). Through all of this, Huerta birthed and raised 11 children.

Huerta is known for creating the demonstration chant “¡si se puede!” or “yes we can!” Yes we can was the slogan used by President Barack Obama’s campaign without giving the proper attributions to Dolores Huerta. Huerta was invited to the White House to receive a Medal of Freedom. President Obama stated in his remarks about the legacy of Dolores Huerta “Dolores was very gracious when I told her that I had stolen her slogan “¡si se puede!” “Yes we can!” knowing her I’m pleased that she let me off easy because Dolores does not play” (23 ABC News, 2012). Huerta continues to speak at local and national conferences about her involvement in the movement and politics.

Not all Latinx social movements and groups have resisted feminist goals and practice. A good example of what a Latinx community organization and movement of the 1970s looked like with gender equality as a central component is the Young Lords Party. From their 13-Point Program, Point Number 10 directed their organizational efforts to fight patriarchy within their movement head-on. The following is the text from Point Number 10,

> We want equality for women. Machismo must be revolutionary... not oppressive: Under capitalism, our women have been oppressed by both the society and our own men. The doctrine of machismo has been used by our men to take out their frustrations against their wives, sisters, mothers, and children. Our men must support their women in their fight for economic and social equality, and must recognize that our women are equals in every way within the revolutionary ranks (13 Point Program and Platform of the Young Lords Party, 1969).

Now that we have explored some of the more nuanced and contested concepts within the discipline of Chicanx and Latinx Studies, we will learn about some of the core concepts that define the discipline. For more analysis on Chicana Feminism and *Mestiza* Consciousness, please see Chapter 8 Section 8.3, "Intersectionality and Third World Feminism."

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6.4: Racialization and Identity

Critical Latinx Indigeneities

Maylei Blackwell and colleagues (2017) define Critical Latinx Indigeneity as a lens to:

> ...critique enduring colonial logics and practices that operate from different localities of power as well as the physical, social, cultural, economic, and psychological violence that often targets Indigenous Latinx peoples, including forms of state and police violence, cultural appropriation, economic exploitation, gender violence, social exclusion, and psychological abuse (p. 132).

This perspective challenges Latina/o/x and Chicana/o/x Studies to uproot ideologies in broader society, especially as they are reproduced through narrow definitions of Latinidad. For instance, the ideology of **Indigenismo** is an "Aztec-centric celebration of the Indigenous past of the nation, which often serves to erase the present and future of the sixty-three Indigenous pueblos of Mexico" and the millions of Indigenous peoples living around the world (Blackwell et al., 2017, p. 131). This section will provide an overview of the concepts and background to recognize diverse Indigenous heritages among Chicanx and Latinx communities and the intersecting dynamics of racialization, mestizaje, and Afro-Latinidad.

Indigenous Roots in Chicanx and Latinx Communities

While stratification among Latinx communities occurs on racial lines, it is also present in Indigeneity. Indigeneity is constructed through cultural norms, shared group formations, communities, institutions, and families. Indigeneity is also often recognized and policed through phenotype, where individuals with darker skin and features associated with local Indigenous peoples are more likely to be visibly associated with stereotypes and cultural scripts pertaining to Indigenous people. The reality of colorism is present in many societies and cultures. In the lands referred to as North America and Latin America, the Indigenous peoples have used names like Isla Tortuga / Turtle Island, referring to the North American continent; Abya Yala, referring to southern Mexico and Central America; and Pachamama, referring to South America. Indigenous people are an active part of the culture, politics, and history of island societies in the Caribbean, such as the Arawak-speaking Taino people.

In Figure 6.4.1, you can see a visual representation of the percentage of Indigenous people living in Latin American countries today, which totals 46 million across the region and ranges from 0.2% in El Salvador to 62.2% in Bolivia. Guatemala follows this at 41%, Peru at 24%, and Mexico at 15.1%. There are over 800 recognized Indigenous groups in Latin America, with the most significant number of distinct Indigenous peoples residing in Brazil, with over 300 different Indigenous peoples represented. Scholars also estimate that 200 or more groups operate actively but do not seek state or federal recognition. The image displays important information, including that by the year 2010, an estimated 45 million Indigenous people lived in Latin America, accounting for 8.3% of the region's population. The United Nations has championed the promotion of their rights through the use of different resources and special regulations for this purpose. At present, there are 826 Indigenous peoples. An additional 200 are estimated to be living in voluntary isolation. In the chart, the countries are labeled by their name, the percentage of Indigenous people out of the total population, and the total number of the Indigenous population. The countries included are Mexico, 15.1%, 17 million, Honduras 7%, 537,000, Panama 12.3%, 420,000, Colombia, 3.4%, 1.6 million, Venezuela, 2.7% 725,000, Brazil, 0.5%, 900,000, Bolivia, 62.2%, 6.2 million, Paraguay, 1.8%, 113,000, Uruguay, 2.4%, 77,000, Argentina, 2.4%, 955,000, Chile, 11%, 1.8 million, Peru, 24%, 7 million, Ecuador, 7%, 1 million, Costa Rica, 2.4%, 105,000, Nicaragua, 8.9%, 520,000, El Salvador, 0.2%, 14,500, Guatemala, 41%, 5.9 million. Additionally, the captions included read: "The countries with the greatest number of Indigenous peoples are: Brazil, 305, Colombia, 102, Peru 85, Mexico 78, Bolivia, 39." and "Many Indigenous peoples are in danger of physical or cultural disappearance: Brazil, 70, Colombia, 35, Bolivia, 13." And the chart is summarized with the text, "ECLAC encourages the region's countries to put public policies in practice which:

1. are based on standards of Indigenous people's rights;
2. include their perspectives and contributions to the region's development;
3. consolidate improvements in their well-being and living conditions, political participation and territorial rights;
4. promote the construction of multicultural societies that benefit us all."

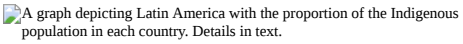

Figure 6.4.1: "Indigenous Peoples in Latin America" (Free Use; Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) via United Nations)

For example, the identity term **Chicanx Indigenous** signifies being Indigenous to Mesoamerica, also called **Anahuac** in the Nahua language. It is a self-identity category used by people, unlike Hispanic or Latinx, which emerged from western institutions. Chicanx is an identity term that originates from Xicano, which stems from Mexicano that has roots in Mexica -- one of the central Indigenous groups in Mesoamerica (Anahuac).

For Chicanx communities, in the 1960s Aztlán was considered the name of a homeland in the area now known as the Greater Southwest in the United States. The claim to the Greater Southwest by Chicanxs in the 1960s is troubling because it overlooks the past and present existence of Native tribal nations living in the regions in the areas signified, who were colonized by the Spanish before becoming part of Mexico, and then the United States. The idea that Chicanxs had a rightful claim to the land is contradicted by the Nahua paradigm, which states that the meaning of Aztlán is not a physical homeland but rather a commitment to stewardship.

Mestizaje and the Intersection of Indigeneity and Race

Stories of heritage among Chicanx and Latinx Indigenities or groups vary on their past and present ties to their homelands as well as in terms of their degree of inter- and intra-group recognition. **Mestizas/os/xs** are a diverse population with a combination of mixed heritage, often including Indigenous lineage, along with a combination of African and/or European backgrounds. Across these diverse groups, some have experienced contemporary forced acculturation, and others have been taught to believe they can assimilate and be invested in the dominant Spanish or Anglo-American cultural ways. The investment in whiteness is sometimes experienced through colorism when children are born, as they may be referred to as being a *güerita/o* or *morenita/o*, if they have light or dark skin. Children's light skin may be celebrated guided by the belief that they may eventually pass as white, which leads to identity conflict and pressure throughout development.

The idea of **mestizaje**, or mixed-race identity, emphasizes the multiple lineages that not only shape individual identity but also the communities, cultures, languages, and traditions that we practice. However, an overemphasis on the mixing of various groups in Latin America can be used to create a false sense of equality that is not reflected in the actual conditions of racialized groups in Latin America, the United States, and Canada. In particular, Mexico and Brazil have both promoted a sense of national unity that attempts to erase differences based on race, color, and Indigeneity (Telles, 2014). For communities experiencing the effects of inter-generational oppression, segregation, and exploitation, the idea that all ethnic differences have fused in a post-racial society erases the realities of inequity and the importance of advocates calling for justice. For Indigenous peoples, reductive deployments of ethnic categorization can disrupt attempts for collective liberation (Sánchez, 2021).

Marginalization continues through everyday stereotypes and myths about Indigenous people taught in various institutions, such as schools, mass media, and policy. As an example of anti-Indigenous oppression among Chicanx and Latinx people, we may hear pejorative terms like "India Maria" and "Oaxaquita," signifying a connotation of inferiority. Community responsive efforts, like in Ventura California, have included the "No me llames Oaxaquita" campaign. This effort created greater awareness about how this harmful term can negatively impact young people and their communities, motivating people to question their own biases and assumptions. Social movements have always been important for responding to the marginalization and direct threats to the lives of Indigenous peoples. Movement mobilization includes calling for sovereignty, treaty rights, resistance to Columbus Day and triumphalist narratives in history, stopping environmental destruction, water rights, cultural revitalization, land acknowledgment, and more. A land acknowledgment is a formal statement recognizing and respecting Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of the land as well as the historical relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

Latinidad has also been critiqued for the ways that it calls for an overriding unity between all Latinx, Latina, and Latino people. These generalizations tend to benefit the most privileged within this group, including cisgender, heterosexual, male, English-speaking, light-skinned or white, citizen Latinos. For this reason, some groups who are multiply marginalized within the Latinx community have called against using this term or qualifying it (Flores 2021). Others have modified the term, including through the label, **Afro-Latinx**, which describes people from Latin America of African descent.

Afro-Latinidad

The histories and identities of Afro-descendant people and Indigenous peoples in the Americas have been interacting and intertwined for centuries. For example, the Garifuna people are of mixed African and Indigenous heritage from the island called St. Vincent. Members and descendants of this group exist across Central America, the Caribbean, and the United States and are just one example of the strength and pride that has been built through solidarity with African and Indigenous heritage.

However, Afro-Latinxs are more likely to experience discrimination and policing in the United States (Noe-Bustamante, Gonzalez-Barrera, Edwards, Mora, and Lopez, 2021), and also more likely to raise these issues within Latinx communities more broadly (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2022). Within Latinx communities, dynamics of racism and colorism work to silence Afro-Latinx voices and discourage inclusive participation. These dynamics can be seen as widespread as white supremacy and global colonialism. Racial categorization in places like Brazil tends to be closely layered with colorism, leading to vastly different experiences of racial norms and consequences, even within biological families, based on one's physical presentation of race (Telles, 2014).

In the United States, self-identified Afro-Latinxs make up nearly 25% of the total Hispanic population (Gonzalez-Barrera, 2022). This suggests that the concerns of Afro-Latinx people are more central to both Black and Latinx cultures than is typically represented in popular media or social movements. For example, Black feminism often credits the development of major theoretical traditions like intersectionality to African American women in the United States. However, when considering transnational Black communities, there have been theoretical and conceptual developments in places like Brazil that predate U.S. manifestations of Black feminism. The recognition of these mutual sources of inspiration and activist mobilization is an opportunity for transnational coalitions and mutual learning. For example, Angela Davis has made a practice of collaborating with Black feminist leaders in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, such as Preta Ferriera, Lélia Gonzalez, and Marielle Franco.

The formal categorization of individuals into sub-categories by race was constructed by the Spanish empire in the Americas through the system of casta. Casta sorted people based on their heritage. A painting of the casta designations can be found in Figure 6.4.2, which shows sixteen different designations organized hierarchically, with Spanish descendant (Español or Española) individuals ranked at the highest positions, and those with Black and Indigenous ancestry ranked at the bottom. They are:

1. Español con India, Mestizo;
2. Mestizo con Española, Castizo;
3. Castizo con Española, Español;
4. Español con Mora, Mulato;
5. Mulato con Española, Morisca;
6. Morisco con Española, Chino;
7. Chino con India, Salta atrás;
8. Salta atras con Mulata, Lobo;
9. Lobo con China, Gíbaro (Jíbaro);
10. Gíbaro con Mulata, Albarazado;
11. Albarazado con Negra, Cambujo;
12. Cambujo con India, Sambiaga (Zambiaga);
13. Sambiago con Loba, Calpamulato;
14. Calpamulto con Cambuja, Tente en el aire;
15. Tente en el aire con Mulata, No te entiendo;
16. No te entiendo con India, Torna atrás

Many of the categories and labels used in this image are considered derogatory and are only presented here for a sense of the historical language use and social construction of race.

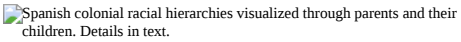

Figure 6.4.2: "Las castas" (Public Domain; Museo Nacional del Virreinato, Tepotzotlán, Mexico via Wikimedia)

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6.5: Migration and Immigration

Overview of Migration

When examining migration from Latin America, it is important to recognize that the term “immigrants” often also refers to Latin American Indigenous peoples. For example, immigrants from Oaxaca, Mexico may also identify as Indígena (Indigenous) and speak their native language of Mixteco. Although **immigrant and immigration policy** sound alike, they each play different roles in shaping the ways immigrants experience life in the United States. Immigration policy is about the laws and policies that determine the process and number of people who can immigrate in various ways, whereas *immigrant* policy refers to the laws and regulations that impact immigrants currently residing in the country. For example, immigration policy reflects systems such as visa lotteries and temporary worker programs, whereas immigrant policy is enforced by federal institutions such as Immigration Customs and Enforcement (ICE). ICE was formed in 2003, following the creation of the Department of Homeland Security following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. It replaced the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) and adopted a militarized, policing framework for immigration enforcement. While some policies attempt to curtail migration by restricting access, the economic and military policies of the United States continue to encourage migration, including through dangerous and unauthorized migration.

Immigration Policy

In the United States, early immigration acts (e.g., the Immigration Act of 1875, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, and the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act enforced racial and ethnic (national) quotas on immigrants coming to the United States and, ironically, called for the removal of Native Americans. The use of quotas creates a baseline expectation that migration to the United States will be carefully limited and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship will be restricted. This process is rooted in white supremacist ideas and has historically targeted specific countries and regions in attempts to restrict legal migration for Black and Brown people from around the world.

While the U.S. uses a logic of restriction and exclusion, it has also created specific policies to recruit migrants to work in industries where the domestic labor supply is failing. For example, the Bracero Program (1942-1965) encouraged a pattern of cyclical migration by legalizing migration for individual men working seasonally on farms (See Chapter 11, section 11:5 on "Labor Movements - Agricultural Workers"). This served to separate working men from their families, who often stayed in Mexico, while the workers would send back their earnings, a practice called remittances. In 1965, the program was ended and the amended Immigration and Nationality Act removed all country-of-origin quotas, which led to an increase in the number of migrants coming from Latin American countries. At the same time, the U.S. government has continued to encourage the flow of migration by facilitating military and economic campaigns that destabilize Central and Latin American countries. Widespread corruption, crime, and violence are exacerbated by continuous external interference, resulting in vulnerable individuals and communities seeking out new opportunities and protection in the United States.

The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 was a major shift for immigrant communities, as it offered amnesty to millions of undocumented Mexican migrants living in the U.S. It also promised more punitive policies and restrictions for immigration moving forward. Since then, policymakers have not made any structural changes to immigration policy that facilitate pathways to citizenship or offer amnesty to undocumented workers living in the United States. Instead, politicians have focused on encouraging immigration among educated and professional immigrants, also known as “brain drain,” while providing more punitive and militarized immigrant policies, like border patrol, deportation, immigrant detention, and family separation. Pervasive immigration and anti-immigrant policies at both state and federal levels perpetuate nativist discourses of “us” versus “them,” where Latina/o/x immigrants are overwhelmingly portrayed by the media as criminals, invaders, and terrorists. This leads to an illegalized identity that can have serious ramifications. In recent years, elected officials like ex-President Donald Trump have amplified these stereotypes, encouraging the formation of anti-immigrant groups and emboldening unregulated militias who treat the southern border of the United States like a war zone. Hegemonic institutions, like ICE, instill fear among migrants by threatening their livelihood and family life. Further, racial profiling in immigration enforcement extends this fear to Latinx communities and people of color.

Immigrant Policy and Immigrant Justice

Advocates focused on immigration have used creative strategies to advance policy goals for groups who are formally excluded from political representation and legal rights in the United States. Immigrant justice movements mobilize around a range of issues

that include, but are not limited to, legal reforms around immigrant rights. This takes into account the heterogeneity of immigrant communities whose concerns also include dignity, health, economic justice, and connections with mixed-status family members. While activism focused on legal rights emphasizes the state's control over citizenship, immigrant communities also include Indigenous peoples from Latin America and advocates focused on sovereignty and cultural preservation. The range of concerns present among Latinx immigrant and Indigenous communities leads to movements that combine direct action with community support and policy change at every level (local, state, and federal).

One common issue facing both immigrant and Indigenous communities is language barriers and access. For Latinx migrant communities, access to multilingual translation and interpretation facilitates inclusion for Spanish speakers and Indigenous language speakers within Latinx communities. In California, the Mixteco/Indígena Community Organizing Project (MICOP) centralizes language interpretation in their work and lifts up Indigenous language access within networks of immigrant and health advocates. The group launched Radio Indígena in 2014, a local FM station with over 40 hours of weekly live programming featuring at least seven Mixteco languages, Zapoteco, and Purépecha. This service provides information and entertainment that is relevant to Indigenous farm working communities, such as support for low-income individuals to receive rental assistance, energy payment programs, and family-paid leave (Espinoza-Kulick, 2022). These groups put into practice a human rights framework for providing holistic support to communities. In Figure 6.5.1, an artist has depicted a family traveling in a pick-up truck accompanied by the phrase "Freedom of Movement and Family Unity are Human Rights."

Figure 6.5.1: "Freedom of Movement and Family Unity are Human Rights." (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Kim Dinh via Justseeds)

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6.6: Special Topics in Chicanx and Latinx Studies

Chicanx and Latinx Healthcare Perspectives

There is much health and healing of body, mind, and spirit to do given our Chicanx and Latinx history of genocide, colonization, violence, acculturation, sterilization, hazardous working conditions, environmental toxins, diabetes, intergeneration trauma, abuses, and more. Views of health are shaped by one's culture, and culture is informed by nationality, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, language, and dis/ability (Chabram-Dernersesian and de la Torre, 2008; de la Torre and Estrada, 2015; Flores, 2013; Borunda and Moreno, 2022). At the same time, health access and health resources are historically and negatively impacted by a history of anti-Indianness, racism, classism, undocumented status, and region (Viruell-Fuentes, Miranda, and Abdulrahim, 2012). The implications of wealth, or net worth (what you own minus what you owe) by race and ownership of housing, and neighborhood income are apparent in the health inequality and lack of access to health care. You often see better health facilities and well-trained doctors, and fully staffed medical facilities in more affluent communities compared to poor ones. For this reason, the emergence of community-based clinics has been critical to racialized ethnic communities, especially in California Chicanx Latinx communities (De la Rocha, Bonta, and Garcia, 2019).

Think about your own experience with health and healing and that of your parents and grandparents. Where have they received most of their health and healing information? Both institutional and traditional health care are key to our communities. **Institutional health care** has to do with health care provided by hospitals and with doctors, physicians, prescribed medications, surgical procedures, and psychiatric appointments, which typically involve insurance. **Traditional health** has to do with Indigenous ways of health and healing of *cuerpo y alma* (body and soul) mediated through *curanderas/os* (healers) or other specialists, like *parteras* (midwifes) and involves *remedios* (medicinal herbs), ceremonies, *limpias* (spiritual cleansings), *sobaras/os* (message), *huezera/o* (bone setter), informal counseling for *bilis* (rage), *susto* (fright), or *envido* (envy), ancestral foodways, and referrals to medical doctors if needed (Avila and Parker, 2000; Flores, 2013; McNeill and Cervantes, 2011; Perrone, Stockel, and Krueger, 1989; Tello, 2019). Traditional health care has been in existence since before colonization and requires skilled and experienced healers.

Traditional Health Practices and Perspectives

Traditional *remedios* or medicinal herbs and ancestral foodways for the people connected to land have been impacted by invasion and colonization by the Spanish and European Americans ranging from 500 years ago to 150 years ago, depending on the region in this hemisphere (Rodríguez, 2013; Facio and Lara, 2014; Kimmerer, 2015; McNeill and Cervantes, 2011; Medina and Gonzales, 2019; Torres and Miranda, 2017). When people are de-terroritorialized or displaced, they lose their land and access to *remedios* (medicine) and ancestral foodways. When you lack access to ancestral food, there is a shift to more processed foods with sugars leading to an increase in diabetes and other related health conditions. Diabetes, in some cases, is caused by the experience of being torn from ancestral food and shifting into colonial foodways. In addition, **assimilation** has been detrimental to the health and healing of Chicanx Latinx communities. The longer the generations of Chicanx Latinx are in the United States, the higher the rates of diabetes, obesity, suicide, and drug and substance abuse. In some contexts, researchers have observed a pattern that can be described as the **Latino Health Paradox**. This means that immigrant Mexican and Latinx people will report better health and longer life expectancy compared to their acculturated Mexican origin and Latinx counterparts and European Americans of higher class statuses. Despite experiencing discrimination and institutional exclusion, which are typically risk factors that exacerbate bad health, recent migrants can carry forward strong traditions of resilience and well-being. Traditional diet and lifestyle play a major role in the Latino Health Paradox theory. Fewer years of processed foods, more walking, and less drug and substance abuse by immigrants make a difference in everyday health and overall longevity.

In recent years, with an alarming rate of cancer and research on the connection between our gut and minds, there's been an attempt to move away from processed foods and move towards decolonizing diets and cultivating gardens (Calvo and Esquibel, 2015; Peña, 2017). This means moving towards the use of ancestral foodways, which includes Meso American (Anaucan) super foods like corn, beans, squash, *nopales* (cactus), chiles, amaranth, and chia. This has meant regarding food as an essential part of health and healing rather than consumption. Chicanx and Latinx communities often have few stores and market sales of fresh items compared to alcohol and processed foods within approximate distance to homes. These impact Chicanx and Latinx farmworker families who work in the food industry and provide sustenance for communities around the globe. In addition, the lack of clean and safe water and toxic pollutants used on crops compounds health issues and avoidable illnesses. The impacts of contemporary food systems on our bodies, minds, and spirit have been detrimental. Historically groups like the United Farmworkers, American Indian Movement, Black Panther Party, and the South Central Los Angeles Farm have raised awareness about this reality concerning food

access and insecurity in Chicanx, Latinx, and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Food is ultimately important to forming healthy families and communities. In response, more and more farmers' markets are emerging in low-income working-class communities, aided by the ability to accept EBT payments (food stamps).

Traditional health through an Indigenous framework acknowledges the connection and health between body, mind, and spirit. This creates space for more diverse understandings of how healthy bodies can look, including fat bodies. Oftentimes, traditional food and food cultures of people of color are characterized as unhealthy, without regard to their place in spiritual, physical, and social processes.

Political Representation of Latinx and Hispanic People

Political representation of Latinx communities creates opportunities to advocate for better policies and new reforms. In the U.S., trailblazing leaders have crossed barriers for Chicanx and Latinx communities, opening new doors for others to continue the work of equity and justice for all. However, Latinx people remain under-represented in nearly all aspects of government and politics. In 2018, Latinx people were only 1% of all local and federal elected officials, according to the NALEO Educational Fund (2021). In 2022, that number is similar, with only four U.S. Senators and 40 U.S. Representatives. Women are underrepresented among Latinx elected officials, being only 1 Senator and 12 House Representatives. On the website from Rutgers University, you can explore more statistics about women of color in politics and elected positions.

Some of the leaders for Latinx communities in politics include the U.S. Congressperson Romualdo Pacheco, who was first elected in 1879 as a Representative from California. Pacheco had previously served as the first Mexican American governor of California in 1875. Even in states that include a high number of Latinx people and voters, such as California, researchers have identified a pattern of underrepresentation, including in appointed and elected positions in state government, county supervisors, school board members, and city-level positions. Groups like the California Latino School Boards Association have emerged to address some of these specific issues of representation and political power. You can learn more about the California Latino School Boards Association on their website.

At the federal level, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus represents the interests of Hispanic Congresspeople and it includes over 30 members, including many Latinx representatives and their allies. Some Latinx Congresspeople are not members of the Caucus, in part due to partisan divides between Republicans and Democrats. In the Senate, U.S. Senator Octaviano Larrazlo from New Mexico was the first Latino and Mexican American Senator in 1928. Despite gains for representation won in states with high proportions of Latinx people, it took decades of additional advocacy before major federal and judicial positions were held by Latinos. For example, there has never been a Latinx President of the United States, Vice President, or Secretary of State. It was not until 1988 that Lauro Cazavos became the Secretary of Education and the first Latinx or Hispanic person to serve in the U.S. Cabinet. On the U.S. Supreme Court, when Justice Sonia Sotomayor was confirmed to her position in 2009, she became the first Latinx person and the third woman to be confirmed to the Supreme Court. In Figure 6.6.1, there is a photo of Justice Sotomayor fulfilling one of her duties on the Supreme Court by swearing in Kamala Harris as Vice President, who is another woman who broke barriers as the first Black person, first Asian person, first multiracial person, and first woman to serve as Vice President of the United States.

Figure 6.6.1: "Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor swears in Vice President Kamala Harris into office during the 59th Presidential Inauguration ceremony in Washington, Jan. 20, 2021." (CC BY 2.0; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff via Flickr)

Sidebar: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, popularly known as AOC, has been a major figure for Latinx representation in politics. This is in part because she actively embraces her connection to the Latinx community, foregrounding her status as a young Latina woman living in New York City, who recently paid the bills by bartending. Her continued and unapologetic presentation of herself positions her as a capable and strong advocate for diverse people living in the United States, including immigrants, women, and people of color. In Figure 6.6.2, she appears in a photograph, speaking passionately in front of a crowd of people.

Figure 6.6.2: "Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez." (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Miki Jordan via Flickr)

Her passion and tenacity represent a commitment to social change and a critical lens that is relatable for many Latinx people as well as her wide range of supporters.

Politics and Liberation

Some members of Latinx communities are disengaged from formal political processes, including voting and representation. This is in part due to the exclusion of immigrants from voting, which prevents families from engaging in a shared practice of voting and being represented. Beyond that, many Latinx people also share the critical perspective that the U.S. government itself and U.S. society are built around principles of division, exclusion, and exploitation and must be critically examined and transformed. Under this view, participation in the system only serves to encourage people to believe in the possibility of reform, while ultimately failing to address the root causes of racism, xenophobia, and intersectional oppression. Among Native American and Latinx Indigenous peoples, this sentiment can be accompanied by a commitment to tribal sovereignty and the creation of modern systems rooted in traditional and sacred relationships with the land.

Figure 6.6.3: "Puerto Rican Flag in Old San Juan." (CC BY 2.0; Lorie Shaull via Wikimedia)

The contradictions of political representation can also be seen in Puerto Rico, which is a U.S. territory. Although the people of Puerto Rico bear many of the responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, including paying taxes, being drafted, and following the laws created by the government, they are not politically represented at the federal level. You can see a Puerto Rican flag hanging in Old

San Juan in Figure 6.6.3, showing the people's pride in their island. More recently, this lack of representation has had devastating effects in the face of increased hurricanes in the region and the larger dynamics of climate change. While Puerto Ricans are clearly not represented equally in the U.S. governmental system, the people of the island remain persistently divided as to whether to pursue statehood or independence. This shows the complexity of political perspectives present among communities. Diversity of perspective within Latinx communities and in solidarity with other racial and ethnic groups ultimately contributes to the use of multiple strategies in advocacy and politics. This creates opportunities for future generations to continue the struggle and find new solutions to long-standing systems of white supremacy, xenophobia, and settler colonialism.

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6.7: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In this chapter, you have learned about some of the foundational concepts and debates in Chicanx and Latinx Studies. There are many more topics that are covered in this field and opportunities for additional exploration and learning. This overview provides some of the key information and perspectives that can guide this process. By examining the roots of Chicanx and Latinx Studies within the movements for Ethnic Studies, we can recognize important theories and knowledge produced by Chicanx and Latinx communities to recognize a more truthful and accurate understanding of history, culture, politics, and society.

Furthermore, we have seen that Chicanx and Latinx Studies is similar to other Ethnic Studies fields because it is rooted in struggle and resistance for racial justice and in solidarity with movements for decolonization. These struggles inform the significance of scholarship and inquiry in these areas, including with respect to identity formation, language access, healthcare, politics, and more. While Chicanx and Latinx communities have experienced substantial barriers related to systemic racism, settler-colonialism, and other interlocking forms of exploitation, this has only served to motivate communities to rally for justice, equity, self-determination, and liberation.

Key Terms

- **LULAC:** League of United Latin American Citizens, a nationwide group committed to advancing the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health and civil rights of Latinxs through community-based programs. LULAC created the little school of 400.
- **East L.A. Blowouts:** Also known as the East L.A. Walkouts, are widely regarded as catapulting the Chicano Movement forward in the late 60's and through the 70's. The Blowouts were a series of walkouts carried out in 1968 by Mexican American students in protest against the educational inequality they faced in their schools and classrooms.
- **M.E.Ch.A.:** Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (Chicano Student Movement of Aztlan) was created in order to have a Mexican American united front (Muñoz, Jr., 2007, p.96). M.E.Ch.A was created because of the need to unify Chicanx and Mexican American student organizations at various campuses (Rosales, 1997, p. 183).
- **Chicanx:** Commonly accepted as "connoting political awareness or consciousness and refers to U.S. born persons of Mexican descent" (Vargas, 2017, p. xxi). Additionally, it has been used to reclaim a word that was originally pejorative, inverting it by rooting it in the positive of their existence within Aztlan. (Gonzalez, 2022, p. 117).
- **Latinx:** The term Latinx is developed as a method to drop the traditional patriarchal dichotomy of identifying simply as a male or female through ethnic identifiers such as Latinx.
- **Indigenismo:** An "Aztec-centric celebration of the Indigenous past of the nation, which often serves to erase the present and future of the sixty-three Indigenous pueblos of Mexico" and the millions of Indigenous peoples living around the world (Blackwell et al., 2017, p. 131).
- **Chicanx Indigenous:** It is a self-identity category used by people, unlike Hispanic or Latinx which emerged from western institutions. Chicanx is an identity term that originates from Xicano which stems from Mexicano that has roots in Mexica -- one of the central Indigenous groups in Mesoamerica (Anahuac).
- **Anahuac:** A nahua word, signifies someone from Mesoamerica.
- **Mestizas/os/xs:** A diverse population that has a combination of mixed heritage, often including Indigenous lineage, along with a combination of African and/or European backgrounds. Across these diverse groups, some have experienced contemporary forced acculturation, and others have been taught to believe they can assimilate and be invested in the dominant Spanish or Anglo American cultural ways. The investment in whiteness is sometimes experienced through colorism when children are born as they may be referred to as being a güerita/o or morenita/o, if they have light or dark skin, respectively. Children's light skin may be celebrated guided by the belief that they may eventually pass as white, which leads to identity conflict and pressure throughout development.
- **Mestizaje:** Mixed-race identity, emphasizing the multiple lineages that not only shape individual identity, but also the communities, cultures, languages, and traditions that we practice.
- **Afro-Latinx:** People from Latin America of African descent. The histories and identities of Afro-descendant people and Indigenous peoples in the Americas have been interacting and intertwined for centuries.
- **Immigrant and Immigration Policy:** Immigration policy is about the laws and policies that determine the process and number of people who can immigrate in various ways, whereas *immigrant* policy refers to the laws and regulations that impact immigrants currently residing in the country.

- **Institutional health care** is healthcare provided by hospitals, doctors, physicians, prescribed medications, surgical procedures, and psychiatric appointments, which typically involve insurance.
- **Traditional Health:** Indigenous ways of health and healing of *cuerpo y alma* (body and soul) mediated through *curanderas/os* (healers) or other specialists, like *parteras* (midwifes) and involves *remedios* (medicinal herbs), ceremonies, *limpias* (spiritual cleansings), *sobaras/os* (message), *huezera/o* (bone setter), informal counseling for *bilis* (rage), *susto* (fright), or *envido* (envy), ancestral foodways.
- **Assimilation**: The cultural (diet, language, dress, etc.), economic, and psychological pressures, especially for immigrants, to conform and reconfigure themselves to fit the culture of the dominant group.
- **Latino Health Paradox:** Immigrant Mexican and Latinx people will report better health and longer life expectancy compared to their acculturated Mexican origin and Latinx counterparts and European Americans of higher class statuses. Despite experiencing discrimination and institutional exclusion, which are typically risk factors that exacerbate bad health, recent migrants can carry forward strong traditions of resilience and well-being.

Discussion Questions

1. Indigenous perspectives and western knowledge have conflicted over the beginning of human life on this planet, reflecting distinct standpoints. Recent evidence has shown that the hypothesis that humans in the western hemisphere migrated from Asia over a land bridge is not supported. Indigenous perspectives center on a relationship with the land since time immemorial. How do stories about where we come from shape our sense of self? How do these perspectives show a different understanding of the relationship between people and the land?
    - Researchers, including Indigenous archeologists and anthropologists, continue to investigate these issues and identify new evidence about the historical conditions where human life developed. You can supplement your discussion with contemporary sources, such as the websites linked here:
        - Scientists in Chile have found a 15,000-year-old footprint, the earliest sign of humans' presence in the Americas | CNN Travel
        - 68 VOCES (Español with English description available at Cinema Tropical: Watch Mexican Indigenous Tales in Their Native Language in 68 VOICES, 68 HEARTS)
2. Students have been a major part of Chicanx and Latinx social movements. This includes advocacy around education and schools specifically, as well as broader movements for justice and liberation. Why are students uniquely situated to advocate for their communities?
    - You can help guide this discussion by providing some examples of student advocacy as a jumping-off point. The websites linked in this list include just a few examples of student activism in Chicanx and Latinx social movements.
        - UWM Latino Activism | UWM Libraries Digital Collections
        - 10 Young Latinx Activists You Should Know | DoSomething.org
        - The Student Protest That Heralded the Chicano Movement
3. Individuals who break through barriers are often celebrated for being the first of their kind, such as Sonia Sotomayor being appointed to be the first Latinx person on the U.S. Supreme Court. These figures become role models, or what some call “possibility models.” Why does it matter that people see others like them represented? How does this representation affect communities as a whole?
    - You can inform this discussion by examining specific figures who have broken barriers in representation. The websites in this list contain some biographical descriptions that can be used as a starting place. It can be even more powerful to tailor these to your local context or a specific field of interest.
        - Famous Firsts by Hispanic Americans
        - Sonia Sotomayor and 9 Other Latina Pioneers of the 19th, 20th, and 21st Centuries - Biography
        - 10 Inspiring Latinas Who’ve Made History — Google Arts & Culture

Journal Prompts

1. Is there power in a name or in naming? Please write about one new organization or concept that you learned from this chapter. Please provide examples in your analysis.
2. What is Chicanx and Latinx? What are the differences and similarities between these terms?
3. Stories are vital because they are how we shape our own narratives and create self-assigned identities. The terms that we use to identify ourselves are part of the stories and narratives that we tell. What are the stories and narratives that you utilize to

identify yourself?

Class Activities

Power Mapping

All advocacy is tailored toward a specific audience. The technique of “power mapping” can be used to identify potential viable targets for a social movement. As illustrated in Figure 7.99, the basic structure of power mapping is to create a chart. In this chart, the vertical axis is based on influence. At the top of the chart, you will place individuals and organizations that are the most influential with respect to your defined outcome. As you go down the chart, you will place individuals who are less influential. At the same time, the horizontal axis represents support or opposition, with the leftmost part of the chart being the most opposition, and the rightmost part of the chart being the most support

To complete the activity, create your own power map.

1. Start by clearly defining an objective, which should be specifically defined. This might be a policy, or working to eliminate a concrete disparity, like improving high school graduation rates among Chicanxs and Latinxs, or addressing a specific health disparity within your city, county, or state.
2. Then, begin filling out the chart relative to that issue by identifying individuals and organizations and estimating their amount of influence and support to place them on the chart.
    - You can start with the folx you are most familiar with. You may want to also look up elected officials or policymakers, such as legislators, mayors, or appointed representatives. Some of these people and organizations will be listed in news articles on your topic.
3. To complete the chart, identify the four groups that you have mapped:
    - Champions: Individuals who are high in influence and support your objective.
    - Supporters: Individuals who are low in influence and support your objective.
    - Targets: Individuals who are high in influence but oppose your objective.
    - Opponents: Individuals who are low in influence and oppose your objective.
4. Finally, reflect on what you have learned from this process in a short written response (250-500 words), focusing on the question: how can the identified champions and supporters of your issue work to influence the targets and opponents?
    - Note that successful social movements do not always win over all of their targets and opponents to become in favor of the objective. Sometimes the most effective way to meet an outcome is to move Targets from opposition to neutrality. And Opponents may continue to work against your objective, but this is not always impactful if they do not have influence.

Group Blog Assignment

- Demonstrate your interpretation of and engagement with a topic of your choice related to Chicanx and Latinx Studies.
- Address the following general prompts:
    - How does the topic you chose to research relate to Chicanx and Latinx communities?
    - What is the relationship between your topic and Chicanx and Latinx identities, along with intersectional factors?(for example, gender, sexuality, immigration status, or ability status)
- You should use multiple sources to inform your contribution, such as written text, images, music, videos, and more.
- Format Options
    - For an individual assignment, you can complete this independently. It can also be completed as a group, either by having each student complete an individual assignment and sharing it in a group format (e.g., Canvas discussion, free blog site, online Jamboard), or by having people work in groups to formulate and execute their blog contributions.
    - You can specify the format or a range of options for the format to make the blog post assignment more engaging. For example, instead of a traditional blog post, students can make Instagram stories or short videos.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

7: White Supremacy, Racisms, and Racial Formation

By Dr. Teresa Hodges

Learning Objectives

- Analyze race as a social construct and the changing definitions of race;
- Critically analyze systems of historical and current-day racial/ethnic oppression using social scientific and humanistic approaches, including ethno-centrism, eurocentrism, white supremacy, and settler-colonialism;
- Explain the significance of power as a crucial variable in racial/ethnic conflict and as they relate to so-called minority-majority group relations;
- Analyze the cultural and institutional factors involved in race and ethnic relations, relating the macro-level to the micro-level.

7.1: Introduction
7.2: Defining Whiteness and White Supremacy
7.3: Racism as Structural/Institutional
7.4: Structural/Institutional Legacies of Whiteness
7.5: Normalization of Whiteness
7.6: Summary/Review
7.7: References

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7.1: Introduction

Dehumanization and Whiteness

Paulo Freire (1970) describes dehumanization as when people are considered less-than-human and that their status as humans is different than what it should be. Being humanized means they should have the ability to pursue their hopes and dreams, some of the very things that make them so human (p. 44). Humanization is when we actively see the humanity in others and therefore treat people like they are worthy beings and therefore that their lives matter. One of the biggest reasons that Ethnic Studies became a field of study is because historically the European settlers that colonized the Americas and developed the structures of this nation by dehumanizing Native Americans, Africans, and other non-Europeans. Not only do many of these structures still exist today but in what ultimately became white supremacy were systems, beliefs, languages, laws, practices, and more that continually work to maintain a dominance of an elite class. In this chapter, whiteness is the construction of identity that enables privilege and power based on skin color and white supremacy is the system in which whiteness is perpetuated and maintained even through things like policies.

White supremacy has been maintained by continual adaptation to localized and generational contexts but the underlying basis is white, middle class (and beyond) male, Christian heteropatriarchy. Whiteness is not a “natural” category of identity, it is created and is maintained by a belief in its superiority. When whiteness is used to uphold power, it is white supremacy. The power of whiteness lies in its ability to be largely invisible and therefore functions as the standard of humanity. When teaching Ethnic Studies students, I make it a priority to help them process some of their racialized experiences especially in relation to their positionality, meaning where they are socially located for example in terms of race, class, gender, etc. In one class, I had a white female student say that she couldn’t think of instances where race was a salient feature in situations. I hear this a lot from white students and my response is typically, “OK. So then, that is where you start! Why is it that you haven’t had to think about your race? Can you think of situations where others have experienced something where someone made an issue of their race but not of yours? Or where someone made an issue of their race, and it made you think something about being white?” This type of interaction between my students and I help to prove the point about whiteness as invisible, normalized, and the standard but it also helps them see that they were also taught to perpetuate whiteness in these ways.

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7.2: Defining Whiteness and White Supremacy

Whiteness vs. the Other

Whiteness is something that was created by juxtaposing Europeans with Native peoples and other non-Europeans. Michael Omi and Howard Winant (2014) define **racial formation** as the process in which racial identity is created and experienced (p. 109). Non-Europeans were "othered" in order to maintain a superiority of whiteness. Since encountering Native peoples in the 15th and 16th centuries in what is now the United States, white settlers used to judge Native peoples' appearances as backwards with "dark devil skin," even as sexually loose and therefore immoral. Relatedly, white settlers would see Africans as dark and therefore opposite of them, having protruding lips and often created caricatures with images of dark people with huge lips. In both instances, white settlers saw these peoples as "heathen" and "uncivilized" and therefore used this to justify why they needed to conquer Native lands and enslave Black people, as both were seen as unfit to take care of themselves. This idea of "unfit to take care of themselves" was promoted through an infantilization of nonwhites meaning they were described as childlike and therefore unable to take care of themselves (see Takaki, 2008 or Zinn, 2009, or others for more information about these initial racializations). The sidebar below shows an example of infantilization that was extended to relate to other people and serve as justification for conquest and rule, just like it had been used against Native Americans and Black Americans. Something identified as racial, whether having direct association to a racial group, whether true or not or even something like having a motive to designate something racially, is what Omi and Winant call **racial projects**. In defining racism, they state that racial projects can be defined as racist if "it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial signification and identities" (Omi and Winant, 2014, p. 128). In this way, the combination of racial association or label with "structures of domination" can mean that racism requires a notion of superiority tied to a particular group.

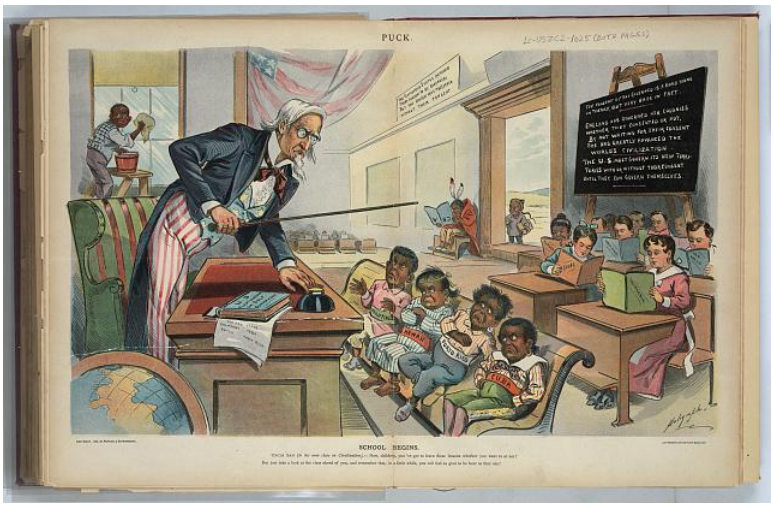

Figure 7.2.1: School begins / Dalrymple, 1899. (Public Domain; Louis Dalrymple via Library of Congress)

Sidebar: "School Begins"

In Figure 7.2.1 from the Library Congress, school children are deemed savages and Uncle Sam is teaching the class. It portrays different places such as Cuba, Philippines, Guam, Puerto Rico, etc. as childlike and unruly. This picture is used to show how these places need the care and guidance of the United States through direct policy and governance. Specifically, these places became a part of U.S. territory in 1898 after the Spanish-American War, and as the U.S. exercised dominance through narratives of saviorism, or the idea that these places need the U.S. to "save" them from their uncivilized and unfit-to-rule selves. The authors of *The Forbidden Book: The Philippine-American War in Political Cartoons* (2014) gathered some of these images as a look at U.S. imperialism, or rule that extends over an empire and dictates matters of economic, political, social, cultural rules of another country. Hawai'i is included in this and actually became a state but many are unaware that the U.S. imprisoned Queen Lili'uokalani of Hawai'i in her home and forcefully took over Hawai'i so that's how it became a state. Many sovereignty activists are legally battling the mainstream depiction of Hawai'i annexation narratives that exclude the violent takeover of their lands and are imprisoned. Scholar Noenoe Silva discusses how the Queen of Hawai'i was compared to Black Americans and deemed unfit the rule. The U.S. created caricatures of her that likened her to racist Black caricatures. These images of imperialism gathered in *The Forbidden Book* shows the long history of "othering" and conquest that links Black,

> Indigenous, and people of color histories and realities and help to unmask hidden truths about race, U.S. imperialism, and white supremacy.

Scholar, activist, Chicana feminist Elizabeth Martinez explicitly defines **white supremacy** as a system that promotes privilege and power of whiteness for white people through institutional entities (see: What is White Supremacy by Elizabeth 'Betita' Martinez). White supremacy is rooted in African enslavement, Native American removal and genocide, imperialism and war in Asia, and land dispossession of Mexico. These linkages to various non-European groups in these historical ways is not uncommon knowledge amongst Ethnic Studies scholars. Martinez distinguishes white supremacy from the term "racism," because white supremacy points out how racism is systemic and not only "as a problem of personal prejudices and individual acts of discrimination." White supremacy, therefore, points out a power relationship rooted in exploitation and maintaining the wealth, power and privilege of a few.

Omi and Winant bring up the idea that non-whites can also be racist, and Lipsitz points out that non-whites can invest in whiteness as well. However, it is important to point out that a lot of scholarship in Ethnic Studies doesn't always use the words white supremacy. For example, they might talk about white elitism, white as dominant, etc. Even if scholarship does not explicitly name white supremacy as that, everything that helps to perpetuate the maintenance of white dominance is a part of the system of white supremacy. Part of this stems from how the concept of whiteness was created in order to distinguish European colonists from Native Americans and people of color, in particular to distinguish itself as superior. Therefore, talking about whiteness has been a way to explain that the construction of whiteness is constantly created and re-created in order to try to maintain superiority. Further, whiteness operates within a system and also works representationally.

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7.3: Racism as Structural/Institutional

Color Matters

Because of inferiorization, students of color (non-white students), indigenous students, low-income students (who may be white or non-white), women, and other marginalized groups have disproportionately experienced discrimination and oppression. For example, Winant (2002) recalls,

> Pick any relevant sociological indicator—life expectancy, infant mortality, literacy, access to health care, income level—and apply it in virtually any setting, global, regional, or local, and the results will be the same: the worldwide correlation of wealth and well-being with white skin and European descent, and of poverty and immiseration with dark skin and "otherness." Sure, there are exceptions: there are plenty of exploited white workers, plenty of white welfare mothers both urban and rural, plenty of poor whites throughout the world's North; and there are a smattering of wealth-holders "of color" around the world too. But these are outliers in the planetary correlation of darkness and poverty (p. 305).

Possessive Investment in Whiteness

Part of the idea here is to recognize proportionality. While there are low-income white people, for example, the majority of white people aren't poor and those that are typically aren't poor due to racism. Additionally, while we understand racism as racial discrimination, many scholars in Ethnic Studies specifically emphasize the structural connection within the definition. In the 1990s, Ethnic Studies scholar George Lipsitz coined the term **Possessive Investment in Whiteness**, or PIW. PIW is a way to explain how white people are encouraged to "buy" into whiteness, promote it, maintain it, uplift it, and exclude access from others. Possessive Investment in Whiteness is to embrace the category of whiteness as a community that embraces white skinned hierarchy in order to obtain advantages that go deeper than everyday privilege. These advantages range from creating laws/policies/procedures that benefit white as a privileged class, that maintains generational wealth by excluding non-whites and profiting from structured discrimination. Part of the maintenance of PIW requires a normalization of whiteness (such as white as the standard of beauty), and adherence to the status quo. Because PIW is embedded in societal structures, it is also self-maintaining and replicating. One example of this is redlining which is explained further in the sidebar below (for more information about related structural racism please see the Chapter 9 on the Racial Wealth Gap).

Sidebar: Redlining

Redlining is the labeling of certain communities predominantly occupied by people of color to be red and as distinct and inferior to white communities. This creates inequitable housing opportunities and maintains wealth for white people by rejecting people of color from obtaining home loans to purchase homes in white communities and also financially devaluing homes in communities of color that make it nearly impossible to accumulate wealth. In home ownership deeds in white communities, there would be explicit directions that prohibited people of color to buy homes in white communities. Policies like this help to perpetuate the accumulation of wealth within white families that already have legacies of generational wealth compared to Blacks because of slavery and the wealth from profiting off Black bodies.

Teaching in Ethnic Studies often points to structural/institutional racism such as described in this sidebar as what creates the biggest racial inequities in our society. Whereas equality is equal, same, "fair," having the same exact access to resources, equity recognizes that people do not occupy the same positions that grant them the same access as others so there needs to be differentiated treatment such as particular resources and services that can help give access that people were left out of initially. When naysayers argue that there shouldn't be "hand-outs," what they fail to acknowledge is deep history that creates such inequities in the first place. In terms of racism as racial inequity, this is vastly due to structural/institutional racism. Slavery, for example, was an economic, political, cultural, and social system which was the law. Because it was sanctioned by the government, there was no avoiding it and it seeped into every fabric of society for centuries, creating a devastating impact of how Black people are seen even today. This includes the lack of access to the levels of generational wealth that whites have, and being denied privileges associated with freedom, safety and security, which are typically afforded to whites.

Figure 7.3.1: "Don't you just love the suburbs?" (CC By-NC-ND 4.0; Jan Buchholtz via Flickr)

PIW is not just something that white people can profit from. People of color can profit from Possessive Investment in Whiteness also. However, PIW predominantly and most generously enables white people to dismiss race and promote **colorblindedness**. It is in the best interest of whiteness to mask historical oppression as this exposes the wrongdoing that comes from whiteness as superior. Colorblind racism therefore uses the notion of colorblindedness to uphold white supremacy especially through policies and laws that normalize the absence of color which then promotes whiteness as standard instead of inclusion of others.

Because of the power of whiteness and specifically white supremacy, there have been times in U.S. history when people of color sought to be classified as white. This often occurs when there are some loose boundaries around what is defined as white. In the 1923 Supreme Court case of Bhagat Singh Thind, Thind, born in Punjab, India, attempted to claim that he was Aryan due to language and being high-caste without racial mixing and therefore eligible for U.S. citizenship. Due to the Naturalization Act of 1790, only free white persons were eligible for citizenship at that time. Prior to Thind, Takao Ozawa (1922) also tried to argue that Japanese people had the same skin color as white people and should therefore be of the "Caucasian race." This is why Thind made the case that some Indians were Caucasian. The infamous one-drop rule was created to classify who was white. During slavery, Black enslaved women were sometimes raped by their white masters. Their children were called mulattos and there were concerns that their racial mixtures would taint white blood. Thus, the one-drop rule, known as an anti-miscegenation law, was created in the 1600s. This rule declared any person with a single drop of Black blood to be Black. Not only were mixed race children of Black enslaved women and white masters deemed Black, but this rule also ensured that a child of a Black enslaved women was also considered enslaved, reinforcing the next generation of free enslaved labor. Designating a drop of Black blood to a mixed child also applied to white women who had children with Black men. However, when a white woman gave birth to a child that was mixed with Black and white, she was also punished for it. White men were not punished for having mixed race Black and white children. California struck down anti-miscegenation laws in 1948. The last of the anti-miscegenation laws were struck down in 1967 in the Loving v. Virginia case.

The Three I's of Oppression

The three I's of oppression describes multi-dimensional domination. **Institutional oppression** is oppression within organizations, societal institutions such as government, health, media, schooling, and more. According to Omi and Winant, institutional oppression is one that is largely seen through laws, policies, and protocols. In this way, institutions function largely without needing constant surveillance that guides every movement because when rules are created, people for the most part will follow them. Institutions also operate seemingly invisibly in this way by standardizing functions and symbols so that they are universally known. Institutional oppression within laws can exclude people from immigrating to the United States and it can also decide who is criminalized or otherwise different. The Immigration Act of 1924, for example, placed quotas on immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe and completely denied immigrants from Asia.

Interpersonal oppression is when someone is being oppressed by another person, thus inter + personal. Violently attacking someone on the street is a form of interpersonal oppression. Attacking someone specifically due to race is interpersonal racism. Name-calling, microaggressions, verbal insults, and verbal or physical assaults, are some examples which demonstrate interactive exchange within interpersonal oppression. Microaggressions have increasingly been researched amongst people of color communities as a way to explain oppression that isn't always considered a "macro" oppression like institutional racism but something usually more interpersonal and "less severe" like a verbal insult or slights. Filipino American psychologist Kevin Nadal

is one who has lead research on microaggressions against Filipinx Americans specifically, and Asian Americans generally. With Asian Americans, one thing that some expressed was treating Asian Americans as foreigners as if many hadn't been born here. Many say that even though they are called "micro"aggressions, they can still cause deep psychological impact especially when experienced constantly and that they can often feel larger than "micro" in impact. While seemingly disconnected, interpersonal oppression or racism can largely be in relationship to the Institutional. Because of the policies that frame how to operate with people, individuals can treat one another according to certain laws and procedures.

Internalized oppression is when a person internalizes negative messages, stereotypes, etc. that are associated with some aspect of them. For example, if they are a person of color and hate their skin color or hair texture, this could represent internalized racism that they somehow learned in their lifetime. Colonial mentality is when one believes in the inferiority of colonized peoples or the inferiority of some aspect within being a colonized or formerly colonized people. One example of this is if an English-speaking country colonized another country and colonizers teach them that English is superior, then believing that English is better than their language(s) in part shows that this colonial mentality accepts the superiority of the colonizer. Even though institutional and interpersonal oppression seem to be the most damaging and harmful of the oppressions, decolonial scholars importantly point out the extreme dangers of internalized oppression. When a person believes themselves to be inferior, this contributes to their continual subjugation and oppression as not believing they have power and agency. When people absorb ideas and beliefs of a group, they will perpetuate or challenge these ideas in regard to themselves, their family, and others. This helps to complete the cycle between the I's.

In the 1970s, education scholar Caroline Persell named the three I's of oppression and included societal oppression to be in a system called the "structures of dominance" that worked together to uphold oppressive ideologies in a cycle. Societal oppression are the societal values and beliefs, or ideologies, that can serve to uphold dominance for some and subordination for others. In her model of structures of dominance, institutions shape the way that people interact with one another, and therefore impacts how one sees themselves. This then translates into group values and beliefs. She specifically uses this model for education in the way that educational policy and rules impact teacher-to-student behavior and student-to-teacher behavior, and counselor-to-student behavior, etc. Then this influences the way the students see themselves, the way teachers see themselves, etc. and gets absorbed into existing and new pathways for societal beliefs. There are more ways that oppression operates within the dimensions according to Persell's structures of dominance, but one of the most significant of her ideas within this model reflect how structures of dominance don't just self-maintain oppression, but in particular it upholds the domination of the ruling class within education and throughout society.

Ideology and Hegemony

Ideology is a set of beliefs such as within a group. Ideologies are a part of all societies and contribute to how they define and distinguish who they are. Ideologies are often used to delineate who belongs and who does not, by sometimes attempting to require members of society and groups to practice and embrace such beliefs. In Ethnic Studies, it is recognized how sometimes ideologies spouted by elitist members in society can be harmful to the rest of the population, especially when they disregard the humanity of others, devalue their labor and cultures, and attempt to erase other cultures and way of life.

Sidebar: ideology

One example of ideology is whiteness as the standard for beauty.

Figure 7.3.2: "Then and Now® Bathing Suit Barbie® - Made in China". (CC by NC-ND 4.0; Dolls N' Stuff via Flickr)

Related to ideology, **hegemony** is the dominance of one groups' beliefs over others. When dominating beliefs are the standard or norm within organizations and institutions, it then establishes power for the dominant group and therefore helps to solidify dominant practices and beliefs within laws and policies that then are applied to everyone. Antonio Gramsci first introduced the concept of hegemony as cultural hegemony to explain the structured domination/subordination relationship. For example, Bates (1975) remarked how Gramsci's hegemony could "eliminate class struggle" by squashing it with such dominant norms and beliefs (p. 351). These laws and policies that uphold dominant beliefs as the norm often oppress marginalized populations.

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7.4: Structural/Institutional Legacies of Whiteness

Schooling and other Institutions

James D. Anderson discusses how whites kept Blacks from high quality education in the late 1800s/early 1900s because they deemed it to be a "subversive" way to gain equality (1988, p. 95). Part of the fear resided in how reading might inspire Blacks to want to vote (p. 98). Keeping Blacks from getting an education thus attempted to keep Blacks in an underclass. Although voting was not allowed for Blacks yet, the fear of schooling encouraging voting also idealized who was considered a citizen and thus who was humanized. It was further propagated that "industrial schooling" was ideal compared to other schooling so that the status quo would remain intact (p. 86). Again, this exemplifies the desire for white political and economic leaders to deny humanization for Blacks and thus equity in school and life, let alone excellence.

Lisa Delpit (1988) is often cited for her work that describes how there is a **"culture of power"** in schools that socialize students to perpetuate White middle-class norms. She calls for educators to teach students about the culture of power: that it exists and that sometimes you must play by those rules (of White middle-class norms in schools) but that doesn't mean your home culture isn't valued. Delpit says that we must not just teach children tools like code-switching, or knowing how to speak, say, their native African American Vernacular English or other language but then also know when, where, and why to use the "culture of power" in order to gain access to spaces and operate within places where they are unable to resist or draw from their home cultures.

Cultivating identity and multiple **epistemologies** in schools, even classrooms, can work to counter the misrecognition and dehumanization of students' identities and cultures. Delgado Bernal (2013) pointedly states, "Although students of color are holders and creators of knowledge, they often feel as if their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages are devalued, misinterpreted, or omitted within formal educational settings" (p. 390). In order to counter this, she says that these aspects must be "recognized and valued in schools" (p. 403). In these ways, Delgado Bernal points to epistemology, "how we know what we know" as the popular definition says. Student of color epistemologies are not valued in schools often not beyond superficial celebrating of differences that also do not delve deeper into issues of discrimination due to the differences and other issues of inequities. Such epistemologies are exemplified by Delgado Bernal when she writes,

> What are often perceived as deficits for Chicana/Chicano students within a Eurocentric epistemological framework—limited English proficiency, Chicano and/or Mexicano cultural practices, or too many nonuniversity-related responsibilities—can be understood within a Chicana feminist perspective as cultural assets or resources that Chicana/Chicano students bring to formal educational environments (2013, p. 397).

Studies suggest that when a student has a positive racial identity and positive student identity, they tend to do better in school (Akom 2003). As discussed in Chapter 2 on the struggle for Mexican American Studies in Tucson, not only does Ethnic Studies help students achieve academically in other courses, but it helped to build and cultivate positive identities that had been otherwise devalued in a white supremacist society.

Louis Althusser further identifies an **Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)** where interrelated institutions together perpetuate the status quo (Feinberg and Soltis, 1985, p. 57). Feinberg and Soltis name these institutions such as "communications, such as newspapers, radio and television; the cultural institutions; the family; political parties and trade unions" and more (1985, p. 57). Feinberg and Soltis cite Althusser's naming of the "function" of ISAs as a way to socialize people and direct their decisions and thus "maintaining the current system of production relations and power" especially "of the ruling class" (p. 57). Figure 7.4.1 shows an image representing the news media, an institution that can be considered an ISA and that can often perpetuate stereotypes. These societal institutions work hand-in-hand with schools and Althusser even includes schools as an ISA.

Figure 7.4.1: "Local News: Mountain Lion Attack". (CC By SA 2.0); Lars Ploughmann via Flickr)

Caroline Persell (1977) in her work on **"structures of dominance"** agree that society impacts institutions especially through ideologies, or group beliefs, especially dominant ideologies that shut down others in a cycle of institutional, interpersonal, internalized, and societal oppression. Put this way, it seems difficult to escape the influence of societies on schooling. Is there a way that schools can intervene? ISAs perpetuate, for example, the misrecognition and dehumanization of American Indians by various means that led to the creation of boarding schools in order to alter their cultural institutions, family, etc, as will be discussed more later. But such negative associations sought to justify the inequities that limited the type of schooling the American Indian boarding students would receive. Thus schools, as an ISA, embrace societal ideologies and continue to perpetuate what is already accepted about groups: their misrecognition and dehumanization. For American Indians, their misrecognition and dehumanization, expressed for example through the U.S. government believing American Indians to be "backwards and savage," prevented the youth from obtaining any education besides that which would prepare them for industrial schooling and jobs in the service sector. The belief of inferiority of a group is then used to justify why such groups should not have access to higher quality of education: society deems that it should be invested in those who can actually understand "complex" thinking (Feinberg and Soltis, 1985, p. 94). An additional impact is that when people of color are devalued in society, students of color experience the perpetuation of the devaluation in schooling, which affects their educational experiences. For example, Darling-Hammond (2010) writes,

> … dozens of studies have found that teachers typically hold more negative attitudes about Black children's personality traits, ability, language, behavior, and potential than they do about White children, and that most Black students have fewer favorable interactions with their teachers than White students (Footnote: Irvine, 1990). Studies have also found that children of color are more likely to be treated differently in the classroom—neither pushed academically nor praised as much as White students—and more often punished for offenses that White students commit without consequence; they are also more likely to be suspended from school than Whites who commit the same infractions. (Footnote: Fine, 1991; Nieto, 1992; Carter & Goodwin, 1994) (Darling-Hammond, p. 65).

Here there is a direct link between societal beliefs, with teacher-student interactions, and student-institution relations: disregard for Black people leads to disconnection with and mistreatment of Black students.

Althusser's identification of ISAs can be viewed through a lens of conflict theory because some would say the role of schools is to perpetuate the functioning of society, while others might argue that that is true but it is done for the "ruling class." For example, in one study, Entman (1990) analyzed a "single week of local news programming in Chicago" and looked at "one hour per day of local news from each of the three network affiliates" (p. 335). He found that "76% of all local TV stories about blacks fell into the categories of crime or politics" (p. 332). The portrayal of blacks and crime were different than whites and crime: "the accused black criminals were usually illustrated by glowering mug shots or by footage of them being led around in handcuffs…none of the accused violent white criminals during the week studied were shown in mug shots or physical custody" (p. 337). This criminalizes blacks and as an ISA, media is a huge source of mainstream news for many. But while this study was from 1990, a study published in 2007 that showed the outcome of such criminalization through the media looked at about 70 responses from White communications students who viewed videos and read news stories about Black Americans and Asian Indians and "hostile prejudicial feelings were more strongly expressed toward African-Americans" (Ramamsubramanian and Oliver, 1990, p. 639). Further, "counter-stereotypical news stories" reported "less prejudicial responses than" those "who read stereotypical news stories"

about Asian Indians, but “counter-stereotypical” news stories “did not bring about any noticeable changes in prejudicial attitudes” about Black Americans (p. 640). Thus ISAs reflect inequities that reflect attitudes, which makes higher quality of education difficult for students of color to access when society embraces such measures of inequities. It is this co-functioning of media as an ISA that helps cultivate a devaluation of Blacks in society, which as discussed by Darling-Hammond’s quotation about the negative attitudes towards Black children is reflected in schools.

Medicine/Health/STEM

Research shows that medical doctors have actual biases against Black and Brown patients (Ventura, Denton, Asack, 2022). One of the issues is doctors and medical workers believing that patients of color have a higher tolerance for pain or don’t need to be prescribed medications as quickly or as much as others and having implicit bias against them (see more about the impacts of "Systemic Racism and Health" in Chapter 3: Africana/African American/Black Studies). Medical racism such as research done on Black patients without their knowledge and consent like in the Tuskegee Experiment and forced sterilization against patients of color (see Chapter 8: Intersectionality, section titled "Eugenicists and Forced Mass Sterilization" for more information) are all examples of bias and racism that does occur against minoritized patients.

Studies and even popular news and technology sources recognize that self-driving cars can be racist. Self-driving cars weren’t created to recognize people of color that are in front of the car and are therefore more likely to hit people of color. Stanford Fellow Dr. Lance Eliot in *Forbes* Magazine (Jan. 4, 2020) discussed that white engineers created and tested the algorithms that recognizes white people as people that the car should be cautious of and avoid hitting. Thus, the predominance of white male engineers created a crisis of diversity where the lack of people of color as engineers that would test these features then create a lack of recognition of people of color whenever the self-driving cars encountered them. Because these tests involved only white engineers, self-driving cars didn’t see people of color as people. This shows not only the importance of diversity in STEM fields but also that people of color need to be included in initiatives that affect us all. It shows that representation in science and tech matters.

In a study of engineering departments in universities, studies overwhelmingly show that programs that have more engineering professors that are Black and Asian women are more likely to have students who are also Black and Asian women. This also shows the importance of diversity and representation amongst faculty in STEM departments.

Figure 7.4.2: "High School Students Discover STEM Careers at College of DuPage 2017 23". (CC By 2.0; COD Newsroom via Flickr)

Studies show that when there is diversity amongst educators, students feel more seen, acknowledged and heard, and experience less discrimination than with white educators (Darling-Hammond, 2020). Studies in elementary schools show how white educators often not only view Black and Latinx students differently but then also treat them differently compared to white students (Darling-Hammond, 2020). For example, white educators may view white students as more intellectually superior to Black students and will therefore view them as more academically capable. This results in white educators giving white students more advantages, assistance, guidance, and accolades. This also results in Black students receiving more punishment and harsher discipline than white students. Studies show in particular that Black and Latinx children are criminalized in schooling. Relatedly, Portillos, Gonzalez, and Peguero (2011) show the criminalization of Latinx students also in terms of immigration status. This trend of preferential treatment is not only with white educators but also with white administrators. Especially in fields like STEM, this type of representation is also important to help show these students that they too can succeed in STEM when they see professors who look like them.

Sidebar: Texas

Texas has been a state that has attempted or completed alterations to their curriculum that aims to revamp efforts that expose racism and critical discussions of race. One example of this is a recent initiative to change any mentioning of slavery to be called “Involuntary relocation.” Recently, Texas passed a bill that largely limits the teaching of recent events, and even teaching about the history of the Alamo as part of a target bill to limit the teaching of critical race theory. These efforts aim to maintain white history as heroic and mask any racist and harmful struggles committed against people of color.

Sidebar: Florida

In July 2022, a law in Florida took into affect to ban the teaching of "racism and privilege" (Sullivan, 2022). This law is called the Individual Freedom Act and used to be called Stop W.O.K.E. Act or Stop Wrongs to our Kids and Employees Act (Sullivan, 2022).

The forced displacement of people of color communities have been largely due to the influx of white professionals into communities that have been traditionally cultural art hubs, affordable housing especially for marginalized populations, and shielded from mass consumerist business due to the prevalence of small business such as mom and pop shops that have been community fixtures for a long time. In these communities, the tech industries and others who cater towards later generations of workers then attract other businesses that cater to these demographics. In gentrified communities goods and services tend to cost more.

Finally, the National Center for Education Statistics show that white female professors made up the highest percentages at lecturer, instructor, and assistant professor rankings. "Fast Facts" from the National Center for Educational Statistics displays a chart that show these rankings (NCES, 2020). White male professors made up the highest percentages at associate professor (40%) and full professor (53%) rankings. Even if you combine the percentage of Black male, female, Hispanic male, female, Asian male, female, American Indian male, female, and 2 or more races, that still doesn’t make up the smallest percentage of any of the white professors.

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7.5: Normalization of Whiteness

Race and Children

Figure 7.5.1: Vintage Children, Little Girl with Doll. (CC BY-NC 2.0; chicks57 via Filckr)

Scholar Robin Bernstein wrote a book on race and childhood where she demonstrates how white children are seen as more **racially innocent** than Black children. This is evident in children's toys and especially dolls where white dolls have had angelic appearances with rosy cheeks, delicate curly blond tendrils, and blue eyes. Bernstein illustrates how this innocence is not just one that displays so-called innocent appearances, but also defines the way that we understand whiteness and blackness especially in this age. This is especially significant because there is often a regard for treating race and racism as "very political" and "inappropriate" for younger ages. The idea of racial innocence as non-political attempts to lay personal blame on people of color for any discrimination or oppression instead and deflects from structural causes. De-politicizing race and feigning a non-connection to innocence reinforces attempts to deny discussing race with children. A common sentiment is the desire to not want to teach children about race because they are perceived as young and impressionable. This misconception actually obscures the fact that children can experience racism at a really young age and as discussed about the doll test below, they can distinguish at an early age as well.

Sidebar: Doll Test

A now historic **doll test** was conducted with white children and Black children in the 1950s. Children were shown dolls that were Black and white and were asked various questions about the dolls. The questions included "what doll was the bad doll?" or "what doll is the pretty doll?" while being shown the Black and white doll. Many times the children associated being bad, inferior, and ugly with the Black doll and being good, beautiful, and smart with the white doll. For many, it can be astonishing to witness the choices being made especially when the skin color of the dolls being seen as negative is often the same skin color as the child.

NPR cites that the majority of mass shootings have been committed by males. Of these, the vast majority have been white males. When these mass shootings committed by white males would occur, many would try to fault mental health and how people who have a history of mental health issues should not have access to firearms. Some point out that faulting mental health of white men deflects from the violence of white male heteropatriarchy. One significant point is that when these men commit mass shootings and they are captured by law enforcement, they are incarcerated. This is a vast departure from the killing of Black people who don't even pose a threat to law enforcement.

In 2022, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of a football coach that led a prayer with his team on the football team. Many on social media called for the separation of church and state and others also pointed out the hypocrisy that allows for Christian prayers, but not of other religions. What does this say about whose religions are valued? What does this mean in terms of race and regligion, of whose religions are valued?

Racialization

Racialization is assigning a racial category to someone especially that has not had a designation before (Omi and Winant, 2014). This typically refers to the way that people were categorized historically such as laws that dictated who can identify as white. In a general sense, racialization is designating a race to someone even if it is a different designation from what they actually identify themselves as or a different designation from what someone else has told them. For example, people might racialize mixed race people differently if they are deemed racially ambiguous. People may also racialize people based on their own contexts. For example, if someone has dark skin and curly hair and they're walking around New York City, one might automatically think the person is Dominican due to the presence of Dominican people in New York City that might have dark skin and curly hair. This means that their context, or the conditions around them, influence how they racialize others. Even when someone or a group is racialized by others, not only does it mean that a lot of times such signification is not accepted by the individual or group, but that such characterization of a racial group is often forced onto minoritized groups.

Since colonization, U.S. nationality has been marked as one who is white. In Ronald Takaki's opening chapter of *A Different Mirror* (2008), he recalls how his midwestern taxi driver sees his Asianness as foreign despite Takaki being born in the U.S. The taxi driver reveled at his remarkable English skills. This is one example of how white is seen as "American." Takaki discusses this phenomenon as a master narrative that says nonwhite is foreign and does not belong. The prevalent belief in this master narrative or **metanarrative** also contributes to promoting the U.S. flag as super patriotic and representing traditional ideals and values that counter multiculturalism and other progress such as within gender, sexuality, and class struggles. When there is a metanarrative that "American" is limited to white, it creates a standard for legislation that uphold rights for those who promote these values.

Sidebar: "Perpetual foreigners"

The idea of Asian Americans as **"perpetual foreigners"** is a common stereotype about Asian Americans. No matter how long Asians have been in the U.S. collectively, many are seen as foreign as if they have just arrived in the United States. This reflects the racist perception that it isn't possible that Asians too can be from the U.S. - either born or living here a long time. Takaki's experience in the taxi shows how "American" is often seen as white and non-white is seen as "other." The perception of "perpetual foreigners" means that Asians are told to "go back to where they came from," especially in the time of the pandemic. The U.S. flag in figure 7.5.2 captures a symbol of the U.S. that is sometimes used to display patriotism and signify who is "American" and sometimes stands to mean the U.S. as white, especially when referring to the founding of this nation and Eurocentric values.

Figure 7.5.2: American Flag. (CC BY 2.0; Mike Mozart via Flickr)

Normalization of whiteness/standardization of whiteness

The **normalization of whiteness** helps to create a standardization of whiteness. As discussed earlier, #oscarssowhite was used to point out how the Academy Awards showcases white actors and actresses way more than nonwhites. The normalization of whiteness helps the standardization of whiteness because when whiteness is normalized, it is held with greater esteem and therefore becomes the "standard" in which all must strive toward.

Before Western dominance through colonization, scholars recognize that the world was on par with one another in societal, technological, and agricultural development. Although different places, various civilizations grew and progressed and even traded

with one another. Great Britain enacted colonization as a way to exert dominance and extract resources as way to have power and exploit others for their benefit. This understanding counters perspective that we “needed” colonization in order to grow as countries in this world. We did not need the domination of Britain to encourage trade and the sharing of ideas as this was already occurring.

Eugenics is the attempt at racism through science. Various mentions of eugenics aim to show a superiority of white/European people compared to nonwhite people based on measurements and other size/appearance indicators that were supposedly related to corresponding ability and quality. Eugenics was especially used as a part of movements or periods when rulers tried to justify war, oppression, inhumane treatment, and more, as a part of hegemonic normalization of white supremacy. Omi and Winant point to how eugenics is one example where the normalization of whiteness through science is an exemplary example of structural/institutional and societal white supremacy. To learn more about how eugenics applied to attempts at controlling reproduction, see Chap 8, section 8.4 on "Eugenicists and Forced Mass Sterilization."

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7.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

The normalization, invisibility, and institutionalization of whiteness have given it an enduring power. While some are quick to name non-whiteness when talking about people (Black man, Asian worker, Chicana girl, etc.) the lack of designation for whiteness goes unmarked (man, worker, girl). The perpetual and devastating history that embraced genocide through settler colonialism, scientific racism and eugenics, and structural oppression has roots in racism that sought to distinguish a white supremacy and still impacts us today. The ongoing inequalities that create long-lasting disparities between whites and non-whites sustains over generations and the forgotten histories surrounding it ensures its continuity. From history to the present day, from understanding how people create race and racial categories and ideas constantly changing, from connecting the institutional to the interpersonal, internal, and cultural, we see the power of whiteness. We see how the power lies in the Eurocentrism that marginalizes nonwhite lives and shapes our understanding of reality.

Key Terms

- **Racial formation:** As defined by Michael Omi and Howard Winant (2014) this is the process in which racial identity is created and experienced. Omi and Winant argue that race is never static - instead racial categories are defined, redefined, transformed, destroyed, and contested throughout society and history. Racial formation is the process by which social, economic, and political forces shape the meaning and importance of racial categories which are also influenced by racial meanings.
- **Racial projects:** Something identified as racial, whether having direct association to a racial group, whether true or not or even something like having a motive to designate something racially. Racial projects are the effort to organize and distribute resources along racial lines. Racial projects can be defined as racist if “it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial signification and identities” (Omi and Winant, 2014, p. 128).
- Scholar, activist, Chicana feminist Elizabeth Martinez explicitly defines **white supremacy** as a system that promotes privilege and power of whiteness for white people through institutional entities
- In the 1990s, Ethnic Studies scholar George Lipsitz coined the term **Possessive Investment in Whiteness**, or PIW. PIW is a way to explain how white people are encouraged to “buy” into whiteness, promote it, maintain it, uplift it, and exclude access from others. Possessive Investment in Whiteness is to embrace the category of whiteness as a community that embraces white skinned hierarchy in order to obtain advantages that go deeper than everyday privilege. These advantages range from creating laws /policies/procedures that benefit white as a privileged class, that maintains generational wealth by excluding non-whites and profiting from structured discrimination
- **Redlining** is the labeling of certain communities predominantly occupied by people of color to be red and as distinct and inferior to white communities. This creates inequitable housing opportunities and maintains wealth for white people by rejecting people of color from obtaining home loans to purchase homes in white communities and also financially devaluing homes in communities of color that make it nearly impossible to accumulate wealth. In home ownership deeds in white communities, there would be explicit directions that prohibited people of color to buy homes in white communities.
- PIW predominantly and most generously enables white people to dismiss race and promote **colorblindedness**. It is in the best interest of whiteness to mask historical oppression as this exposes the wrongdoing that comes from whiteness as superior. Colorblind racism therefore uses the notion of colorblindedness to uphold white supremacy especially through policies and laws that normalize the absence of color which then promotes whiteness as standard instead of inclusion of others.
- **Institutional oppression** is oppression within organizations, societal institutions such as government, health, media, schooling, and more. According to Omi and Winant, institutional oppression is one that is largely seen through laws, policies, and protocols.
- **Interpersonal oppression** is when someone is being oppressed by another person, thus inter + personal.
- **Internalized oppression** is when a person internalizes negative messages, stereotypes, etc. that are associated with some aspect of them.
- **Ideology** is a set of beliefs such as within a group
- **Hegemony** is the dominance of one groups’ beliefs over others. When dominating beliefs are the standard or norm within organizations and institutions, it then establishes power for the dominant group and therefore helps to solidify dominant practices and beliefs within laws and policies that then are applied to everyone.
- **"Culture of power"** in schools that socialize students to perpetuate White middle-class norms.

- Cultivating identity and multiple **epistemologies** in schools, even classrooms, can work to counter the misrecognition and dehumanization of students' identities and cultures. Delgado Bernal (2013) pointedly states, "Although students of color are holders and creators of knowledge, they often feel as if their histories, experiences, cultures, and languages are devalued, misinterpreted, or omitted within formal educational settings" (p. 390). In order to counter this, she says that these aspects must be "recognized and valued in schools" (Delgado Bernal, 2013, p. 403).
- Louis Althusser further identifies an **Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs)** where interrelated institutions together perpetuate the status quo (Feinberg and Soltis, 1985, p. 57). Feinberg and Soltis name these institutions such as "communications, such as newspapers, radio and television; the cultural institutions; the family; political parties and trade unions" and more (Feinberg and Soltis, 1985, p. 57). Feinberg and Soltis cite Althusser's naming of the "function" of ISAs as a way to socialize people and direct their decisions and thus "maintaining the current system of production relations and power" especially "of the ruling class" (Feinberg and Soltis, 1985, p. 57)
- **"Structures of dominance"** agree that society impacts institutions especially through ideologies, or group beliefs, especially dominant ideologies that shut down others in a cycle of institutional, interpersonal, internalized, and societal oppression
- **Racial innocence** is how white children are seen as more **racially innocent** than Black children. This contributes to how people think we should let children be exposed to topics surrounding race and racism. Studies show children are exposed to these things in the world whether or not we talk about it with them.
- A now historic **doll test** was conducted with white children and Black children in the 1950s. Children were shown dolls that were Black and white and were asked various questions about the dolls. The questions included "what doll was the bad doll"? or "what doll is the pretty doll?" while being shown the Black and white doll. Many times the children associated being bad, inferior, and ugly with the Black doll and being good, beautiful, and smart with the white doll.
- **Racialization** is assigning a racial category to someone especially that has not had a designation before (Omi and Winant, 2014)
- **Metanarrative** is a dominant narrative that is often based on stories told about people, and in this case that serve to determine who is an "insider" and who is an "outsider" as an "American" national.
- **"Perpetual foreigners"** is a common stereotype about Asian Americans. No matter how long Asians have been in the U.S. collectively, many are seen as foreign as if they have just arrived in the United States. This reflects the racist perception that is isn't possible that Asians too can be from the U.S. either born or living here a long time.
- The **normalization of whiteness** helps the standardization of whiteness because when whiteness is normalized, it is held with greater esteem and therefore becomes the "standard" in which all must strive to.

Discussion Questions

1. How has whiteness changed over time?
2. Give examples of how whiteness is institutionalized.
3. What is Possessive Investment in Whiteness and what are examples of this in this chapter?
4. How does white supremacy compare/relate to people of color histories and inequalities?

Journal Prompts

1. Re-visit the section on epistemologies or the key term. What epistemologies do you have that you feel are valued? What epistemologies do you have that you feel are not valued? Who values/devalues them? If more of your epistemologies were valued, how do you think that would impact you and/or others? What epistemologies of groups of color, that you know of, are not valued? What do you think would be the impact if their epistemologies were valued?
2. Review some laws and policies in this text. How might they reflect a Possessive Investment in Whiteness? Who benefits from these policies/laws and how? Reflect on how this makes you feel.

Class Activities

The Normalization of Whiteness

(Online or in-person)

Put students into groups. Have them fill out this chart where they identify how whiteness can be invisible or normalized. They may add more categories.

The Normalization of Whiteness Table

Person	Place	Thing
Themselves	Home	Media including music, movies, television, books, commercials
Family	School	Policies/procedures/laws
Friends/peers	Work/extracurriculars/sports	Social media/internet
Workers	Government, hospital/doctor's, stores, restaurants, etc.	Flags, emblems, etc

Identifying Types of Oppression

(online or in-person):

A. For Part A: Put students in groups and have them answer which type of oppression is each scenario and why? Have them discuss what would make each scenario a different type of oppression (i.e. for the interpersonal oppression scenario, what would make that institutional?). Part B. Now have students consider liberation. What would liberation for our communities look like? Have them respond to Figure 2's prompt.

- Oppression Type: A mixed race Black and Asian person feeling like they aren't "Black" enough or "Asian" enough.
- Oppression Type: "...dozens of studies have found that teachers typically hold more negative attitudes about Black children's personality traits, ability, langauge, behavior, and potential than they do about White children, and that most Black students have fewer favorable interactions with their teachers than White students (Footnote: Irvine, 1990)." (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 65)
- Oppression Type: In the 1930s and 40s, Filipinxs were prohibited from renting from certain areas or even go to restaurants that had signs that said "No Filipinos or dogs allowed."

B. Can you think of different types of liberation in your life?

- Institutional
- Interpersonal
- Internalized

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

8: Intersectionality- Centering Women of Color

By Kay Fischer

Learning Objectives

- Analyze the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality in the context of United States institutions;
- Critically evaluate forms of difference and identities impacted by hierarchy and interlocking systems of power as related to race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, religion, national origin, and immigration status;
- Compare and contrast the ways women of color, and queer and trans people of color engage in resisting interlocking systems of power.

8.1: Introduction
8.2: What is Intersectionality?
8.3: Intersectionality and Third World Feminism
8.4: Intersectionality and Reproductive Justice - Part I
8.5: Intersectionality and Reproductive Justice - Part II
8.6: Transformational Liberation through Love
8.7: Summary/Review
8.8: References

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8.1: Introduction

Importance of Intersectionality

The first time I came across the term, "UndocuQueer," I was moved by the work of visual artist, Julio Salgado. Salgado is queer and undocumented and as an artist and activist based out of the Bay Area and Los Angeles, his work represents the diverse narratives of a community that fall along the intersections of immigration status and **LGTBQIA** (Lesbian Gay Transgender Bisexual Queer/Questioning Intersex Asexual/Ally), or **Queer** identity, which represent any sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender. **Intersectionality** is the study of multiple or intersecting social identities that people carry with them. For example, how racial/ethnic identity intersects with gender identity, sexuality, class background, etc. to shape the experiences of women of color. Furthermore, intersectionality examines the intersecting structures of power (such as white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism) that limit, marginalize, or oppress people based on race, class, gender, gender identity, immigration status, national origin, sexual orientation, language, religion, spirituality, ability, tribal citizenship, sovereignty, age, and other notable markers of difference. Such intersecting oppressions might extend to an institutional level, interpersonal level (between individuals) or an internalized level (i.e. believing racist and sexist stereotypes about self-worth).

One of the more forceful works of Salgado's that I have used in my classroom is a poster titled "Illegal Faggots For the Destruction of Borders." The first image you may notice is a shirtless brown-skinned man with sunglasses flipping us off with both hands. He's standing in front of what could be inferred as a fence that's part of the U.S./Mexico border; a desolate desert landscape is beyond the metal fence/border. On the fence is taped a tank top that's labeled *maricón* - a derogatory Spanish term for gay people - a translation for the word "faggot." And then lining the poster on the left is a poem which reads: "When your body is queer and brown/ they will want to build fences around you/ choose a side/ brown or queer/ but borders are not natural to us/ we are both moon and sun/ we are everything in between/ you can not divide land and you can not make me choose/ I am manifestation that all borders will fall."

In a blog interview where you can check out the poster I referenced earlier, Salgado shared that he uses humor to address xenophobia in his art. He was once called "an illegal faggot" and his poster was a response to this comment (Barrón, 2017). With talent and wit, Salgado eviscerated hateful comments and created artwork with an important message about intersectionality, the invalidation of national borders, the falsehood of manifest destiny, colonialism, and landtheft, and of the surveillance and criminalization of the very human act of migration.

This chapter on intersectionality will expand on the origin of this framing, recognizing the legacy of intellectual work produced by Black feminists and women of color feminist writers and activists. It will highlight how women and queer people of color have emerged through the interlocking channels of power and oppression with the audacity to organize for social transformation and envision a future for themselves without sexism, violence, war, or institutional control over our racialized and gendered bodies. First, we'll review the concept of intersectionality and examine earlier works by women of color or Third World feminists. Then the chapter will apply an intersectionality lens on two areas: reproductive justice and self-love.

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8.2: What is Intersectionality?

Embracing Our Whole Selves

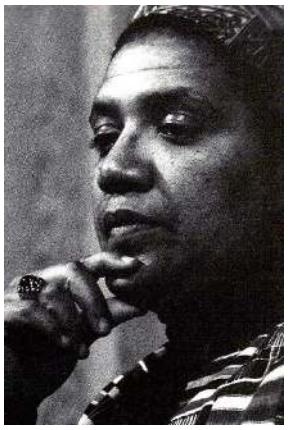

Figure 8.2.1: Feminist and poet, Audre Lorde in 1980. (Licensed under CC BY 2.0; Photo by K. Kendall)

Writer, Audre Lorde (Figure 8.2.1), a self-described "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet," also wrote about intersectionality. In her paper "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Redefining Difference" (1980), Lorde explained how the Western framing of society was limited to understanding human differences in simplistic, hierarchical, and binary oppositions: good/bad, superior/inferior, dominant/subordinate, etc. As someone whose intersectional identities left her "defined as other, deviant, inferior, or just plain wrong," (1998, p. 144) Lorde explains how this practice of othering stems from an idea she calls the **mythical norm**. The mythical norm is the standardization of "white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, christian, and financially secure" people, and anyone who falls outside of this so-called "norm" is othered (p. 116). Lorde explained that she is, "constantly being encouraged to pluck out some one aspect of [her]self and present this as the meaningful whole, eclipsing or denying the other parts of self. But this is a destructive and fragmenting way to live" (p. 120). Intersectionality is a process of identifying and embracing *all* aspects of one's identity, and Lorde emphasizes how this practice allows us to fully see one another's humanity, as there is strength in diversity and difference. As a Black and Queer feminist who's faced marginalization in white feminist spaces, Lorde proclaims her identity, stating: "Now we must recognize differences among women who are our equals, neither inferior nor superior, and devise ways to use each other's difference to enrich our visions and our joint struggles" (p. 122). Meaning, such divisive othering, and old divisions, patterns, or frames are limited and will never lead toward the liberation of oppressed peoples.

If we are to dispense old frames that exclude our experiences, what are new frames we can apply that will center the experiences of UndocuQueer people, Trans refugees, and **women of color**, or cis and trans women who are not racialized as white, including Black, Arab, Asian, Chicana/x, Indigenous, Latina/x, Pacific Islander, and mixed race women, for example? A chapter on intersectionality in this *Introduction to Ethnic Studies* textbook is paramount to addressing questions around liberation and interlocking systems of power as they pertain to race and ethnicity, yes, but also class, gender, *and* sexuality. If we don't apply an intersectionality lens to understanding police violence, for example, we'll miss the fact that Black women are just as impacted as Black men. Without an intersectionality lens, we wouldn't be able to understand the ways in which Julio Salgado and other UndocuQueers experience the intersection of migration and sexuality. Without an intersectionality framing, we wouldn't be able to recognize the way that Audre Lorde, as a Black lesbian feminist, would be marginalized in white middle class feminist spaces for being Black, and Black feminist spaces, for being a lesbian.

The Framing of Intersectionality

Figure 8.2.2: A Say Her Name print to raise funds for the global art sale Printmakers Against Racism fundraiser. (Licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; by Desiree Aspiras)

The term intersectionality is largely recognized as being coined in 1989 by professor of law, Dr. Kimberlé Crenshaw. In Dr. Crenshaw's 2016 TED talk, "The urgency of intersectionality," she conducted an exercise with her audience about people killed by the police. The majority recognized the names of Black men, including Eric Garner, Mike Brown, Tamir Rice and Freddie Gray. But when she began to read aloud the names of African American *women* who were killed by police, including Michelle Cusseaux, Tanisha Anderson, and Meagan Hockaday, most of the audience members didn't know these names. All were African Americans killed by police, and only gender separated the second set of names. Crenshaw points out that Black women have "slipped through our consciousness because there were no frames for us to see them….But it doesn't have to be this way" (Crenshaw, 2016).

Crenshaw introduces the frame that is lacking: intersectionality. She tells the story of Emma DeGraffenreid: an African American woman whose claim of race and gender discrimination against a local car manufacturing plant was dismissed. Seeking better employment for her family, she applied for a job and was not hired, and Ms. DeGraffenreid believed she wasn't hired because she was a Black woman. The argument used by the judge for dismissing her suit was that the employer did hire African Americans and the employer did hire women. What wasn't pointed out was that typically men were hired for industrial positions and only white women were hired for secretarial or front-office work. The courts were unable to recognize a type of double discrimination that Emma DeGraffenreid faced. Instead, they refused to allow Ms. DeGraffenreid to put two causes of action together, as the judge believed that she would have preferential treatment. Crenshaw asked,

> Why wasn't the real unfairness law's refusal to protect African-American women simply because their experiences weren't exactly the same as white women and African-American men? Rather than broadening the frame to include African-American women, the court simply tossed their case completely out of court (Crenshaw, 2016).

Years later Crenshaw developed a frame to help us recognize Ms. DeGraffenreid's challenge, one that would allow judges to see and understand her story. Crenshaw developed the term intersectionality - using an analogy of an intersection: one road representing a workforce structured by race, the other road by gender. Ms. DeGraffenreid, as a Black woman, was positioned where these roads overlapped, simultaneously experiencing gender and racial discrimination. African American women, and other women of color, and other socially marginalized people, face discrimination and challenges as a result of intersectionality: intersections of race and gender, homophobia, transphobia, immigration status, religious bias, and more, to create unique challenges. Intersectionality is a framing to help us raise our consciousness around the ways that oppressive social systems interlock and shape our lives. As Dr. Crenshaw connects back to the issue of Black women killed by police, she explains that intersectionality "expos[es] the tragic circumstances under which African American women die" (Crenshaw, 2016).

In Figure 8.2.3, I illustrate Crenshaw's analogy of an intersection into overlapping lines that represent the intersectionality of structural oppression. One line represents "sexism and patriarchy," which intersects with "racism and white supremacy." Those lines all overlap with other forms of oppression including: nativism, classims/capitalism, ableism, transphobia/cisheteropatriarchy, and homophobia/heteropatriarchy. In Figure 8.2.4, I created another graphic to represent intersecting social identities. One line representing our gender or gender identity, another our racial/ethnic identity. These overlap with citizenship/nationality, socioeconomic class, physical or mental ability, and sexuality.

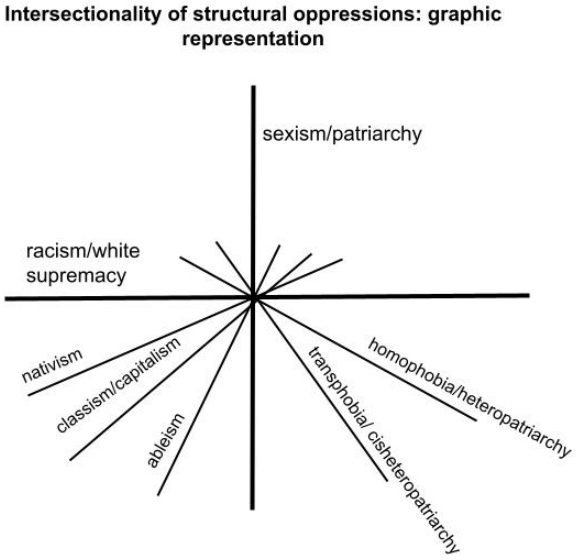

Figure 8.2.3: Intersectionality of Structural Oppressions: Graphic Representation. (Licensed under CC BY 4.0; by Kay Fischer)

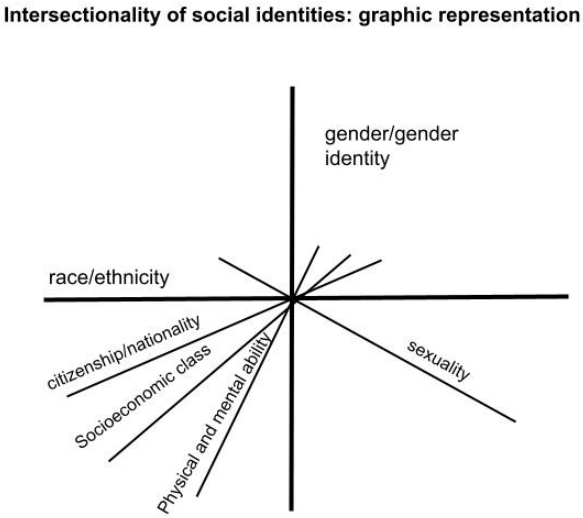

Figure 8.2.4: Intersectionality of Social Identities: Graphic Representation. (Licensed under CC BY 4.0; by Kay Fischer)

On the point of police violence, one of the co-founders of #BlackLivesMatter, Alicia Garza, wrote in a contribution to *The Feminist Wire* titled "A Herstory of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement":

> Black Lives Matter is a unique contribution that goes beyond extrajudicial killings of Black people by police and vigilantes….Black Lives Matter affirms the lives of Black queer and trans folks, disabled folks, Black-undocumented folks, folks with records, women and all Black lives along the gender spectrum. It centers those that have been marginalized within Black liberation movements. It is a tactic to (re)build the Black liberation movement (Garza, 2014).

Garza calls attention to the ways in which state-sanctioned violence is uniquely burdened by Black women, poor Black people, incarcerated Black people, Queer and Trans Black people, undocumented Black people, and Black people with disabilities. This is another important call for applying the intersectional framing, especially as #BlackLivesMatter has turned into one of the largest global movements for social change of our time.

Women and Trans Women of Color of 1960s - 80s Liberation Movements:

Although Crenshaw is credited with coming up with the term intersectionality, it's important to recognize the long legacy of intellectual work produced by women of color who identified this concept decades earlier before the term was coined and popularly applied. According to Sociologists Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge who wrote a book on intersectionality, women of color who participated in social movements of the 1960s to '80s met "the challenges of colonialism, racism, sexism, militarism, and capitalist exploitation" (2016, p. 64) and because they were impacted by more than one of these systems of power, they applied foundational concepts of intersectionality in their work.

The movements of the '60s and '70s embraced a racial consciousness, rejecting generations of Eurocentric and colonial ideas of white supremacy and racial hierarchy. While rooted in nationalist framing, these culturally and racially based organizations also began to build coalitions and solidarity with other groups, addressing methods of dismantling the status quo and advocating for basic access to power for disenfranchised communities. While women of color were leaders and members of these movements, sexism, heterosexism, and male chauvinism prevailed and women and LGBTQ members faced abuse and marginalization. Divisions were also prevalent in the women's movement and gay liberation movement of the time, especially when led by middle-class white women and cisgender gay white women and men, who reinforced racism or simply ignored the voices of women of color and LGBTQ peple of color. Frustrated by the limitations of male-centric nationalist organizations and white-led women's and gay liberation organizations, Black feminists created their own groups, and published their own ideas around intersectionality and dismantling racism and sexism "using the epithet 'black feminist'" (Collins and Bilge, 2016, p. 65).

Sidebar: Marsha P. Johnson (1945 - 1992) and Sylvia Rivera (1951 - 2002) - Trans Activists

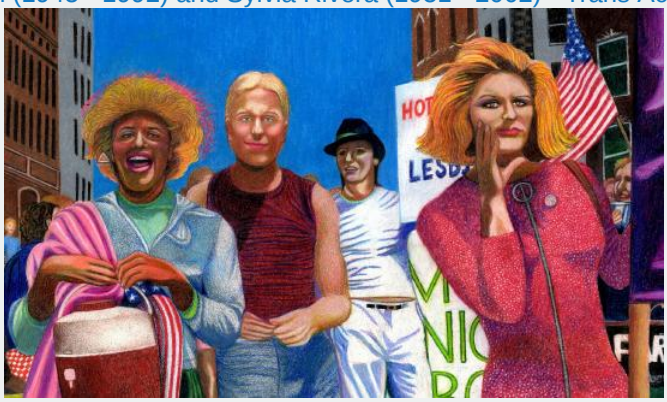

Figure 8.2.5: Marsha P. Johnson, Joseph Ratanski, and Sylvia Rivera march in the 1973 Gay Pride Parade in NYC. (Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0; by Gary LeGault)

Marsha "Pay-it-no-mind" Johnson and Sylvia Rivera were best friends. Although largely uncredited for their activism in the mainstream until fairly recently, both were fearless leaders for gay and trans rights before terminology like "transgender" or LGBTQ existed. They advocated for Queer people, the homeless, poor people, and sex workers. Both participated in the Stonewall Uprising (1969) and Gay Liberation Front. Together, they founded STAR - Street Transvestite (later Transgender) Action Revolutions. STAR provided shelter for homeless LGBTQ youth of color, many of whom got into sex work in order to survive.

Marsha was from New Jersey and Sylvia was born in the Bronx, New York. As trans women of color (Marsha was Black, Sylvia was Puerto Rican and Venezuelan) they faced discrimination from white middle-class gay communities. Marsha was well known on Christopher Street in New York for her colorful and flamboyant outfits, typically including flowers and fruits on her head. She was unabashedly herself and famous for her generosity, standing up for the most vulnerable of our society and serving as a drag mother. Sylvia was often bullied for her interest in feminine makeup and fashion, leaving her home at only 10 years old. She expressed her gender identity in multiple ways including effeminate boy/male, "half-sister," transvestite, drag queen, street queen, and transgender (Aue, 2019, pp. 74-76; Morris and Keller, 2021, pp. 742 - 744).

As sex workers who didn't conform to gender binaries, and often homeless, both Marsha and Sylvia faced violence and harassment from clients, police, and bystanders and were arrested multiple times. They also struggled with mental illness and substance abuse. Marsha later became an AIDS activist, sharing that she was HIV positive in an interview in 1992. Marsha's body was found floating in the Hudson River that same year. The police ruled it a suicide, but many of her friends suspected that Marsha was murdered (Aue, 2019, pp. 74-76; Pierceson, 2020, pp. 227-228). Sylvia died at the age 51 due to kidney cancer (Morris and Keller, 2021, pp. 742 - 744).

Both Marsha and Sylvia demanded the inclusion of trans people and gender identity in the mainstream gay liberation movement. At the 1973 Pride March, they were told to march in the back with all drag queens, so that gays who were "more palatable" could be presented prominently, but they refused to be shut out of a movement they fought for and marched ahead anyway. Sylvia was heckled while speaking on a stage at Washington Square Park, calling out white middle class marchers for their discrimination of trans people of color, who frequently were jailed and beaten, yet never acknowledged. In her now widely recognized speech, named Sylvia's "Y'all Better Quiet Down" speech, she testifies to the violence she's faced and yells, "I believe in gay power, I believe in us getting our rights, or else I would not be out there fighting for our rights" (LoveTapesCollective, 2019). She invites marchers to visit the STAR office, where people are "trying to do something for all of us, and not men and women that belong to a white middle-class club—and that's what you all belong to! REVOLUTION NOW! GAY POWER!" (Morris and Keller, 2021, pp. 742 - 744; Keller and Morris, 2021, pp. 466-467; LoveTapesCollective, 2019).

Collins and Bilge wrote:

> African American women understood that addressing the oppression they faced could not be solved by race-only, or class-only or gender-only or sexuality-only frameworks. Thus early statements of intersectionality permeated black feminist intellectual production because other women of colour developed similar sensibilities and because the social context of social movement activism provided venues for working on these ideas (Collins 2000) (2016, pp. 65-66).

One such important piece of document that articulated this political and intellectual perspective was the Combahee River Collective (CRC)'s "A Black Feminist Statement" (1977). This collective of black feminists lesbians were deeply entrenched in racial justice and gender justice movements. Collins and Bilge point out that earlier texts had been written about the concept of intersectionality, such as the 1970 volume *The Black Woman* edited by Toni Cade Bambara, Frances Beal's essay, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female" (1969), and abolitionist and feminist, Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" speech (1840) which is noted as "a benchmark for intersectional sensibilities" (2016, p. 68). However, these contributions are often overlooked, as the writers didn't have as large an audience as the CRC, nor the context of social movement organizing. By the time CRC developed, there was a larger network of black feminist activism which helped propel the CRC's statement to a wider audience.

The statement starts out by affirming the collective's commitment "to struggle against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression" which they named as interlocking systems of oppression (Smith, 2000, p. 264). They recognized the long trajectory of Black women resistance, and although not all would identify as feminists, the CRC pointed out how daily interactions with oppressive forces led Black women to develop a political ideology rooted in antiracism and antisexism (p. 265).

Embracing self-love and self-value, the CRC saw the importance of identity politics and that only Black women could liberate themselves. They rejected Queenhood and simply asked to be seen as full human beings. They explicitly named the framing of intersectionality, writing, "We also find it difficult to separate race from class from sex oppression because in our lives, they are most often experienced simultaneously" (Smith, 2000, p. 267). They connected intersecting identities with interlocking systems of power, stating, "...the liberation of all oppressed peoples necessitates the destruction of the political-economic systems of capitalism and imperialism as well as patriarchy" (pp. 267-268).

In addition to highlighting their political philosophies, the CRC statement chiefly pointed out the challenges faced by Black lesbian feminist intellectuals and activists, such as meeting multiple forms of oppression at once (racism, sexism, heterosexism, and classism), leading to psychological stresses and feelings of isolation, but also less material access to political power and resources. Still, they maintained the power of this positionality, writing, "We might use our position at the bottom, however, to make a clear leap into revolutionary action. If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression" (p. 270). See also "Black Feminism" under Chapter 3.

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8.3: Intersectionality and Third World Feminism

Centering Women of Color

Once we understand the relevance of an intersectionality framing, we need to also understand why the term feminism or the mainstream women's movement alone might be insufficient when addressing specific challenges and oppressions experienced by women of color. Author and Creative Writing Professor, Susan Muaddi Darraj described the challenges she faced when confronted with "a brand of white feminism" that she felt didn't represent her experiences as an Arab American. Upon learning about Betty Friedan's work, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) in graduate school, Muaddi Darraj felt that the woes of the housewife spoke to a specific race and class privilege of white middle class women that didn't represent her experiences. The assumption around the **heteropatriarchal** nuclear family model where the husband in the heterosexual marriage financially supported the household contrasted deeply with her own family, where her mother assumed housekeeping duties in addition to working full-time for their family business (2019, p. 286).

She further elaborated that she disliked how "this version of feminism" viewed women like her as veiled oppressed women from the Middle East, an "orientalist cliché," who needed rescuing by the supposed "assertive, liberated" western women. Pointing out the hypocrisy in such notions, Muaddi Darraj stated, "They wanted to save them from the burden of their families and religion but not from the war, hunger, unemployment, political persecution, and oppression that marked their daily lives and that left them with only their families and religion as sole sources of comfort" (2019, pp. 287 - 288). She added that Arab women were simultaneously exotified and "othered," being asked if she knew how to belly dance and often mistaken as Muslim, even though she is Christian (p. 293).

Figure 8.3.1: Algerian revolutionary, Djamila Bouhired. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Hijazilanai via Wikimedia Commons)

So, Muaddi Darraj went in search for *her* feminism, pointing out that Arab culture was "a jungle of patriarchal pitfalls," but also how she felt that her culture never stood in her way. In fact she found feminism in her culture, as evidenced by the stories her father told her about Djamila Bouhired (Figure 8.3.1), an Algerian revolutionary who resisted French colonialism. This was a common story he heard growing up in Palestine. She learned about Muslim women who saw no contradictions between feminism and Islam, such as the Muslim Sisters (Ikhwat al-musilmat) in the West Bank who believe that Islam gave women their full rights, but that the religion was corrupted by men to suit their patriarchal agenda (2019, p. 294).

Inspired by the works of Black feminists and other women of color feminists who "had the courage to carve a feminism of their own out of the monolithic block that was generally accepted as 'feminism'" (p. 295), Muaddi Darraj began developing her own feminist voice, reflecting that "It required no great sacrifice of my Arab heritage, no shame at my close ties to my family, and no compromise of my own needs" (p. 299).

Third World Feminism

Feeling alienated by mainstream, white, or western feminism seems to be a common experience for many women of color. They often don't see themselves reflected in the people who purport to represent all women, but instead often erase or ignore most who don't fit their narratives. This was even experienced by a Latina professor of Women's Studies and Chicano/Latino Studies at CSU Long Beach, Dr. Maythee Rojas. In the prologue of her book, *Women of Color and Feminism* (2009), Rojas states how the project of feminism is to center women's stories, but "often the generic 'women' has meant white women" (p. ix) and so it's not surprising that many women of color don't gravitate toward feminism. Rojas even admits that she has a hard time identifying herself as a feminist at times, since "as a Latina from a working-class background whose family and friends are still largely removed from the academic world, I often feel the tension that the word raises when it is brought up" (p. ix).

This is perhaps why in addition to understanding intersectionality, we need to be familiar with **Third World Feminism**. According to author and Professor Emeritus of History, Dominican University, Cheryl Johnson-Odim, there is an added element of racism and imperialism in addition to gender and class oppression, that needs to be applied when understanding struggles by Third World women. "The term *Third World* is frequently applied in two ways: to refer to 'underdeveloped'/overexploited geopolitical entities, i.e., countries, regions, and even continents; and to refer to oppressed nationalities from these world areas who are now resident in 'developed' First World countries" (1991, p. 314). Both groups of Third World women feel marginalized under this "feminist terrain as an almost singularly antisexist struggle" while ignoring how sexism overlaps with oppressions tied to class, race, and empire (p. 315).

Figure 8.3.2: Author, novelist, poet, and activist, Alice Walker in 2012. In 1983, she became the first African American woman to win the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction for her novel, *The Color Purple*. (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; The American Library Association via Flickr)

Johnson-Odim noted how such narrow definitions of feminism have led to some women of color electing to use a term other than feminist. For example, African American author, Alice Walker (Figure 8.3.2) preferred using the phrase **womanist** to describe "a Black feminist or feminist of color" (1991, p. 315) whose priorities laid with the entire community, both male and female. Such a term stressed the sentiment amongst Third World women that their feminist struggles were not separate from the struggles against racism and economic exploitation that their communities shared (p. 315). See also "Sidebar: Black Womanism" in Chapter 3.

The 1970s was a time when international feminist movements began to take shape, as women in Asian, Africa, and Latin America were emerging against colonialism and women of color in the United States were coming out of the civil rights movement. This was a time of applying social justice solutions to addressing racism, classism and imperialism, along with sexism. While many women who emerged from the civil rights movement were involved in antiracism, this didn't prevent them from experiencing racism within the women's movement in the U.S., nor was there much emphasis on the role of racism in the oppression of all women.

Third World women in the west often ended up organizing separately from white women due to the racism they experienced. Gloria Joseph, who organized with Black women across the African Diaspora, pointed out how "black women have as much in

common, in terms of their oppression, with black men as they do with white women" (Johnson-Odim, 1991, p. 318). There was a particular way that Black women were constructed in the slaveocracy that justified the violent oppression they experienced, and such ideas are still around today. And despite the slave system resulting in work by poor whites "nearly superfluous except to help police the black labor force," instead of working to end slavery, poor whites aligned themselves to the white masters and desired opportunities for themselves to benefit off slavery. Johnson-Odim argued that some Black American women suspected the same with the white women's movement, translating women's interest to "the desire of a few white women to enter the corporate boardroom" (p. 319). This would only result in benefiting only a select few, and mostly women with access to race and class privilege.

Johnson-Odim further points out how a feminist movement that soley focuses on the advancement of the most privileged class of women will never dismantle larger systems that continually rely on the exploitation of nations and people with less power. She writes how focusing only on "women's rights" will never result in larger changes. If women from western societies accomplish some sense of equality with men through legal and moral changes in patriarchal systems without simultaneous challenges to racist and classist systems, this will ultimately undermine the success of a movement for *all* women. Also important to add that any "economic surplus in the West is often directly related to oppression in the Third World" (1991, p. 320).

As First World women advance toward equality in the workplace or labor in the home, the "second shift" of housework are not picked up by men. Instead, they become dependent on labor from Black women, Indigenous women, women of color, and immigrant women largely from developing nations, who often are separated from their own families, paid poorly and work in highly exploitative and vulnerable positions. Filomina Clarice Steady, Professor Emerita of Africana Studies from Wellesley College wrote in 1985 that such a type of feminism will only help women "be seen as partners in oppression and as having the potential of becoming primary oppressors themselves" (Johnson-Odim, 1991, p. 321). Alternatively, Steady calls for an intersectional approach to not only dismantling sexism, but also larger systems of economic and political inequality that lend to a relationship of economic dependency and internal colonialism in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, and economically impoverished areas of the United States.

Additionally, paternalistic attitudes of western feminism often mistakenly portray women of the Third World as oppressed by "an indigenous patriarchy," and act as though egalitarian relationships between men and women were brought over from western societies. Muaddi Darraj's essay addressed this very hypocrisy when discussing how white women would see all Arab women as oppressed by Islam or Arabic culture. In fact, it could be argued that the opposite is true, as severe patriarchal values were often imposed on many cultures along with European colonialism. Ultimately, the point is that aspects outside of gender play a major role in the oppression of Third World women and that struggles remain "exacerbated by Western patriarchy, racism, and exploitation" (Johnson-Odim, 1991, p. 321).

Many Third World Feminist call for a movement that works to dismantle systems that oppress all women, including racism, sexism, classism, and imperialism. Johnson-Odim calls for First World women to confront racism in their own communities and struggle against the complicity of the First World in oppressing Third World women. While all women might share experiences of sexism, that doesn't mean that a more privileged group of women can't oppress other women. Third World feminism requires a decentering of the "colonial lens" and calls for a broad base of feminists to recognize the importance of respecting different cultures and "agree that women in various places are perfectly capable of having their own voice" (1991, p. 325).

Chicana Feminism and *Mestiza* Consciousness

Chicana feminist consciousness has also brought forward the role of Chicanas in organized resistance and crafting "spaces of liberation." Chicanas were on the frontlines of the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and '70s, creating their own "Chicana praxis of resistance," organizing within the margins, challenging the intersections of sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, and colonialism (Espinoza, Cotera, Blackwell, 2018, p. 1). Take for example, critical feminist thinkers like Yolanda Broyles-González who challenged the minimization of women's role in Teatro Campesino (p. 8). Or the work of Chela Sandoval, Professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies, UC Santa Barbara, who "articulated a flexible oppositional consciousness" from which women of color negotiated their identities as they worked "within and between multiple movements to combat oppression" (p. 15).

Chicana feminist writings are grounded in intersectionality, the editors of *Chicana Feminisms* writing, "Our guiding metaphor for Chicana feminist writing expands on Anzaldúa's notion of Chicanas' bodies as bocacalles. Literally, bocacalle translates as an intersection where two streets cross one another" (Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn, Nájera-Ramírez, and Zavella, 2003, p. 2). But the editors further explain that bocacalle also translates to "mouth/street," thereby eliciting a picture of women shouting in the streets, demanding to be heard. Chicana feminists have asserted their analysis of power dynamics in relation to their locations, based on

diverse class, racial, sexual, linguistic, and nationality backgrounds. Still, there are common structural locations that women of Mexican origin share in the United States, including being predominantly working class, disproportionately poor, and a majority not experiencing social or economic mobility despite being in the U.S. for several generations. Chicanas are targets of racist schools, concentrated in segregated job markets such as in agriculture or garment manufacturing, and facing exploitative work dynamics including low pay and poor conditions (p. 3).

A Chicana feminist point of view is also "rooted in Mexican history," located at the intersection of colonialism, violence, discrimination, and racial and class hierarchies, "against the backdrop of Catholicism and language repression, especially toward indigenous peoples (Castañeda 1993; González 1999)" (Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn, Nájera-Ramírez, and Zavella, 2003, p. 4). Furthermore, Mexicanas and Chicanas are impacted by 20th and 21st century neoliberal practices of free trade and the politics of globalization with the passage of GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), opening up trade restrictions that lead to major displacement and migration (p. 4). They point out how overlapping histories of Mexico and the United States lead to Chicanas having a transnational point of view, recognizing the border as a "site of convergence, conflict, and creativity" (pp. 4-5).

Figure 8.3.3: Chicana feminist, Gloria Anzaldúa (1990). (Licensed under CC BY 2.0; Photo by K. Kendall)

Chicana feminists offer various theoretical insights, marking a "consciousness of resistance to the repression of language and culture, a recognition of a 'third space' located within intersecting structures of power in which women construct claims to human agency," such as Gloria Anzaldúa's (Figure 8.3.3) *mestizaje* and "borderlands" (Arredondo, Hurtado, Klahn, Nájera-Ramírez, and Zavella, 2003, p. 5). In Anzaldúa's canonical work, *Borderlands: La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987; 1999), she locates the mestiza in a hybrid identity of indigenous, Spanish, and African ancestry, giving voice to people who live between worlds and are in "perpetual transition," writing, "To live in the Borderlands means you...

> are neither *hispana india negra española*
>
> *ni gabacha, eres mestiza, mulata*, half-breed
>
> caught in the crossfire between camps
>
> while carrying all five races on your back
>
> not knowing which side to turn to, run from (p. 216).

Anzaldúa also writes,

> the world is not a safe place to live in….Alienated from her mother culture, "alien" in the dominant culture, the woman of color does not feel safe within the inner life of her Self….caught between *los intersticios*, the spaces between the different worlds she inhabits….My Chicana identity is grounded in the Indian woman's history of resistance….Like *La Llorona*, the Indian woman's only means of protest was wailing (pp. 42 - 43).

Anzaldúa and other Chicana feminists have called forward an erased history, that of *Malinali Tenepat*, or *Malintzin*, or *La Malinche*, or *Dona Marina*, transforming her from "traitor to heroine." Sold into slavery as a child, then given to Spanish conquistador, Hernán Cortés, Malintzin is portrayed as a powerful woman who worked on behalf of various Indigenous tribes other than the Aztecs, a "mediator between languages, races, and cultures" (*Exploring borderlands*, 2003). Chicana feminists questioned who she's actually betrayed, as she was enslaved and sold off as a child. Maria Herrera Sobek, Chicana/o Studies, UC Santa Barbara, stated, "In redefining *La Malinche*, the Chicanas are redefining themselves also, and redefining themselves in their own

terms to put the record straight" (*Exploring borderlands*, 2003, 21:58 - 22:49). Anzaldúa calls out the patriarchal interpretation of *La Malinche*, the word, *La Chingada*, meaning the fucked one, stating, "She has become the bad word that passes a dozen times a day from the lips of Chicanos. Whore, prostitute, the woman who sold out her people to the Spaniards are epithets Chicanos spit out with contempt" (1987; 1999, p. 44). Anzaldúa argues that the bigger betrayal is in "making us believe that the Indian woman in us is the betrayer" (p. 44).

In the chapter, "La conciencia de la mestiza/Towards a New Consciousness," Anzaldúa (1987; 1999) challenges the constructions of borders and difference, uncovering a power of being in between. The New *Mestiza* consciousness is one that recognizes the fluidity of culture and position, claiming, "Rigidity means death. Only by remaining flexible is she able to stretch the psyche horizontally and vertically" (p. 101). She embraces "a tolerance for contradictions," as the *mestiza* consciousness establishes a new way of thinking in this world, a way toward a future that dismantles old and harmful archetypes rooted in patriarchy, colonialism, and white supremacy, continuing, "A Massive uprooting of dualistic thinking…the beginning of a long struggle, but one that could, in our best hopes, bring us to the end of rape, of violence, of war" (p. 102).

She proclaims the importance of *mestizas* to support one another in order to challenge patriarchy, emphasizing

> As long as woman is put down, the Indian and the Black in all of us is put down. The struggle of the *mestiza* is above all a feminist one. As long as *los hombres* think they have ot *chingar mujeres* and each other to be men, as long as men are taught that they are superior and therefore culturally favored over *la mujer*…there can be no real healing of our psyches" (Anzaldúa, 1987; 1999, p. 106).

Anzaldúa (1987; 1999) also specifies that "The *mestizo* and the queer exist at this time and point on the evolutionary continuum for a purpose," as Queer people of color have often had to have more knowledge of other cultures, have experienced more injustices, "survived them despite all odds," and have always been at the front and center of "all liberation struggles." She writes, "People, listen to what your *jotería* is saying" (p. 107). Anzaldúa connects this new consciousness back to the land, writing that Chicanas and Chicanos have always tended to the land, and that…

This land was Mexican once

was Indian always

and is,

And will be again (p. 113).

See also "Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x/e Feminism" under Chapter 6.

Pinayism

Ethnic Studies and Asian American Studies (San Francisco State) professor, Dr. Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales defines a very specific application of intersectionality in what she's named **pinaysism**: "a radical pinay sisterhood that connects the global, local, and personal stories of Pinay struggle, survival, service, sisterhood, and strength to mentally, physically, politically, and spiritually uplift ourselves" (1995). She clarifies that *pinayism* is not simply a "Filipino version of feminism or womanism" but that it instead draws from various philosophies and examines the complexity of where race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality intersect (2005, pp. 139 - 141). First, of the use of the term "Pinay," Tintiangco-Cubales cites the late Historian of Filipinx American history (San Francisco State), Dr. Dawn Mabalon, who identified the use of the terms Pinay and Pinoy of the 1920s and '30s as an identity localized in the United States (p. 140). However, Pinayism also tries to insert "a forum to make connections to the issues of Filipinas and Filipinos in diaspora" recognizing how the issues impacting Pinays are borderless. Tintiangco-Cubales explains that "Pinays who live in the United States are affected by the situations of Pinays in the Philippines, Australia, Canada, Kuwait, Japan, and around the world" (p. 140 - 142).

Another important aspect of pinayism is that it's an "impetus for change." Tintiangco-Cubales writes:

> Rejecting white feminism, where women fight with men for equality, Pinayists must take steps to include Pinoys in the fight against sexism by making connections to issues such as classism and neocolonialism….neocolonialism is a system that maintains unequal relations of power on economic, political, and ideological levels in a postcolonial period. Profound relationships exist among sexism, classism, and neocolonialism (2005, p. 142).

On that note, Tintiangco-Cubales and Professor of Asian American Studies, CSU East Bay, Dr. Jocyl Sacramento co-write an article titled "Practicing Pinayist Pedagogy," where they explain how after fourteen years, "Pinayism has become a praxis asserting a transformative and transgressive agency that combines theory, practice, and personal reflection" (Tintiangco-Cubales and

Sacramento, 2009, p. 179). As a praxis, which builds on Paulo Friere's idea of students becoming agents of social change themselves, a methodology of applying theory to practice, pinayism is about action. Specifically, a pinayist praxis is the process and production of addressing issues related to Pinay struggles, service and sisterhood and a method of implementing change through "decolonization, humanization, self-determination, and relationship building, ultimately moving toward liberation" (pp. 179 - 180). At the core of this praxis is Pinayist studies, which offers counternarratives on Filipina women's stories, histories and contemporary experiences.

Next, participants uncover specific challenges (personal or community-based), and pursue a plan of action around resisting oppression and making a commitment to social justice. For example, Tintiangco-Cubales discussed when a young participant shared that her aunt was a mail-ordered bride and asked what she should do. She shared her story with Tintiangco-Cubales who could only suggest that she talk to her family about it and gave her names of supportive organizations. She learned later that this particular Pinay became an activist for women's rights, last seeing her at a protest in front of the Philippine Consulate, urging the government to stop the trafficking of women and children. Tintiangco-Cubales wrote that, "She humanized Pinayism for me. She also gave me hope" (Tintiangco-Cubales and Sacramento, 2009, p. 182).

In practice, pinayism offers both the teacher and the student a type of "mutual humanization" as that relationship is reciprocal and not hierarchical. The space turns into a place of "transformational resistance" and liberation for Pinays and Pinayists, ultimately cultivating a powerful healing space for all (Tintiangco-Cubales and Sacramento, 2009, pp. 180-181). Rooted in the context of the history of feminism, womanism, and third world/women of color studies, Pinayism also creates a space for hope, as it's not about male-bashing, and all genders are encouraged to participate. The transformative moment happens when the Pinayist educator's classroom turns into a space for hope and a place to call home (p. 185).

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8.4: Intersectionality and Reproductive Justice - Part I

History of Reproductive Justice

On June 24, 2022 the United States Supreme Court ruled 6 to 3 to overturn Roe v. Wade, ending fifty years of the right to access safe and legal abortion. However, for poor women and women of color (and all reproducing persons of any gender background), access to safe abortions has been a challenge even before this Supreme Court ruling. Furthermore, the issue of only legality, as abortion rights have been framed in white feminist movements, was too narrow for women of color who have historically faced and continue to meet the interlocking systems of power that attempt to take away agency over their own bodies.

Instead, the **reproductive justice movement**, led by women of color, applies an intersectional lens and expands the concerns beyond the limited framing of pro-choice v. pro-life. The intersectionality framing offers a broader understanding of restrictions placed on reproductive actions, examining the ways oppressions related to race, gender, class, and sexuality operate simultaneously. And therefore, “solutions require a holistic approach” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 75). According to reproductive justice movement leader, Loretta Ross, who outlined the following in her book with Rickie Solinger, *Reproductive Justice: An Introduction* (2017), reproductive justice has three primary values:

- the right *not* to have a child
- the right to *have* a child
- and the right to *parent* children in safe and healthy environments

The authors write, "In addition, reproductive justice demands sexual autonomy and gender freedom for every human being. The problem is not defining reproductive justice *but achieving it"* (p. 65).

In the following two sections, we’ll examine the history of reproductive control and impacts of oppressive policies and practices that particularly target women of color. First, we should understand that options available to fertile people have always been limited by resources they have access to or don’t. Secondly, we’ll examine the specific ways that the goals of white nationhood and expansion have informed the reproductive and parenting experiences of communities of color. Reproductive injustices include rape, forced sterilization, inaccessibility to contraception, including abortion, separation of children from their parents, loss of pregnancies due to genocidal wars, forced removals and marches, antimiscegenation laws and exclusionary immigration policies that prevented the formation of a second generation of immigrants from Asia, and more. Such barriers placed in the past continue to impact many communities today (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 13-14). Lastly, a reproductive justice framing also highlights instances of resistance and responses to such policies and practices led by women of color. This includes organizing to end racially based sterilization programs, access to full reproductive healthcare, and objecting welfare policies that punish poor women for “illegitimate” motherhood.

Reproductive Control and Resistance in Early U.S. History

Let’s begin in the colonial period. European settler-colonist elites from this era were primarily concerned with defining the members of this new nation: who did they want to be considered “American” and who did they want to exclude. Population growth became “...crucial for establishing, developing, and enlarging, and defending their land claims, their accumulation of wealth, and their political control of the settled territories” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 18). Coinciding with this colonial project was the mass removal of Native American populations which interfered with European expansion, as well as increased numbers of enslaved labor by Africans, which was necessary to achieve a rapid accumulation of wealth. The strategy was to control the population growth of African Americans and expunge the population of Native communities, a dual sided approach with a goal of population control, a method of limiting the population numbers of a specific group. In the context of a white supremacist nation, population control was also “a crucial aspect of establishing ‘the legal meanings of racial difference’” (p.18).

A 1662 Virginia Colony law overturned an English common law that defined the status of children according to the father. This allowed the children of enslaved mothers to be automatically enslaved, thereby guaranteeing the continuation of a slavocracy. Enslaved women’s fertility now became “essential, exploitable, colonial resource” and it wasn’t important if her pregnancy resulted from rape or love, “engrossing the holdings of her owner” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 18-19). Another law passed in 1692 outlawing interracial unions, labeling all mixed race children as “illegitimate” and subjecting them into bonded labor. Such laws required the “complete subordination of enslaved women,” stripping away any sexual, relational, and maternal rights, practically legalizing the rape and abuse of enslaved women by white slave masters. These practices set in place the “...absence of reproductive dignity and safety,” making them “key to definitions and mechanisms of degradation, enslavement, and white supremacy” (p. 19).

Enslaved women would often lose their pregnancies, sometimes “right in the fields,” due to being overworked. They also suffered high infant mortality rates, miscarriages, and stillbirths. Even after giving birth to a newborn, mothers were often unable to produce sufficient breast milk due to inadequate diets, weaning their babies early, thereby resulting in more frequent pregnancies at shorter intervals (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 20). Still, women found ways share information on how to control fertility, including effective herbal contraceptives and midwives among them who operated abortions in secret. There were also instances of women killing their newborns in order to resist producing a new slave for the master and “consign a potential child to a life of enslavement” (p. 21). Although painful to read, Ross and Solinger (2017) remind us that, “Each of these acts continued a woman’s claim of full personhood - her linkage of her reproductive life to human freedom” (pp. 20-21).

While invested in the reproduction of enslaved women in order to produce more free laborers, the U.S. did not want that for Native American populations, seeing it in their best interest to terminate the growth of such peoples. The government’s objective was genocidal, which Ross and Solinger (2017) note was “the ultimate population control policy” (p. 22). Christian missionaries also played a significant role, trying to "correct" mothers with European birthing and child-rearing practices. Missionaries directed authority away from women as many tribes were egalitarian or matrilineal and, for example, among the Cherokee, women held political and economic authority (p. 21). The mass removals of Indigenous communities from their homes further west also resulted in the abusive conditions that threatened the wellbeing of pregnant women. Forced to march for days in the cold, with hardly any food or appropriate clothing, many women and their babies died. They were also prevented from practicing any Indigenous rituals associated with health; in fact, one missionary reported that the “‘Troops frequently forced women in labor to continue [marching] until they collapsed and delivered’ surrounded by soldiers” (p. 22).

In contrast, by the 19th century, laws against contraception and abortions reflected ideologies around the importance of “the white mother’s role in making the white nation and the government’s interest in protecting her fertility.” The white mother was a symbol of white nationhood, “...the nation’s most precious resource” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 23). Before the American Revolution and for the first half of the 19th century, white women actually had access to legal abortions. But beginning in the 1820s, physicians began controlling the “lucrative domains of gynecology and obstetrics” and successfully lobbied to end access to abortion services. By the end of the 19th century, all states had outlawed abortion (p. 24). The federal Comstock Law of 1873 even allowed officials to surveil the mail, checking for contraceptives, putting control of fertility strictly into the hands of white male doctors.

After the Civil War, Black people began migrating out of the South during the first wave of the Great Migration (1910 - 1930). For Black women, it meant “moving away from sexually predatory white men who rarely faced legal sanctions when they attacked women of color” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 27). Migration also translated as an act of protecting their children from daily terrorization by white supremacy, even as they faced a different type of racism and discrimination in these new areas. Still, in urban centers of the north, Black women had improved access to contraception and abortion services.

In the meantime, Native American women were battling coercion from the U.S. government to send their children to boarding schools, where Native children were supposedly raised to become “civilized.” In reality, these schools inflicted cruel measures to suppress tribal languages and cultural practices, a hegemonic project forcing children to assimilate and internalize white-centered American culture (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 27). When parents resisted having their children taken away, the government withheld food rations and called the police. An agent to the Mescalero Apache described how police would raid tribal camps to seize children. He witnessed parents running with their children into the mountains and the police having to chase and capture the children “like so many wild rabbits.” Women lamented out loud, and their children were “almost out their wits with fright” (p. 28).

As Indigenous families faced cruel genocidal practices by the U.S. government, population control policies continued to be carried out in order “to distinguish between the value of women’s reproductive bodies by race, class, and ethnicity” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 28). Immigrants from Europe and Asia continued to meet the labor requirements of an industrialized nation, but immigration and welfare officials instituted policies that prevented the growth of such communities. For Asian immigrants, this meant exclusion laws, the first major one being the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the first major immigration law enacted on large-scale exclusion based on race and class (Lee 2015, p. 90). As a result, Chinese laborers and wives of Chinese laborers were prevented from immigrating to the U.S., dramatically impacting the gender balance of this community. Women only made up 3.6% of the Chinese population in 1880 and 12.6% in 1920. Such gendered restrictions and **antimiscegenation** laws (preventing marriage between Chinese men and white women) practically guaranteed that Chinese men could not procreate in the U.S. As a result, hardly any Chinese babies were granted birthright citizenship during this era (p. 29).

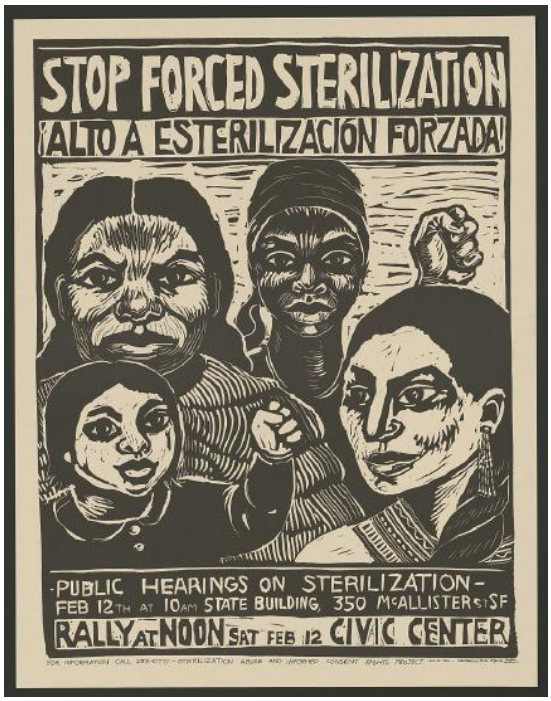

Figure 8.4.1: Stop forced sterilization poster (1977) (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division - No known restrictions on publication; by Rachael Romero, San Francisco Poster Brigade)

By the 20th century, Jim Crow was full blown in the South where neighborhoods, schools, swimming pools, and employment were all racially segregated. Antimiscegenation laws were used to separate the races, “making interracial sex and procreation a crime in many states” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 30). **Eugenics** began to be popular, reinstating much bolder claims of white racial superiority and that it was possible to reproduce “the ‘best examples’ of humanity and eradicate ‘negative expressions' of human life” (p. 30). Genetic inferiority was blamed for larger social issues including criminality, poverty, prostitution, and mental illness, and eugenicists eagerly believed that removing supposedly inferior genes would “foster a superior human race free of these social ills” (Rojas, 2009, p. 98). Groups considered undesirable were nonwhites, the poor, and anybody with psychological, physical, and cognitive disabilities. Politicians began to create laws that criminalized interracial relationships and encouraged the sterilization of “socially inadequate persons,” thereby defining “racial difference and racial hierarchy as primary goals of the government” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 30-31).

The Immigration Act of 1924 or the National Origins Act put nationality caps on immigration meant to “protect the white identity of the United States” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 31). The law included a supposed “scientific” study of the origins of the populations to use as a guide in determining who was allowable or not, completely excluding Asians and their descendants, descendants of “slave immigrants” and “American aborigines”; such restrictions continue to impact the racial and ethnic origins of populations born in the U.S. (p. 32).

Eugenicists also enacted policies that promoted contraception and sterilization to suppress the fertility of key groups. For example, birth control clinics aimed at poor African Americans were developed by public health officials who believed it was a service to “the public good” to decrease Black fertility. Sterilization became an active public health measure during the Depression, especially after the 1927 Supreme Court case, *Buck v. Bell* had upheld the state’s right to forcibly sterilize someone for “eugenical purposes” (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 33-34). By 1932, more than 26 states passed sterilization laws targeting specific populations including North Carolina, where an estimated 8,000 sterilizations were conducted on people claimed as “mentally deficient persons,” a majority of whom were black (Rojas, 2009, p. 99). By 1970, the Nixon administration established federal family planning programs that targeted inner city communities in response to extremist fears of African American population growth. When the forced sterilization of the Relf sisters (ages 12 and 14) by a government funded family planning clinic became public knowledge, it was discovered that up to 150,000 people were sterilized every year by programs funded with federal dollars.

Sidebar: The Relf Sisters

In 1973, African American sisters from Montgomery, Alabama, Minnie Lee and Mary Alice Relf (ages fourteen and twelve), were unknowingly sterilized at a hospital under the Family Planning Clinic of the Montgomery Community Action Committee, funded by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). Once this case gained the national spotlight, it was soon uncovered that up to 150,000 people had been sterilized each year by programs funded by this government agency (Rojas, 2009, p. 100). This injustice started when the Relf family moved to a public housing project and soon asked to participate in its family planning program. Katie, the oldest, was seventeen in 1971 when she was forced to accept (without her mother's presence), an intrauterine device (IUD). Minnie Lee and Mary Alice, who were mentally disabled, received Depo-Provera birth control injections, still at its experimental stage in the 1970s. Later studies showed that Depo-Provera caused cancer in lab animals and clinics discontinued the injections. The clinic then decided to replace the injections with sterilization, as it was the only contraceptive method funded by the HEW, but never informed their mother about this change. Mrs. Relf was illiterate and asked to sign with an "X" on a consent form authoring the operation for her daughters, while believing this was to approve her daughters continuing with Depo shots (p. 101).

The Southern Poverty Law Center filed a lawsuit on the family's behalf in 1974 and also discovered that in addition to hundreds of thousands sterilized without consent, many others were coerced into sterilization as doctors threatened to end access to welfare benefits. The judge ruled against the use of federal dollars for forced sterilizations and the practice of threatening to cut off welfare benefits if women didn't comply. Rojas cites an argument by Angela Davis who pointed out the "inherent race and class privileges" within the reproductive rights movement, as there was hesitation by some to support an end to sterilization abuse if it might limit access by middle and upper class white women who might choose sterilization. Davis wrote, "While women of color are urged, at every turn, to become permanently infertile, white women enjoying prosperous economic conditions are urged, by the same forces, to reproduce themselves" (cited in Rojas, 2009, p. 102).

A notable class-action suit that highlighted an instance of targeted forced sterilization was *Madrigal v. Quilligan* (1975), brought on by ten Chicanas against the Los Angeles County-University of Southern California Medical Center (county hospital). The case brought to light that multiple women of Mexican origin were coerced into signing consent forms while they were in labor or under heavy anesthesia (Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 418). None of the women were fluent in English even though they were pressured to sign forms in English, and were either misinformed or simply lied to about the procedure. Some of the tubal ligations took place even after the women clearly stated that they did not want to be sterilized. For example, Dolores Madrigal refused multiple offers to be sterilized, but presented with consent forms while in labor, she finally signed because she was misinformed that the operation could be reversed easily. For Jovita Rivera, she shared that she was intimidated to sign the forms by doctors who expressed that she would be a burden on the taxpayers (p. 416). Georgina Hernandez didn't know she was sterilized until weeks later, because she refused such procedures, despite the doctor's claim that she couldn't properly care for her children as "a poor Mexican" (p. 417).

The plaintiffs sought financial compensation and for hospitals to provide consent forms in Spanish, arguing that their civil and constitutional rights to procreate had been violated. The judge displayed clear racial bias by making derogatory statements during the case, for instance, claiming, "We all know that Mexicans love their families" (Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 418). Even after ample testimony and evidence presented on the lasting damaging effects of this practice, the judge ruled in favor of the County Hospitals and its doctors, blaming the women and their culture, ignoring the defendants' rights and the moral obligation of medical practitioners (p. 418-419). He claimed that the doctors had acted in good faith and attributed it to miscommunication. Even though the case was lost, Chicana activists highlighted a success in raising public awareness of coerced sterilization as a serious discriminatory act. Since, the California Department of Health reexamined its sterilization guidelines to "ensure the right of informed consent," also issuing booklets in both English and Spanish (p. 419).

Sidebar: More on Madrigal v. Quilligan

For details about the Madrigal v. Quilligan case, check out the Library of Congress's Latinx Resource Guide on the case - 1978 Madrigal v. Quilligan

Puerto Rican *operaciones*

Another group of Latina/x targets of experimentation and sterilization were Puerto Ricans. According to Elena R. Gutierrez, Puerto Ricans "served as a laboratory for American contraceptive policies and products," including contraceptive foams, IUDs, and pills

(Rojas, 2009, p. 99). Most horrific was the jointly sponsored (U.S. and Puerto Rico) sterilization program, *operaciones*, starting in the 1930s. By framing Puerto Rican and Latina women as "hyperfertile," proponents theorized that a population reduction program in Puerto Rico would "improve its long-impoverished economy" and soon hospitals began to routinely perform tubal ligations by obtaining their consent either during labor or right after the birth (p. 102). Gutierrez points out that by 1965 already 35% of Puerto Rican women had been sterilized, a majority only in their twenties. Puerto Rican women still have some of the highest rates of sterilization to this day, with many who underwent the procedure expressing no regrets (Ruiz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 725).

Coerced Sterilization of Indigenous Women

The federally funded Indian Health Services (IHS) were particularly aggressive about the sterilization of Native American communities. The exact numbers are difficult to ascertain, since the IHS didn't keep accurate records, but Women of All Red Nations (WARN) estimated that the rate of female sterilization was as high as 80% on some reservations, and some research uncovered that between 1968 and 1982, around 42% of Indigenous women of childbearing age were sterilized (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 50). According to Andrea Smith, professor of Ethnic Studies, UC Riverside, this program started in 1970. Connie Uri, a Cherokee/Choctow doctor, was one of the first to bring this issue to light after hearing from many Native American patients that they had been sterilized without informed consent (Smith, 2015, pp. 81 - 82). Upon pressuring Congress to investigate this issue, the General Accounting Office (GAO) released a report in 1976 revealing that of the 4 out of 12 areas studied, 3,001 Native women of childbearing age had been sterilized between 1973 and 1976, 36 of the women under the age of 21 "despite a court-ordered moratorium on such procedures" (p. 82). Some women reported getting sterilized to treat a headache or sterilized when they went to the doctors to get a tonsillectomy (p. 84).

The GAO report also discovered that IHS was not in compliance with their own regulations, such as consent forms not indicating that the subject had a right to withdraw consent. The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) regulations were problematic as well, for example eliminating a requirement that a patient seeking sterilization must be orally informed that no federal benefits could be threatened to be withheld if they decided not to accept sterilization. HEW also didn't require the signature of the patient on the consent forms, instead relying on the word of the doctors (Smith, 2015, p. 84).

Sterilizations in Immigration Detention Centers

As recently as 2020, there have been allegations of continued forced sterilization practices in U.S. institutions. Dawn Wooten, a licensed practical nurse who was employed by the Irwin County Detention Center (ICDC) in Georgia became a whistleblower when she accused the ICDC of sterilizing women at the immigration detention center without informed consent. She described numerous accounts of medical abuse, including refusing to test for COVID-19, refusing to provide medication to detainees, and forced hysterectomies. She began to get concerned when noticing a particularly high number of detained women receiving hysterectomies from a doctor known as the "uterus collector." Wooten stated,

> Everybody he sees has a hysterectomy—just about everybody. He's even taken out the wrong ovary on a young lady [detained immigrant woman]. She was supposed to get her left ovary removed because it had a cyst on the left ovary; he took out the right one. She was upset. She had to go back to take out the left and she wound up with a total hysterectomy. She still wanted children.… she said she was not all the way out under anesthesia and heard him [doctor] tell the nurse that he took the wrong ovary (Project South, 2020).

Maya Manian, professor of law, further notes that this is not the only time immigrant detainees had their reproductive choices taken away, bringing up the case of former Office of Refugee Resettlement Director, Scott Lloyd, who attempted to prevent teen migrants from accessing abortions, even when their pregnancies were due to rape (Manian 2020).

Unfortunately, this section only offers a sample of forced sterilization practices in the U.S., expressing a pattern of human rights violations. Medical professionals and government officials continue to make unethical decisions on behalf of vulnerable women with practically no political voice, simply because of their preconceived notions around race, gender, class, and immigration status.

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8.5: Intersectionality and Reproductive Justice - Part II

Limited Access to Abortion and Other Reproductive Care

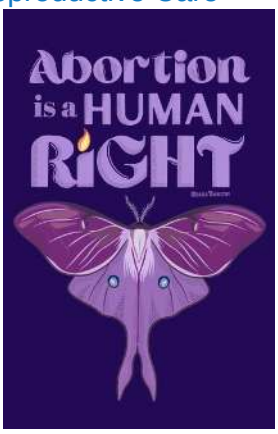

Figure 8.5.1: Access to safe abortion services is a human right. (Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; by Jessica Thornton)

A reproductive justice framing is centered on one's agency over their reproductive decisions (to have children or not) and access to resources to support their decisions. While mass sterilization programs have taken away someone's right to have children, on the other hand, even with *Roe v. Wade*, marginalized communities have faced major challenges to accessing full reproductive services, including abortion.

The Hyde Amendment was enacted in 1976, eliminating any funding of abortion services by the federal government and also denied abortion coverage to military personnel and their families, women who receive care from the Indian Health Services (IHS), and people on disability insurance (Rojas, 2009, p. 97). Smith argues how under the Hyde Amendment, IHS could not offer abortion services unless the woman's life was in danger or had been impregnated as a result of incest or rape. Since most Native women used services provided by the IHS, the Hyde Amendment was a case of racial injustice. Furthermore, the Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center (NAWHERC) found that IHS service units were not compliant with their own abortion policies, and 62% did not provide abortions even when the mother's life was in danger, citing only 5% of service units that actually performed abortions at their facilities (2015, pp. 96 - 97).

According to Ross and Solinger, the author of the Hyde Amendment claimed they saw "an effective opportunity to pass a federal law embedding a religious objection to legal abortion" (2017, p. 53). Yes, there's justified anger and shock around 2022's overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, but when we examine reproductive rights through an intersectional framing, we can understand that for almost fifty years, the Hyde Amendment effectively made access to abortion services under *Roe v. Wade* ineffectual for poor people and people of color.

Supporters of this amendment often wrote off poor women as "bad choice makers" and "bad mothers" who required reproductive restrictions, practically criminalizing unintended pregnancies. Such thinking also justified policies that punished poor women by withholding welfare or making them ineligible for any assistance at all. Rojas argues that limited access to reproductive healthcare in fact feeds into racially and sexually charged stereotypes of poor women of color exploiting the system, with a particular characterization coming to light during Ronald Reagan's failed bid for presidency in 1976: "the welfare queen" (2009, p. 96). He told an overexaggerated story of a woman from Chicago's South Side who was accused of welfare fraud. Reagan never identified the woman, but he insinuated her racial and class background and the idea of the Black "welfare queen" cheating and abusing the system became quickly enshrined in the media and in the minds of the American public (pp. 96-97).

Another group that continuously face barriers to reproductive care is undocumented people. There is a general fear of policing and surveillance experienced by undocumented immigrants, even in arenas of public welfare, such as schools and hospitals. In 2015, Blanca Borrego, an undocumented Mexican women, presented a false ID at a women's health clinic outside of Houston, Texas for a routine follow-up. Her rights to patient-doctor privacy were violated and Borrego was reported to the local Sheriff's deputy and arrested in front of her two daughters. Her daughter, who is a DACA recipient, shared that the deputy told her they were arresting her mom for fake papers and that she would be deported. Events like this and collaboration between health clinics and local police deter other undocumented women from seeing and receiving gynecological healthcare (Gonzalez, 2015).

Furthermore, the highly policed borderlands of places like Southern Texas contribute to disproportionate rates of barriers to reproductive healthcare for Latina/x members of the community. According to a report by Center for Reproductive Rights, Tejanas ages 21-64 are less likely than Latinas nationally and white and Black women in Texas to have received a Pap smear within the last three years. In fact, women living along the Mexico/U.S. border are 31% more likely to die of cervical cancer (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2015, p. 11). Gonzalez (2015) notes that, "Because of the barriers to healthcare, many Latinas die from untreated and undiagnosed cancers at late stages of development. Racism, policing of immigrants, and the recent restrictions on affordable healthcare lead to tragic, preventable deaths."

Additionally, the near annihilation of abortion services in the state of Texas has now made it virtually impossible for women to access full reproductive care. With the Supreme Court overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, states are free to prohibit abortion. Senate Bill 8, signed by Governor Greg Abbott (Sep 1, 2021) outlawed abortion at six weeks of gestation, even in cases of rape and incest. Despite organizations like the ACLU and certain law makers challenging such bills, misinformation or frequent changes to policies can confuse everyone about their rights and what resources they have access to. Interstate or international travel for reproductive healthcare is often not an option for undocumented immigrants. In contrast, middle class women with U.S. citizenship will likely face no barriers, including travel, to making reproductive decisions in private.

Criminalization of access to full reproductive care is tied to racist, sexist, and classist false narratives around population. In the 1960s, for example, academics and politicians claimed that a global "population bomb" caused internally by "high birth rates of 'Negroes,'" would lead to major social challenges such as the overcrowding of cities and more crimes. This racist framing completely dismissed the impact of "the apartheid labor system, poor educational systems in poor neighborhoods, and lack of quality medical care as causes of poverty" and instead scapegoated the poor and communities of color, particularly supposed "'irresponsible females,' who persisted in having 'unwanted babies' that cost the taxpayers too much" (Ross and Salinger, 2017, p. 40).

In reality, poor women did not want more children than middle-class women: the issue was *access* to contraception. Reports by scholars and public health doctors found that poor women were eager for birth control. In Chicago, most of the patients who sought birth control at Planned Parenthood clinics doubled in the first nine months since opening in 1962. A report from Detroit found that after the 1967 rebellion, a family planning program located in the "heart of the riot area" was left alone, along with a Black church, while surrounding buildings on the block were burned to the ground. Furthermore, the Amalgamated Laundry Workers, made up of mostly African American women, started a free birth control program in the mid-1960s.

Relatedly, when Justice Clarence Thomas recently argued that abortion for Black women is a form of genocide, Dorothy Roberts, legal scholar and reproductive justice activist, quickly corrected this misconception in a 2022 interview. She explained,

> Abortion hasn't been used historically as a form of controlling Black reproduction. Sterilization has. There's a big difference between forcible sterilization and upholding the human rights to control your body and not be compelled to be pregnant….The billboards that went up [10 years ago] to shame Black women for abortion that said, 'The most dangerous place for an African American is in the womb' — that message supports sterilizing Black women, as well as compelling pregnancies. It's a message about reproductive control. It's a false message that isn't about any kind of liberation for Black people (Cineas 2022).

Roberts further clarifies another misconception that abortion is a "white women" issue. She refutes this by stating:

> It's just ridiculous to say it's a white woman's issue when Black women are more likely to seek and have abortions. Black women have been advocating for reproductive freedom for just as long as white women have been. We have included the right to abortion in our fight, but it's just that we haven't focused on it since we recognize that sterilization, abuse, and being prosecuted for having babies, and Black maternal mortality, and so many other issues involving our reproductive lives are equally as important (Cineas 2022).

Sidebar: Restricting Abortion Access in Mississippi

In this 14-minute report, investigators look into the impacts of abortion restriction on the Black residents of Mississippi: "What Happens When You Restrict Abortion?" by AJ+ (2019). This is a useful video to help you understand the impact of abortion restrictions for marginalized communities. You might also consider what this means in our current post-*Roe* world.

On the heels of the civil rights and women's rights movements, the Supreme Court ruling in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) legalized abortion, prompting women reproductive "choice" (not "right" or "justice"). The decision related the idea of "choice" within "a zone of

privacy," from which women should make reproductive decisions, but women of color activists importantly pointed out that only women with enough resources had access to make these "choices." For instance, if a woman from a lower socioeconomic background didn't have access to a doctor, how would they get a prescription for birth control pills? A poor woman might have to decide between using her family's budget to pay for rent or for an abortion. This is a much narrower set of choices when compared to a middle-class woman, for example, who would be able to pay for an abortion with cash on hand. Women of color activists argued "that the concept of choice masks the different economic, political, and environmental contexts in which women live their reproductive lives," (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 47) hiding the impact of policies and practices that either punish or reward different groups of women as well as the degree to which women have access to health care and resources needed to manage sexual activity, fertility, and motherhood.

Andrea Smith cites Native American activist Justine Smith who stated that the framing of the reproductive rights movement on individual "choice" essentially

> obscures all the social conditions that prevent women from having and making real choices - lack of health care, poverty, lack of social services, etc....In the Native context, where women often find the only contraceptives available to them are dangerous….where their life expectancy can be as low as 47 years, reproductive "choice" defined so narrowly is a meaningless concept. Instead, Native women and men must fight for community self-determination and sovereignty over their health care (2015, p. 98).

Formation of the Reproductive Justice Movement

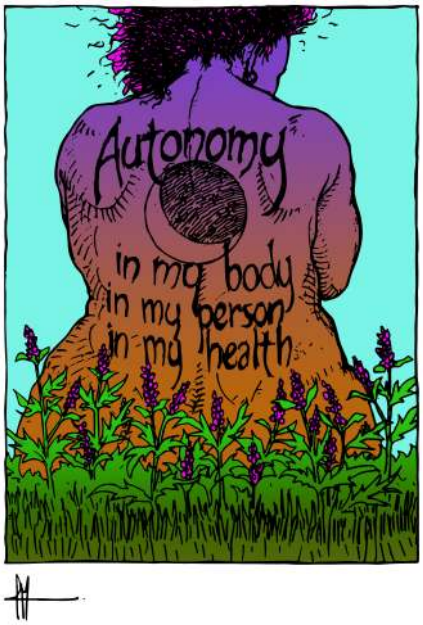

Figure 8.5.2: This graphic was created in response to the state's attack on people's bodily autonomy – in particular, the control of women's, queer, and trans bodies....The *plantitas* are a field of Artemisia, also known as mugwort or wormwood, which besides promoting dreams, is also one of many herbs used by traditional healers and midwives to prevent or terminate pregnancy. Traditional herbal abortion was one of the ways women protected their bodily autonomy and choice for millennia.
(Licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; by Fernando Martí)

By the 1990s, various women of color organizations who had been critiquing the limitations of a "choice-framed" reproductive movement started coming together. Organizations like SisterSong (Atlanta) and the National Black Women's Health Project highlighted the long history of reproductive injustice experienced by women of color:

> They underscored the lived experience of the enslaved woman who could be raped and impregnated with impunity….They invoked the massacred Native populations. They catalogued the ways that law could mandate a woman's sterilization, could punish her for having a child, could enforce her poverty and punish her for it, could exclude her from hospitals and her children from schools and jobs, based on race. They added that laws had blocked women from immigrating to this country to join their husbands, to make families and citizens. The law could criminalize birth control and punish a woman for trying to manage her fertility. The law and other instruments of power could use this woman's body and her fertility to degrade her and her children…and protect white supremacy in the United States. In the context of such histories, such laws and policies,

what role did individual, personal choice have in safeguarding the reproductive dignity and safety of women of color (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 54 - 55)?

Smith wrote that Native women are organizing around a more "holistic analysis of reproductive justice." For example, NAWHERC provides comprehensive services to Indigenous women related to reproductive health including contraception information, advocacy for the environment, violence against women, and advocacy for access to abortion services (2015, pp. 105-106).

Reproductive justice activists objected to the single-issue framing of the white-led movement and pushed that the right to have a child was just as important as access to contraception and abortion. They also identified the limits of the legal system that failed to address the overlapping structures of inequality, including access to political power. They instead offered a framing that centered on "reproductive safety and dignity," including access to decent healthcare and housing, jobs that paid a living wage, the right to live a life without worry of police violence, the right "to live free of racism," in addition to access to legal contraception and abortion (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 55 - 56). The first activists of this movement illustrated the importance of bodily self-determination - the right to reproduce or not to.

Applying an intersectional analysis, the burgeoning reproductive justice movement organized with the environmental justice movement, studying the effects of toxic waste in certain communities of color on reproduction, infants and maternal health (Ross and Solinger, 2017, pp. 56-57). They pushed for the inclusion of women in public health information and treatment of AIDS by the Centers for Disease Control, and helped end various attempts to restrict or ban abortions in states across the nation. They have advocated for antidiscrimination policies that would protect LGBTQ people, and voluntary hormone therapy for incarcerated trans people. Ross and Solinger (2017) point out that collectively, "reproductive organizations and their allies have refocused and redefined the basic elements of sexual and reproductive dignity for all" (p. 57).

In the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision to overrule *Roe v. Wade*, Dorothy Roberts stated that despite still being shaken by this ruling, in many ways, the reproductive justice movement was preparing for such a "post-*Roe*" world. She reminded us that today, "there's a reproductive justice movement that's so much stronger….it seems like we're going backward while at the same time building movements that are so much further than we were when we were growing up" (Cineas, 2022). The work by women like Ross, Solinger, Roberts, and countless others who've committed decades to the reproductive justice movement remind us how an intersectional lens can help us understand how seemingly oppositional issues are actually interrelated. And when we understand this, we can envision a society rooted in recognizing one another's humanity. We can take active steps toward demanding sexual autonomy and gender freedom, and achieving the core principles of the reproductive justice movement:

- the right *not* to have a child
- the right to *have* a child
- and the right to *parent* children in safe and healthy environments (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p.65).

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8.6: Transformational Liberation through Love

Love as a Way Forward

Figure 8.6.1: bell hooks at the New School in 2014. (Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0; by Alex Lozupone (Tduk))

When I think of love as a transformational concept, I go back to the work of activist, feminist, and prolific writer, bell hooks (Figure 8.6.1). In one of her best selling books, *All About Love: New Visions* (2001), hooks reflected on her personal experience with love, writing that "it was love's absence that let me know how much love mattered" (ix). She called to attention the simultaneous obsession our society has around being desired and "finding" love, but also our repulsion from having any honest discussions about love. All around her she heard that lovelessness was the norm. She wrote *All About Love* as a call to return to love so that we can "let our hearts speak" (xi).

In her book *Women of Color and Feminism* (2009), Dr. Maythee Rojas also projected the importance of love, explaining, "love is what provides a way forward for women of color" (p. 135). In fact, the concept of self-love and self-care is rooted in writings by radical women of color, many finding that self-love is a matter of survival in a toxic white supremacist, imperialist, capitalist, heteropatriachy that seems to reserve the most hateful acts of violence and abuse towards women of color, particularly poor women of color, and Queer and Trans people of color. If we accept this lovelessness, we'll only continue toward demise; it's up to each of us to love ourselves and each other in order to thrive and continue fighting for a world that embraces love and embraces our differences.

At times it can be disheartening to learn about violent injustices and overwhelming to comprehend how oppression may have impacted our lives. However, applying an intersectional lens can also help us uncover the power of resilience amongst oppressed communities. This can be especially true in the ways that we find love in ourselves, for our ancestors, our culture, and our communities. This starts by breaking through the damaging messages and practices, stemming from the legacies of settler-colonialism, imperialism, wars, slavery, and genocide. Ethnic Studies allows us to see that we absolutely can unravel the traumas that we inherit. And an intersectional framing can help us to see and value the ways that love is often the connecting theme across stories of struggle and survival.

Figure 8.6.2: Chicana author and feminist Cherrie Moraga on Jan 1, 2000. (Licensed under CC BY 2.0; by Natália Otto)

When human beings are marginalized, it is tremendously validating and empowering to find others who understand our experiences. This lends the possibility of finding love in a community. An example of finding community and love through written work is the groundbreaking publication of the first edition of *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*, edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga (Figure 8.6.2) in 1981. The book represented a vanguard of written work that intersected race, gender, class and sexuality, unfailingly transforming feminism in the United States. Rojas explained how the anthology expressed pain and anger, but also joy, holding a promise of building bridges. Moraga wrote of the book,

> To come to see each other as sisters. This is not a given. I keep wanting to repeat over and over again, the pain and shock of difference, the joy of commonness, the exhilaration of meeting through incredible odds against it (as cited in Rojas, 2009, p. 29).

Rojas emphasizes how Moraga's excitement cannot be overstated, as many of the contributors, including Moraga and Anzaldúa, were lesbians of color, often isolated and marginalized within their families and also among women of color feminist spaces.

Dismantling the status quo can be daunting, and Rojas argues that while there are concrete structures to take down in order to advance social justice and equality, "there is also an emotional repairing that must take place" tied to the damage that generations of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, and poverty can inflict on our self-esteem and sense of self-worth. She writes: "Not loving others is one of the most effective ways to ensure divisions and internal conflict. Not loving ourselves warrants our annihilation" (2009, p. 137).

bell hooks wrote that "when we can see ourselves as we truly are and accept ourselves, we build the necessary foundation for self-love" (2001, p. 53), but that this assertion can be confusing, especially if we were socialized to see ourselves as "unlovable." She continues that while it may be helpful to reflect on our childhood to understand how one's sense of identity was shaped, we can get stuck holding onto grief and pain and place blame on others. hooks promotes the importance of the next stage of self-love, which includes "actively introducing into our lives constructive life-affirming thought patterns and behavior" (p. 55). This includes thinking critically about ourselves and our society: to live consciously. This means acceptance of ourselves and taking responsibility in all areas of our lives. This does not mean denying the reality of oppressive systems like racism, classism, homophobia, and sexism, nor preventing discrimination from happening. Instead, accepting ourselves and taking responsibility means "we can choose how we respond to acts of injustice" (p. 57). hooks emphasizes how taking responsibility can lead to reclaiming agency over our lives and help center our well-being.

Radical Self-Love

Figure 8.6.3: Sonya Renee Taylor presents at Central Washington University on February 28, 2019. (Licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; by Central Washington University)

Sonya Renee Taylor (Figure 8.6.3), poet, activist, and author, asks us to go beyond self-esteem and self-acceptance toward a concept of **radical self-love** in her book, *The Body is Not an Apology: The Power of Radical Self-Love* (2018). She argues that the oppressive intersections of racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, and fatphobia are manifested by our struggle to make peace with the body and that a radical self-love approach envisions "a world free from the systems of oppression that make it difficult and sometimes deadly to live in our bodies" (p. 4). When defining *radical* self-love, Taylor explains that it's deeper and more expansive than self-confidence or self-esteem, "juicer than self-acceptance" and that "the word *radical* offers us a self-love that is the root or origin of our relationship to ourselves" (p. 6). Reminding her readers that when each of us came into this world, we weren't ashamed of our bodies, race, gender, age, or disabilities, but through a barrage of harmful messaging from

society and media that dehumanize and disparage fat bodies, Black bodies, and disabled bodies, it's glaringly clear that something radical is needed to resist such messages. She writes that the word *radical* reminds us how our society requires drastic transformation, as the United States was built on the idea of excluding bodies outside land-owning white men (p. 7). Taylor connects radical self-love to our bodies, professing how such a perspective "demands that we see ourselves and others in the fullness of our complexities and intersections and that we work to create space for those intersections" (p. 9). Finally, that radical self-love is the foundation of radical human love and how our relationship with our bodies, "inform our relationships with others" (p. 9).

On apologizing for our bodies, Taylor shared that living in a female, Black, aging, fat body with mental illness, she was "to awaken daily to a planet that expects a certain set of apologies to already live on our tongues…traumas and resiliency of our ancestors are passed on to us molecularly. Being sorry is literally a lesson in our DNA" (2018, p. 11). For Black boys like Emmett Till, that apology could be "exacted by death sentence," who was expected to be sorry for allegedly whistling at a white woman, his 14-year old body kidnapped, tortured, beaten, mutilated, then shot and dumped in the Tallahatchie River by a group of adult white men. Taylor points out how women are expected to apologize about the length of their skirt or how many drinks they had after a sexual assault; that disabled people were expected to apologize for their need to access; and that if one's gender identity was different than the sex assigned at birth, and it confused strangers, an apology was expected. Our society has conditioned us be apologetic for not only having the "wrong body" but also for supposedly stirring discomfort in others, Taylor writing, "...it was in these moments that we found our heads bowed in shame, certain that our too fat, too dark, too muchness was the offense" (p. 13). She asks,

> Why are we consistently apologizing for the space we inhabit? What if we all understood the inherent vastness of our humanity and therefore occupied the world without apology?....What if we made room for every body so that no one ever had to stand on someone else's foot? How might we change our lives? How might we change the world? (p. 14).

In February of 2011, Taylor decided to post a picture of herself in a strapless corset: "I was being saucy, sexy, and silly, and I absolutely did not think a single soul besides myself would ever lay eyes on that photo" (2018, p. 15). For six months, she would revisit this photo in her cellphone, fearful of the judgment that could come if she posted it on social media. Taylor describes that "the voices of apology" would take over her brain, and she'd wonder:

> Would people think I was vain? Would they fail to see the beautiful woman I saw in the image and instead simply remind me that I was too fat, too black, too queer, too woman, and no one was ever going to think that was beautiful (p. 15)?

But after being inspired by photos of plus-size model, Tara Lynn, Taylor posted her photo on Facebook with a caption that read: "In this picture, I am 230 lbs. In this picture, I have stretch mark….For this one camera flash, I am unashamed, unapologetic" (2018, p. 16). She encouraged others to share their photos, unashamed and unapologetic, and the next morning discovered over thirty photos that people posted, of varying ages, races, sizes, abilities, genders, sexual orientations. A Facebook group page titled "The Body is Not an Apology" was born. Taylor proclaims that "Being unapologetic created an opening for radical self-love" (p. 17) and when one "embraces the fullness of ourselves" (p. 17) we can love our whole selves.

Taylor (2018) critiques the perceived logic of "choice" which she argues leads to justifying judgment of bodies and difference. For example, to claim that people choose to be gay is a scapegoat for our biases and bigotries, because the logic believes if people choose to be different, then they should choose to be the way "I believe they should be." Taylor instead proposes that we ask ourselves, "Why do I need people to be the way I believe they should be?" (p. 18) and that the argument about choice is actually a projection. She also offers what she calls the Three Peaces, the key tenets to "pry us out of the mire of body judgment and shame" (p. 19):

1. Make peace with not understanding
2. Make peace with difference
3. Make peace with *your* body (pp. 18-19).

Understanding should not be a prerequisite to love, and Taylor (2018) encourages us to accept that we can't have everything figured out. In fact, when we comprehend this notion, this can lead to empathy, writing, "Not knowing is an opportunity for exploration without judgements and demands" (p. 19). On the tenet of making peace with difference, Taylor rejects the notion that "we're all the same," a type of mask that veils our own ignorance about someone else's experience, and instead of admitting it and accepting that we can't understand everything, we're prompted to minimize it and instead "homogenize it by proclaiming we are all the same" (p. 21). She applies this concept to the rhetoric of health, pointing out how hegemonic ideas of what's considered a "healthy body" can reinforce the oppressive idea that people with illnesses and disabilities have "defective bodies rather than different bodies" (p. 22). She addresses the larger issue of our society projecting "greater value, resources, and opportunities" (p.

22) to so-called “normal” bodies, ideas warped by hegemony. Taylor calls for a shift from “occasionally celebrating difference (as long as it doesn’t fall too far outside the boundaries of our ideas of ‘normal’) to developing a difference-celebrating culture” (p. 22). On the third tenet, peace with your body, Taylor reminds us that if we believe our body should be some other body, it’s likely a “reflection of your struggles with the first two Peaces” (p. 23). She emphasizes that we didn’t come into this world hating our bodies, therefore what we’ve internalized about our bodies is learned. Not only is our internalized body shaming hurting ourselves, it hurts those around us as well. Taylor states that, “The bodies you share space with are afraid you are judging them with the same venom they have watched you use to judge yourself” (p. 24).

With these tenets, Taylor (2018) boldly reminds us that radical self-love is not impossible, nor a destination. She stresses how embracing your body is “awakening…who you have always been: the physical, spiritual, and energetic manifestation of radical self-love” (p. 58). Taylor describes this journey of dismantling body-shame practices as a map - and that radical self-love is drawing “a map back to ourselves” (p. 58).

The Hupa Coming-of-Age Dance as Decolonizing Praxis

An important aspect of transformational love is how love can be used as a mobilizing force, as noted by Rojas when discussing the work of Chicana/o Studies scholar, Chela Sandoval. In her work, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000), Sandoval finds that “falling in love” can be a type of “conduit” for the action needed to resist oppression. Sandoval writes, “It is love that can access and guide our theoretical and political ‘*movida*’ [movements] - revolutionary maneuvers toward decolonized being” (as cited in Rojas, 2009, p. 140).

Decolonization is a process of self-love, reclamation of our heritage, and a powerful act of counterhegemony. In *We Are Dancing for You: Native Feminisms and The Revitalization of Women’s Coming–of-Age Ceremonies* (2018), Native American Studies professor, Humboldt State, Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy (Hupa, Karuk, Yurok), writes about the revitalization of the Hupa Ch’ilwa:l, or Flower Dance ceremony, a public celebration of a young woman’s first menstruation, as a decolonizing praxis. Risling Baldy describes how it was her niece, Kayla, who had the first public community Ch’ilwa:l in Hoopa Valley after its absence for many generations. She was 14 and among discussions of bringing back the ceremony, some in the community were enthusiastic and others were hesitant, but Kayla thought, “...if I could be strong and I could do it, then other people who need this dance could have it too, and that was sort of an easy decision to me” (p. 131). Kayla expressed a love for herself and her culture, and by stating that she would also do it so that other girls might have this too, she expressed a love for her community.

Risling Baldy (2018) explained that built into the Ch’ilwa:l, is “The epistemological foundation of survivance and decolonization” which “understand that every aspect of that landscape is embodied by the K’ixinay [immortal spirits], demonstrates respect and empowerment of women, insists gender equality and is grounded in Hupa feminism” (p. 126). There is an inherent sensibility of intersectional framing as decolonization is a form of feminism. Risling Baldy cites Jaimes Guerrero’s call for a formation of “Native Womanism” through traditional practices that center on “women’s respect and authority” (p. 127). Risling Baldy also references Native scholars who stress that decolonizing praxis and Indigenous epistemologies and cultures are a basis for healing. The Hupa ceremony of Ch’ilwa:l focuses on movement as a site for addressing trauma or “unresolved historical grief across generations” that’s been carried by Native peoples. She brings up how the effects of colonization have traumatized the physical and psychological and that cultural indigenous practices can “restore balance” and focus on dismantling sexism.

The revitalization of the Ch’ilwa:l has transformed some of the inherited traumas related to “gender violence of colonization.” Lois Risling, Risling Baldy’s mother, remarked that the dance has encouraged men to view women in “a different light.” She emphasized that,

> When you dance over somebody and celebrate somebody you don’t think of them just as a piece of meat or just some kind of sexual object….this ceremony definitely shows that women are important to the society and play a very important part in it (2018, pp. 143-144).

Risling Baldy adds that Native American cultural practices are proven to effectively address self-esteem, poverty, and school performance for youth, citing the work of Teresa LaFromboise who found that family and community support, along with involvement in cultural practices can lead to “resilient adaptation.” Lois Risling also stated how the Flower Dance ceremony supports a young woman's development of self-worth. She said,

> it tells you that you are not this piece of crap stuff that somebody can abuse and put down. You are being celebrated, as opposed to being demonized….If all of your life you’ve been told that you are worthless and that you’re only good as a sexual partner or somebody who is being abused or beat up…that you’re not worth anything…then this dance comes along

and say, ‘I think enough about you that I’m going to for ten days or five days…sing over you every night….That’s very, very positive. That’s very important, that I think you’re worth that” (Risling Baldy, 2018, p. 145).

For further understanding of Risling Baldy's writing, checkout the section titled "Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy" under Chapter 4, page 4.2: "Indigenous Ways of Knowing."

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8.7: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In this chapter we learned that intersectionality is a necessary framing that recognizes how racial/ethnic identity, for example, overlaps with gender, sexuality, class, and nationality/immigration status. This shapes the reality of the most marginalized, including women of color, Queer and Trans people of color (QTPOC), poor women, immigrant women, and more. Although Crenshaw is credited with naming this framing, the understanding of intersectionality and the importance of recognizing how racism, sexism, classism, and imperialism simultaneously impact certain communities has existed for a long time, as expressed by various Black women and women of color feminists and thinkers. Such framing continues to inform movements today, including #BlackLivesMatter.

Intersectionality is central to understanding how women of color and QTPOC are violated by interlocking systems of power including white supremacy, imperialism, cisheteropatriarchy, and capitalism. For example, how reproductive actions have been controlled or limited, particularly for the most vulnerable fertile people of our society. An intersectionality framing is also paramount in allowing us to name and recognize each other's humanity, and ultimately lead us to transformational liberation. This has been achieved by generations of reproductive justice work by women of color who've resisted classist and sexist policies and practices such as the elimination of full reproductive health services, including abortions, and forced sterilization.

The work of transformational liberation is also achieved through radical self-love which demands seeing our whole selves and our whole bodies, for all its complexities. A decolonial praxis is another expression of radical love and transformational liberation, such as the revival of the Hupa Ch'ilwa:l, or Flower Dance ceremony, that focuses on a young woman's coming of age. This practice in the Hupa community of Northern California has supported healing from generations of colonial violence and sexism.

Key Terms

- **LGTBQIA:** Stands for Lesbian Gay Transgender Bisexual Queer/Questioning Intersex Asexual and Ally
- **Queer:** an identity that describes sexual and gender identities other than straight and cisgender, such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.
- **Intersectionality:** The study of multiple or intersecting social identities that people carry with them, for example, how race and gender intersect to shape the experiences of women of color. Furthermore, intersectionality examines the intersecting structures of power (such as white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism) that limit, marginalize, or oppress people based on race, class, gender, gender identity, immigration status, sexual orientation, language, religion, ability, and other notable markers of difference.
- **The Mythical Norm:** a phrase coined by Audre Lorde representing "white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, christian, and financially secure" people
- **Women of color:** Cis and trans women who are not racialized as white, including Black, Arab, Asian, Chicana, Indigenous, Latina, Pacific Islander, and mixed race women
- **Heteropatriarchy:** A combination of heterosexism and patriarchy, this term refers to the ways that define gender, masculinity and feminity in restrictive binaries that reinforce a dominant (male, straight, cis) and subordinate (female, gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or not straight) relationship. It points to the normalization of these hierarchal social order that privilege cis-straight men over women and LGBTQ people. Heteropatriarchy also works in conjunction with other social hierarchies, including white supremacy, settler colonialism, and imperialism.
- **Third World Feminism:** Third world feminism points out the added elements of racism and imperialism to the gender and class oppression experienced by women from the "third world" or the "global south" and to women who come from "underdeveloped and overexploited" nations who reside in the "developed/First World." Third World feminism critiques feminist theory that only focus on the antisexist struggle while ignoring how sexism overlaps with racial, class, and colonial oppression.
- **Womanist:** Coined by authors, Alice Walker, womanist is used to describe "a Black feminist or feminist of color" whose priorities are laid with the entire community, both male and female. Such a term stressed the sentiment amongst Third World women that their feminist struggles were not separate from the struggles against racism and economic exploitation that their communities shared.
- **Pinayism:** A term coined by Asian American Studies professor, Allyson Tintinagco-Cubales, pinayism is "a radical pinay sisterhood that connects the global, local, and personal stories of Pinay struggle, survival, service, sisterhood, and strength to mentally, physically, politically, and spiritually uplift ourselves" (1995). She clarifies that *pinayism* is not simply a "Filipino

version of feminism or womanism" but that it instead draws from various philosophies and examines the complexity of where race/ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality intersect, and connects issues across the diaspora. See the Pinayism website for more.

- **Reproductive justice movement:** This is a women of color-led movement which applies an intersectional lens and expands the concerns beyond the limited framing of pro-choice v. pro-life. The movement offers a broader understanding of restrictions placed on reproductive actions, examining the ways oppressions related to race, gender, class, and sexuality operate simultaneously. They address access to full reproductive services, including abortion, forced sterilization and harmful reproductive restrictions placed on women of color without their consent, and access to resources that allow parents to raise children in safe and healthy environments. According to reproductive justice movement leader, Loretta Ross, reproductive justice has three primary values: the right *not* to have a child; the right to *have* a child; and the right to *parent* children in safe and healthy environments.
- **Eugenics:** This ideology is related to claims of white racial superiority and push that humans must reproduce only "the 'best examples' of humanity and eradicate 'negative expressions' of human life" (Ross and Solinger, 2017, p. 30). Genetic inferiority was blamed for larger social issues including criminality, poverty, prostitution, and mental illness, and eugenicists eagerly believed that removing supposedly inferior genes would "foster a superior human race free of these social ills." (Rojas, 2009, p. 98). Groups considered undesirable were nonwhites, the poor, and anybody with psychological, physical, and cognitive disabilities.
- **Radical self-love:** Sonya Renee Taylor invites people affected by various forms of oppression to go beyond self-esteem and self-acceptance toward a concept of radical self-love. The concept envisions "a world free from the systems of oppression that make it difficult and sometimes deadly to live in our bodies" (2018, p. 4). It's a type of self-love that's rooted in our relationship to ourselves and the word *radical* reminds us that our society requires drastic transformation, as the United States was built on the idea of excluding bodies outside land-owning white men. Radical self-love is also foundational to radical human love and connection to others.

Discussion Questions

1. What framing does intersectionality provide and why do we need this framing in order to see or understand the experiences of women of color? What happens without this framing?
2. What were the main critiques of mainstream white feminism by women of color and third world women? Name two other feminist ideologies offered instead.
3. What are the ways you've been taught to perform gender?

Journal Prompts

1. Consider and write down your racial/and or ethnic identity. Then write down your gender (or gender identity), class/socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, religion, ability, and citizenship or immigration status. How have the social identities you considered impacted your experiences such as at work and education opportunities, day-to-day interaction with others, family relationships, social status, and/or access to resources like jobs, higher education, housing, etc.? For example, does your immigration status impact access to financial aid, social services, housing, jobs, etc.? Does your skin color impact how you're treated in a store? or by police? Does your socioeconomic background inform access to high education? housing? Does your gender/gender identity influence how your coworker treats you?
2. How can learning about women of color and intersectionality help us resist oppressive systems of power that exist in our society? In answering this question, also consider at least 2 examples of resistance by women of color/third world feminists and/or social movement activists. You may also consider how this applies to your own identity or experiences, whether you identify as a "woman of color" or not.
3. Define and explain why reproductive justice is a major issue for women of color and how this is related to the history of the US controlling raced and gendered bodies. Then summarize at least 2 examples of barriers poor women of color face in particular when it comes to accessing reproductive health. Optionally, you may also connect key ideas with your own experiences around access (or lack of) to comprehensive reproductive health or how the overturning of Roe v. Wade may impact women of color and poor women.

Class Activities

"Doing" Gender Skits using Theater of the Oppressed

1. Self-reflection: Have students brainstorm ways they may have been implicitly or explicitly taught to "do" gender. For example, were they ever told "Boys don't cry" or "Girls can't play with trucks"? Were they conditioned to act "ladylike" or "like a man"?

Have them think back to as young as they can. They may work in groups or independently.
2. Then have them consider how these moments or experiences might intersect with their race, culture, nationality, social class, sexual orientation, religion, or other markers of difference. For example, "Gay people don't exist in Korea" or "This is how Black men are supposed to act."
3. Acting out: Put students into small groups, have them share their examples and then select one example. Following the methods of Augusto Boal's Theater of the Oppressed, direct students to act out a scenario based on an example of "doing gender" that they selected. First, have the group act out the scenario according to the student's memory.
4. Discuss: Once the scene is completed, have students discuss what they observed, how they felt, and how they might change the situation. What would they do differently? How might they alter the dialogue so that instead of the scene focusing on an oppressive action reinforcing gender standards, students can challenge gender norms and expectations?
5. Stepping in: Then have them act out the same scene again. This time though, students will be allowed to intervene and offer alternatives. They can yell "Stop" to freeze the actors in mid-action. Then that individual can step in and take over the role of the protagonist in the scene and act out a different solution.
6. For example: If students were acting out a scene where a father tells his 5-year-old son to stop crying and "act like a man," the second time around what can the father do differently? Or can another family member step in and challenge what the father tells his son in a productive way?

Reproductive Justice

This lesson can be done online or in-person.

1. Have students work in small groups to map out barriers that women of color and fertile people have historically and continue to face when it comes to reproductive issues. Have them consider examples of population control, eugenics, forced sterilization, limited access to abortion and reproductive care. They can create lists, charts, brainstorming maps, or even illustrate what they learn from sections 8.4 and 8.5 in this chapter.
2. Then have students brainstorm ways that women of color have historically led the way in the reproductive justice movement. What are they critiquing? What are they advocating?
3. Students can create a protest poster advocating for one of these changes or critiques. Or you can ask them to record a mini-presentation of what they're advocating for and upload it onto an online platform. Either way, the objective is for students to consider addressing a reproductive injustice that women of color and fertile people of color have faced or continue to face, and how to advocate for justice.
4. For example: If the issue is access to abortion services, the poster might call for the passage of state or local legislation that calls for the protection of rights to abortion services.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

9: The Racial Wealth Gap

By Ulysses Acevedo

Learning Objectives

- Describe and apply the decolonization methodology of testimony, a major theory of Ethnic Studies;
- To understand the historical roots and contemporary consequences of racialized wealth disparities in the U.S.;
- To identify and analyze some of the counternarratives and social movements that have combated the increasing gap of racial wealth disparities.

9.1: Introduction
9.2: Testimony as a Decolonial Methodology
9.3: Racial Wealth Disparities
9.4: Why is Wealth So Unequal in the U.S.?
9.5: Counternarratives in Racial Wealth Disparities
9.6: Summary/Review
9.7: References

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9.1: Introduction

Introduction to the racial wealth gap

Wealth inequity has become an increasingly important identifier of who can and who can't access quality housing, education, food, physical health, and mental health. It is critical to contextualize wealth inequity as an intersectional reality. In other words, how are our intersectional identities (race, class, gender, age, etc.) and our bank accounts connected?

Many of us may have heard the phrase "health is wealth"; it is a common saying in the U.S. which can be interpreted to mean many things. This proverb means that the most important thing that we can possess at any given time is positive physical and mental health. In the song, "Whitey on the moon" by Gil Scott-Heron, an acclaimed spoken-word performer, musician and author, Scott-Heron sings "I can't pay no doctor bill (but Whitey's on the moon). Ten years from now I'll be paying still (while Whitey's on the moon)" (Ace Records, 2014).

Scott-Heron is contrasting the physical pain that his sister is going through after being bitten by a rat due to their disinvested living conditions and the reality that their family will be in debt for years in order to pay the medical bill. For Scott-Heron, "Whitey" is synonymous with the people, institutions, and political bodies in the U.S. that seize resources (his rent, but also taxes and consumer spending), and control where, when and how they are invested (the moon) or disinvested (affecting his family's quality of housing and medical care, but also food, education, etc.). In the U.S., there is a cruel and racialized paradox of divestment in quality affordable health care, housing, facilities, the environment and other basic human needs on earth and the large investment towards exploring space, increasingly in private missions for personal enjoyment.

In the 1970s, Gil Scott-Heron condemned the U.S. for commandeering resources for moon missions rather than maintaining the humanity of those on earth (including his own). In 2023, "Whitey" is still on the moon while others have no hot water, no toilet, no lights. What is the value of a space shuttle that can take you to the moon or the many efforts to explore Mars with the hopes of building a civilization, if the basic needs of many on Earth are not being met? Who will it benefit? Space travel becomes a metaphor for planetary white flight, wealth flight, and leaving earth because human consumption (and the effects of that) have destroyed our planet. Instead of focusing resources on saving the earth, which is shared with people of all backgrounds, the goal for these wealthy elites is in fact to flee.

The impulse to flee earth and its problems for a new world is an example of "wealth flight." And because of the racial stratification of wealth, this is a new form of "white flight," with the new residential communities being colonies on other planets, instead of the suburbs. Just as white flight contributed to disinvestment from, and later deterioration of, urban cities, interplanetary white flight will inevitably contribute to the degradation of Earth and the people left behind. This concept of white flight to outer space is illustrated in the 2013 film *Elysium*, starring Matt Damon.

But many policies, movements and organizations have and continue to push back against the unjust concentration of wealth and resource allocation. In an interview right after Blue Origin's first crewed mission, Chris Smalls, one of the primary organizers of the first-ever Amazon labor union, responded to Jeff Bezos' (widely criticized) comment thanking all the Amazon workers and customers for paying for his trip to the moon by saying, "we want to thank Jeff Bezos for going to space because while he was up there we were signing people up (for the union)" (Fung et al., 2022). Indeed, Smalls and many others have long leveraged the most egregious examples of wealth inequity to organize for better social conditions.

This chapter will first describe a major theory of Ethnic Studies: decolonization, and one of its methodologies: testimony. Then we will define wealth, quantify racial wealth disparities, and explore four major areas of inequity: residential segregation, assets including homeownership, education, and labor.

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9.2: Testimony as a Decolonial Methodology

Decolonizing Wealth Inequity

In her book *Red Pedagogy* (2004), Sandy Grande tells the story of working on a lesson plan while waiting for students to arrive. At one point, one of the students asks her what that sticker on her laptop meant. The sticker read, “Keep Calm and Decolonize,” but the student was interested in the word “Decolonize.”

Grande wondered how she could define Decolonize to a middle school student, when she was still struggling with its definition herself. Later, she tried to break down the theories of colonization and decolonization to this student she concludes:

> Decolonization can only occur when we realize that our realities, lives, experiences are colonized. In the past, we have spoken about historical trauma and treaties. Today, we spoke about school and how it can be an assimilating and colonizing system. To decolonize, we must break or disrupt the system. We must begin to refuse and rethink, re-imagine our traditions in our everyday lives- how we think about land, government, education, etc.
>
> Ultimately, I believe decolonization is not about describing or defining, it is about doing. My definition was incomplete because I was unable to show the youth decolonization in a practice. As I defined decolonization, I was reminded that the “overarching goal of Red pedagogy…. is, and will always remain, decolonization. ‘Decolonization’ (like democracy) is neither achievable nor definable, rendering it ephemeral as a goal, but perpetual as a process (2004, p. 166).

Because the breadth of *wealth inequity and race* in the U.S. is too large to cover in one course or book, let alone one chapter, this chapter will attempt to decolonize the concept by focusing on BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) -led movements to break the housing, education, financial, and labor systems entrenching racial wealth disparities. In order to create a foundation to understand the current state of racial wealth inequity being disrupted, we will first substantiate its existence with some statistics and an overview of the historic and present systemic efforts to maintain economic inequity. But in laying this foundation, this chapter will also employ the decolonial methodology of testimony to embed all stages of learning with decolonial practice.

What is Testimony?

Although it is critical to understand the statistics when examining wealth inequities and race, it is even more critical to read the **testimonies** of those families and individuals who have been impacted by these patterns of inequity. The impacts of poverty and racial economic discrimination are far more human (and their psychological, spiritual, financial, and intergenerational effects are far more complicated) than numerical inequalities can show alone. Testimonies, such as Gil Scott-Heron’s, can therefore be a powerful tool in understanding and when working with the process of decolonization of racially disparate economic systems. Tuhiwai Smith explains:

> Testimonies intersect with claiming because they are a means through which oral evidence is presented to a particular type of audience. There is a formality to testimonies and a notion that truth is being revealed… indigenous testimonies are a way of talking about an extremely painful event or series of events. The formality of testimony provides a structure within which events can be related and feelings expressed.
>
> A testimony is also a form through which the voice of a "witness" is accorded space and protection. It can be constructed as a monologue and as a public performance. The structure of testimony - its formality, context and sense of immediacy - appeals to many Indigenous participants, particularly elders. It is an approach that translates well to a formal written document. While the listener may ask questions, testimonies structure the responses, silencing certain types of questions and formalizing others. Testimonio is more familiar to Latin American context as a narrative of collective memory: it has become one of a number of literary methods of making sense of histories, of voices and representation, and of the political narrative of oppression (2021, p.165).

Testimonies can help us break down wealth inequality barriers that exist by sharing lived experiences with one another and realize that wealth inequality is not an individual issue but a shared issue. It can also give human dimension to numeric measures of racial wealth disparities. We have to keep sharing and witnessing in order to keep it in our consciousness. While decolonization is perpetual, so is fighting for equality and equity.

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9.3: Racial Wealth Disparities

What Is Wealth?

Wealth is having access to an abundance of money or valuable possessions or assets (such as stocks, land, houses, insurance, cars, and retirement accounts) after accounting for liabilities (debts). Assets are property or resources with value that can be borrowed against or invested to generate more money and can be passed down. For people historically disenfranchised from wealth in the U.S., most wealth is accumulated through well-paying jobs, home ownership, and entrepreneurship, rather than from intergenerational gifting or inheritance. But significant barriers still exist for BIPOC in accessing and benefitting from housing, education, and labor/ business.

Wealth is held extremely unequally in the U.S. The top 10% own 70% of the nation's wealth, while the bottom 90% hold only 30% (Frank, 2022). Stated differently, the top 1% of Americans have nearly 35%, or about 17 times more wealth than the bottom 50% (Chancel et al., 2022, p. 224). Within that, there are stark racial inequalities. Although the various movements for civil rights during the 1960s made notable legal improvements for BIPOC communities and white women in the United States, these advances have not improved racial economic inequalities. For example, in 2018 Black income was half that of white households in the U.S., just like it was in the 1950s (Guilford, 2018). Additionally, the methods used to widen wealth inequalities in the U.S. have transformed and adapted to our changing world. But so have the methods of resistance.

Studies that deconstruct the racial and ethnic inequalities in the U.S. are mostly focused on housing, education, and labor. This section will focus on uncovering why having access to these three areas in our lives is critical to closing the racial wealth gap and how they have been used to further disenfranchise racial and ethnic groups in the U.S.

How Unequal is Wealth in the U.S. by Race and Ethnicity?

In 2020, the U.S. Federal Reserve System released a study finding that white families have far higher wealth (defined as the difference between families' gross assets and their liabilities) than BIPOC families using either the median (the typical household within each group) or mean (the average among households in each group) measure of family wealth:

> white families have the highest level of both median and mean family wealth: $188,200 and $983,400, respectively (Figure 1). Black and Hispanic or Latino families have considerably less wealth than white families. Black families' median and mean wealth is less than 15 percent that of white families, at $24,100 and $142,500, respectively. Hispanic families' median and mean wealth is $36,100 and $165,500, respectively. Other families—a diverse group that includes those identifying as Asian, American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, other race, and all respondents reporting more than one racial identification—have lower wealth than white families but higher wealth than Black and Hispanic families. The same patterns of inequality in the distribution of wealth across all families are also evident within race/ethnicity groups; for each of the four race/ethnicity groups, the mean is substantially higher than the median, reflecting the concentration of wealth at the top of the wealth distribution for each group (Bhutta et al., 2020).

The study also found that many key areas of wealth creation also showed clear racial inequities:

- white families are substantially more likely to receive inheritances, gifts and other family support than Black and Hispanic families;
- there are significant differences in homeownership rates between white and non-white families throughout the life-cycle (but with the smallest gap in older age);
- in all age groups, Black and Hispanic families are far less likely to have retirement accounts than white families;
- white and other or multiple race families have broader access and participate more in employer-sponsored retirement plans; and
- white families have significantly more emergency savings than Black or Hispanic families (Bhutta et al., 2020).

The Federal Reserve System found in a later study that in addition to the striking and enduring differences in the amount of wealth held by white and BIPOC families, the gap has actually widened dramatically over the past few decades (as has overall wealth inequality). In 2021, the typical white family had eight times the wealth of the typical Black family and five times the wealth of the typical Hispanic or Latino family (Aladangady and Forde, 2021). In fact, a study by McKinsey and Company found that an estimated 19% of Black American families, roughly 3.5 million households, have a negative net worth because of a history of discriminatory policies from the government and private industry that has hindered their accumulation of wealth over time (Alcorn, 2021).

Perceptions of Race and Wealth

Significantly, white Americans are aware of the privilege their race affords them in financial matters in comparison to BIPOC communities, but disagree about the degree to which Black Americans continue to experience discrimination in economic systems.

A 2019 Pew Research Center survey about “Race in America,” found that respondents unanimously agreed that being wealthy in the U.S. “helps a lot” whereas being poor in the U.S. “hurts a lot” (Menasce Horowitz et al., 2019, p. 28-29). Among those who responded with their racial backgrounds: the majority of white respondents agreed that being white either “helps a little” or “helps a lot”; the majority of those who identified as Hispanic believed that it “hurts a little” or “hurts a lot”; the majority of Asian respondents stated that it “neither helps nor hurts”; the majority of Black respondents stated that it either “hurts a little” or “hurts a lot”; additionally the majority of Native American respondents stated that it either “hurts a little” or “hurts a lot” (p. 29). Most respondents, regardless of their racial and ethnic background, were not in agreement if blacks were treated poorly when applying for a loan or mortgage or in stores and restaurants, however most agreed that blacks are treated worse than whites in police encounters and by the criminal justice system (p. 11).

A study at Yale by Jennifer A. Richeson and Michael W. Kraus found that in 2016, respondents estimated Black wealth to be 90 percent that of whites, when in actuality it was about 10 percent (Richeson, 2020). The authors examined perceptions at various other times in history and found that people’s estimates of inequity were not only far too low for every period, but the estimates actually grew more inaccurate the closer they got to the present, implying that people were more willing to imagine inequity in the past than acknowledge its ongoing presence. A follow-up study that only interviewed white respondents had a subset of the respondents read a short article about the persistence of racial discrimination before responding. Exposure to the article had a surprising impact - rather than considering that the present might be worse than they think it is, respondents instead still estimated that, in 2016, Black wealth was close to that of whites but plotted a more gradual slope of progress by lessening historic inequalities (Richeson, 2020).

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9.4: Why is Wealth So Unequal in the U.S.?

Wealth Inequality

> . . . But I couldn't get away
>
> No matter how far I went
>
> Seems like nothing gonna change
>
> Everything still remained the same
>
> Why is it so hard
>
> To make it in America
>
> I try so hard
>
> To make it in America
>
> Why, tell me, tell me
>
> We gotta make a change, in America
>
> Help me somebody
>
> Song: "Why Is It So Hard" (2011) by Charles Bradley (1948 - 2017)

Many of the racial economic inequalities in the U.S. originated with the property and assets accrued by white individuals and institutions through colonization and the theft of native land, and through slavery. The legacy of this unequal wealth has continued in the white families and institutions which have inherited it, the law enforcement systems created to protect it, and the Black and indigenous communities (often violently) deprived of it.

In a powerful impromptu speech during the demonstrations against the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, Kimberly Jones Powell explains the enduring effect of slavery and ongoing state-sponsored violence on wealth in the Black community:

> So, if I play four hundred rounds of Monopoly with you, and I had to play and give you every dime that I made, and then for fifty years every time that I played and if you didn't like what I did, you got to burn like they did in Tulsa and like they did in Rosewood. How can you win? You can't win. The game is fixed. So when they say, "Why do you burn down the community? Why burn down your own neighborhood? It's not ours! We don't own anything! We don't own anything! There is… Trevor Noah said it so beautifully last night. There is a social contract that we all have that if you steal or if I steal, then the person who is the authority comes in, and they fix the situation. But that the person this situation is killing us! So the social contract is broken! And if the social contract is broken, why the fuck do I give a shit about burning the fucking Football Hall of Fame or about burning a fucking Target? You broke the contract when you killed us in the street and didn't give a fuck! You broke the contract when for four hundred years, we played your game and built your wealth! You broke the contract when we built our wealth again on our own, on our bootstraps in Tulsa, and you dropped bombs on us! When we built it in Rosewood and you came in and you slaughtered us! You broke the contract! So fuck your Target! Fuck your Hall of Fame! As far as I'm concerned, they could burn this bitch to the ground. And it still wouldn't be enough. And they are lucky that what Black people are looking for is equality and not revenge (Jones, 2021, p. 10).

Jones uses a fixed game of Monopoly as an allegory for the U.S. pretending that there is a fair and objective economic system, when really 400 years of slavery and the violent systems that have persisted since (such as Jim Crow, lynchings, racial massacres, and mass incarceration) is the same as cheating every round, and has made the game impossible to win. She points out that the social contract was violently broken so many times and in so many ways, that the 2020 rioting is justified and completely pales in proportion to the violent wealth extraction inflicted on the Black community over centuries.

While much of the **racial and ethnic wealth inequalities** in the U.S. originated in colonization and slavery, they have endured only because of the many legal and financial systems and policies that have been created and continue to operate to ensure this stolen wealth grows and passes to future generations. For example, the lack of reparations for slavery and land theft, investment

and trust systems, inheritance and tax laws. Or, to put it more succinctly, in the words of Mehrsa Baradaran,"Wealth is where past injustices breed present suffering" (Klein & Posner, 2018, 01:05).

But just as importantly, current legal and financial systems also create inequities in how white and BIPOC Americans accumulate new wealth today. These systems are circular and self-reinforcing, so even as parts of the system morph and change (for example how the Fair Housing Act was passed in 1968 to outlaw discrimination in lending, but it was then followed in 1982 by deregulation of mortgage lending), racial financial disparities are further entrenched.

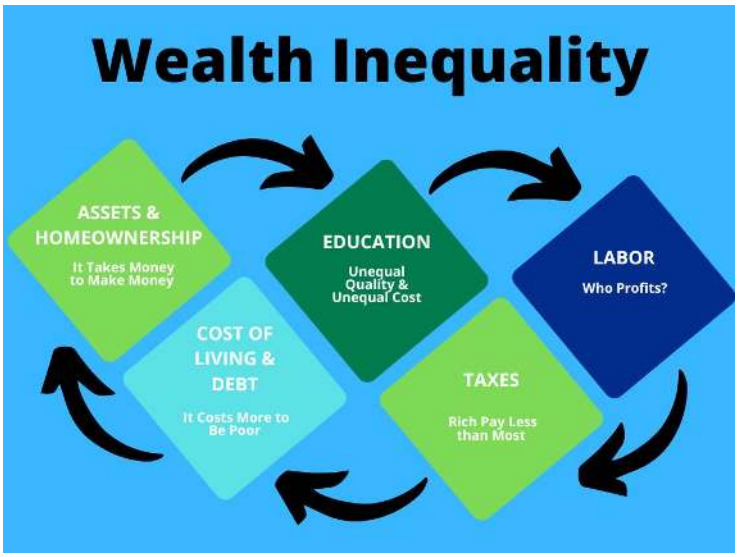

Figure 9.4.1: Wealth Inequality Flowchart. Education, unequal quality and unequal cost. Labor, who profits? Taxes, rich pay less than most. Cost of living and debt, it cost more to be poor. Assets and Homeownership, it takes money to make money. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; Ulysses Acevedo)

Racial inequities are perpetuated by both formal and informal discrimination, such as a landlord choosing not to accept a Black tenant (Demsas 2021) or an employer refusing to hire anyone with a criminal record, which often function to keep BIPOC communities out of wealth-generating arenas altogether (high-salary jobs, property investment, founding businesses, stock markets, etc.).

But just as importantly, racial inequities are perpetuated by policies and practices that continue to build wealth for white Americans while stripping wealth from BIPOC communities. These wealth-building policies and practices, such as the tax, inheritance, and bankruptcy systems, and property tax protections such as those in the state of California, amount to huge subsidies and equity-builders for those who have already accumulated wealth.

In this chapter I will describe some of the economic systems that serve white and BIPOC participants unequally, such as: homeownership, which boosts the wealth of (disproportionately white) homeowners and landlords but indebts (primarily BIPOC) tenants to increasingly unaffordable degrees; the educational system, operating to boost the wealth of some (primarily white) graduates while hindering the income of others (primarily BIPOC); and the labor system, which is controlled and profited by (disproportionately white) business owners or stockholders while compensating many (primarily BIPOC) workers with an unlivable wage.

Residential Racial Segregation

Where you live greatly impacts your access to quality education and proximity to well paying jobs, increasing or decreasing accordingly one's likelihood of escaping poverty. This correlation can actually be mapped through resources such as the Opportunity Atlas.

This leads us to the question, what does my ZIP code say about me? The answer is very complicated but to put it simply, our ZIP code determines our future in many more ways than is discussed. It is important to note that many injustices discussed in this book can be traced to where we live. For example: inequity in wealth, educational inequity, criminalization, mass incarceration, and environmental racism can be traced back to our ZIP codes. Assuming you even have a zip code.

In *The Address Book: What Street Addresses Reveal about identity, race, wealth, and power*, Deirdre Mask asks the following question: "how do homeless people live without an address?" In a national survey facilitated by service providers for homeless

people they found that most responded what they really needed was an address (Mask, 2020). Mask details how although an address is not a home, it is an important part of our lives that allows us access to register a child to school, apply for a job, register to vote, open a bank account, and so forth. Furthermore, the study found that when homeless individuals did not have an address they were barred from applying to jobs. Some jobs where individuals in the study applied required a background check to investigate the applicant's address history (p. 244). It is important to note that families with children make up a third of the homeless population (p. 245).

Why is Housing Racially Segregated?

U.S. residential racial segregation was developed during the early 1900s (Massey & Denton, 1993). Residential racial segregation is the separation of different racial groups to different neighborhoods. The process of residential segregation was not a natural one as it is often described to be, with people voluntarily preferring to live close to their extended families and cultures they are familiar with. Although that is certainly a factor in some amount of racial and ethnic grouping, there were many official rules and laws *requiring* residential segregation. Real estate boards formally prevented realtors from selling to nonwhites because they believed that the price of homes in all-white neighborhoods would increase over time. Realtors used various tactics to keep neighborhoods segregated, most notably racial covenants, steering, and redlining. Although each of these strategies have been independently implemented they have worked together to promote residential racial segregation in order to keep white neighborhoods white.

Racial covenants are a now non-enforceable contractual agreement found in the deed to a house which explicitly states that non-white people cannot own or rent the house. In other words, they are rules that homeowners or developers could add themselves to their house deed to forbid certain races from buying or living on the property, even after the property was sold or passed through inheritance. Homeowners would coordinate with their neighbors to create entire neighborhoods where only whites could live, to protect their comfort and also their property values. For example, "No lot covered by this indenture, or any part thereof, shall ever be sold . . . leased or rented to or occupied by, or in any other way used by, any person or persons not of the Caucasian Race, nor shall any such excluded person live in any main building or subsidiary building or any such lot; provided, however, that this restriction shall not be applicable to domestic servants in the employ of the owner or occupant then living in such building" (Thompson et al., 2021).

Only Members of the Caucasian Race

One of the important features of the Building Regulations at Highland Park reads as follows:

"The buyer agrees that no estate in or possession of the said premises shall be sold, transferred or conveyed to any person not of the Caucasian race."

This means that when you buy a homesite in this properly Regulated home place, you will forever be assured of desirable neighbors. Only members of the white race can buy or hold property in this beautiful restricted residence park.

Another provision specifies that only dwelling houses are permitted, and these must cost at least a definite amount.

Good neighbors, beautiful surroundings, uniform improvements and a large enough area for residential zone, to make Building Regulations effective, are only few of the many advantages of Highland Park.

This handsome park, with 332 acres, is the largest restricted home district in Utah. Because of its farsighted regulations, all property will become more beautiful and more valuable each year.

Go in our auto and investigate for yourself the many advantages of locating in a regulated home district.

Phone—Wasatch 961

Kimball & Richards

"Land Merchants"

84 Main Street

Salt Lake City

Figure 9.4.2: Exclusionary Covenants. A flyer displays the language used to exclude non whites from purchasing homes in segregated neighborhoods. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; elycefeliz via Flickr)

Figure 9.4.2, a flyer titled "Only Members of the Caucasian Race," is a perfect example of how racial covenants were used to segregate white and non-white residential areas, especially new subdivisions. It reads as follows:

One of the important features of the building regulations at Highland Park reads as follows:

> the buyer agrees that no estate is or possesses of the said premise shall be sold, transferred or conveyed to any persons not of the Caucasian race."

> This means that when you buy a homesite in this property regulated home place, you will forever be assured of desirable neighbors. Only members of the white race can buy or hold property in this beautiful restricted residence park.
>
> Another provision specifies that only dwelling houses are permitted, and these must cost at least a definite amount.
>
> Good neighbors, beautiful surroundings, uniform improvements, and a large enough area, or residential zone, to make building regulations effective, are only a few of the many advantages of Highland Park.
>
> This handsome park, with 332 acres is the largest restricted home district in Utah. Because of its farsighted regulations, all property will become more beautiful and more valuable each year.
>
> Go in our auto and investigate for yourself the many advantages of locating in a regulated home district.

In 1948, the Supreme Court case *Shelley v. Kraemer* ruled that racial covenants were unenforceable in real estate transactions. The court didn't find the racist covenants themselves in violation of constitutional rights (because home purchases are a private transaction), but rather that the court's enforcement of these covenants was unconstitutional. Although racial covenants are not enforceable by courts, many homes still have these racial covenants in the "property title" because they are not easily changeable. And some fear that if they are erased, so will the evidence of this horrendous system (Kim, 2021). However, recently the process has been streamlined in California, although it is not automatic, so only time will tell if it increases the rate of removal (Kim).

Quickly after racial covenants were phased out, cities, municipalities, and counties turned to zoning to serve a similar function (Kim).

Education, Zip-Codes, and Wealth

Today, our schools are more segregated than ever through the wealth of our neighborhoods. Although Horace Mann famously called education in the U.S. "the great equalizer," (1848, as cited in Education and Social Inequity, n.d.) it has often been used as a method to keep communities impoverished. Education is believed to be the way for individuals to rise above their social economic status. *What happens when education is designed to perpetuate social economic status?* Our family's socioeconomic status predicts the quality of education we will have access to more than any other factor.

There have been many attempts to desegregate schools and to offer equal education for all, however inequities in education have persisted and transformed how students can access a quality education. Now more than ever, our zip code determines the funding for our schools, the quality of our schools and our access to wealth through education. Although *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954 is often framed as the pinnacle of desegregating schools and opening quality education to black and brown students, there have been many later legal cases that significantly lessened the desegregation of schools.

Since *Brown v. Board of Education* there have been many efforts to further segregate schools in new ways that have pushed back against legal desegregation of schools. According to an article by Time Magazine titled "The Worst Court Decisions since 1960," the *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* (1973) decision has been among the worst. This is an important Supreme Court decision which argued that inequity in school funding did not violate students' constitutional rights to an equitable education. The ruling legalized the funding of schools based on Zip Code wealth instead of funding equitably to historically disenfranchised communities. Furthermore, this decision legalized separate and unequally funded schools in the U.S. and still impacts how our schools are funded.

In the same article, the decision of *Millikan v. Bradley* (1974) is marked as one of the worst court decisions since 1960. This case effectively stopped the bussing of inner city Detroit students to historically segregated schools and getting closer to desegregating schools. This case was a major setback for the progress of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and one of the major goals of desegregating schools. "School segregation is now more severe than in the late 1960s" (Orfield & Jarvie, 2020, p. 11). At the peak of desegregation in 1988, more than a third of Black students (37%) attended schools that had a majority of white students, and in the South, it was 43% in majority white schools. In 2018, it was down to 19% nationally, 18% in the South and only 14% in the West (p. 28). Some have argued that statistics focused on the proportion of white students at a school are misleading, because the U.S. has become more diverse, naturally lowering the percentage of white students (Stancil, 2018). But the evidence is clear: entire school districts are becoming more racially distinct from each other, even while racial diversity within those districts may be increasing (Stancil). The share of Black students in segregated schools has increased by 11 percent nationwide in the last two decades, faster than the share of either white students or nonwhite students overall, which have both risen by about 6 percent (Stancil).

Of course, school segregation is intimately tied to homeownership, both because public schools are funded by local housing taxes, so the higher the home values, the more-resourced the schools, but also because many wealthy communities have little rental housing, and what does exist is exorbitantly expensive. In the next section, we will explore in more detail why there are racial inequities in homeownership, which fuel both school segregation but also how this widens disparities in assets and new worth.

Racial Inequity in Homeownership

Housing, land, and the history of segregation has arguably caused the greatest amount of damage to access to wealth. This chapter will emphasize how housing access, specifically owning land and a home, is the biggest component of wealth for many families (Bhutta et al., 2020). This chapter will also focus on the historical disenfranchisement by laws, policies, and practices that have been utilized to further the racial wealth gap.

Historically, the most common method for families in the U.S. to build wealth has been through real property (land and homes). Some families have inherited property originally granted from the English or Spanish crown when the U.S. was still made up of colonies, through the Homestead Act, or later through the G.I. bill (all of which were given almost exclusively to whites only), or property purchased by their ancestors.

For most others, the greatest wealth they will accumulate in their lifetime is by purchasing a home.

> On the one hand, the ability to purchase a home is a reflection of wealth a family already has (or their parents' wealth), as significant funds are generally required for a down payment and closing costs. On the other hand, homeownership has also been found to yield strong financial returns on average and to be a key channel through which families build wealth (Bhutta et al., 2020, citing Laurie S. Goodman and Christopher Mayer's 2018 article "Homeownership and the American Dream").

Unfortunately, many BIPOC families have been explicitly barred from purchasing or financing a home in thriving communities where real estate prices rise over the years, creating equity. This has created wealth inequality and a lack of equity in BIPOC communities.

A good testimony on the power of having access to generational income through family home ownership is the story of Cory Booker, a current U.S. Senator from New Jersey. Booker narrates his family's story in the Netflix show "Explained," Episode 1, "The Racial Wealth Gap" (Klein & Posner, 2018). He recalls that without a doubt his family's access to purchasing a home in a desirable neighborhood laid a foundation for intergenerational wealth that allowed Booker to become a U.S. senator.

Booker's experience reaffirms many of the things we will be discussing in this chapter including redlining, unfair practices by realtors, and racial covenants. Booker's parents knew that having access to purchasing a home in a desirable neighborhood would open up opportunities for their children. However the laws, policies, and racist practices would have prevented his parents from buying a home in their desired neighborhood. In this story, Booker tells us that his parents had to trick the realtor after they had been denied an opportunity to put an offer on their desired home. His parents met with a white lawyer who made an appointment to see the house and put an offer on behalf of the family without the realtor knowing. Once Booker's family arrived to pick up the keys, the lawyer and the realtor ended up fighting. The realtor begged that the family not move into the home because it would damage his business.

The Booker family story is important when exploring the experiences of African American families that were able to access wealth through the real estate market. Furthermore, their story leads us to ask the question: "how many other families have been turned away from purchasing a home in their desired neighborhood?" Although it may be nearly impossible to find an exact number of families turned away from viewing a home in a greenlined neighborhood, it is imperative to know the stories of families who have been pushed aside from accessing generation wealth vis-à-vis the real estate market. Moreover, by looking at segregated and redlined neighborhoods, we can draw connections between experiences by predominantly African American and Latinx families.

Redlining

Redlining is the practice of automatically denying mortgage loans based on a property's geographic (redlined) location, rather than assessing an individual's creditworthiness. Historically, the areas that were considered undesirable and were redlined were the areas where BIPOC residents were allowed to live, and the desirable (sometimes "greenlined" or "bluelined") neighborhoods were limited to white residents through racial covenants. This meant that even middle- and upper-income African Americans and other BIPOC could not receive a loan to purchase a house anywhere, while a lower-income white borrower could be approved to purchase a home in a greenlined area.

Unable to get regular mortgages, Black residents who wanted to own a house but did not have enough funds to purchase one in cash were pushed into rent-to-own housing contracts that massively increased the cost of housing and gave them no ownership rights or equity until their last payment was accepted (and it was often not, for one reason or another). Many testimonies of those who endured this system are shared in the article by Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations" (2014), discussed in section 9.5, under: "The Ongoing Struggle for Reparations." Redlining and its legacy created the basis for educational disparities to persist even after racial covenants were outlawed, and greatly weakened the BIPOC homeowner base and therefore equity and intergenerational wealth for whites accrued over time.

Although redlining was subsequently outlawed, it still is practiced in new permutations, and was widely cited as part of what created the housing crash of 2008. **The housing crash of 2008** was a bubble caused by racially predatory lending which "popped," wreaking havoc on financial markets while draining housing assets from largely Black and Latinx communities. Redlining was important because it is a basis for educational disparities even after racial covenants were outlawed. It greatly weakened the BIPOC homeowner base and therefore equity/ intergenerational wealth. For example Atkinson expands on the effects of the subprime mortgage crisis, writing,

The subprime mortgage crisis that helped bring on the Great Recession resulted in the decimation of housing-related wealth among economically disenfranchised groups and communities. These losses were, in significant part, the direct result of the rampant racialized and geographic mortgage discrimination that took place in these communities in the run-up to the financial crisis and persists today (Atkinson, 2015, p. 1041).

Unequal Education

Education in the U.S. is widely seen as the method to accessing wealth by having access to a desirable career. Some believe that education can eradicate poverty. What is the real purpose of education in the US? K-12 education and higher education in particular have promoted the idea that education is a critical method for social mobility. But as we saw earlier in this chapter, where we live and our zip codes often dictate the quality of education we have access to.

Educational tracking has also been used by the U.S. hegemonic class which is a method to track racialized students throughout the educational pipeline to not attend college by simultaneously preparing them for menial jobs or semi-skilled labor. Many scholars agree that students of color are disproportionately criminalized and "pushed out" of K-12 education and into the school-to-prison pipeline (Rios, 2011).

Nevertheless, for some racialized people in the U.S., educational achievement has been used to have access to higher paying jobs and achieve other markers of wealth, such as homeownership. Although countless disadvantaged students have achieved social mobility and earn higher wages through completing higher education, even more have been pushed away through racially-disparate educational barriers.

Education has always been used for cultural agendas as well as academic ones. Schools were used to further colonize American Indian children through the use of Native American boarding schools (please see the section "Assimilation, Boarding Schools and Adoption" under Chapter 4, section 4.4: "Invasion, Occupation, Imperialism, and Hegemony). Native American boarding schools were used to convert Native American children to Christianity and simultaneously lose their native culture. Methods used to forcibly assimilate Native American children were not allowing them to speak their native language, practice their religion and spirituality and enforce gender rules that fit in the western culture. For example, young Native American boys' hair were cut short and they were relegated to working outside doing physical labor such as farming and other physical labor. Whereas young Native American girls were pushed to work inside of the home and learn how to cook, clean and keep a home then sent off to work in white homes.

In her opinion piece titled "let's talk about Harvard Colonial past and present," Ariel G. Silverman writes about Harvard University's Native American program which eventually created the Harvard Indian college established in 1655. The Harvard Indian college further progressed the project of assimilating Native Americans to U.S. dominant culture. Additionally, the college was home of one of the first printing presses in the English colonies and it was used to print Bibles in Native American languages (Lopenzina, 2012). Silverman ties the history of Harvard's Indian college to the larger history of settler colonialism and white supremacy in the U.S. where "the ideology that white people and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions are superior to people of color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions" (Silverman, 2021). Lastly, it is important to note that Harvard also has a history of using slave labor to serve faculty, administration, and students (Binkley, 2022).

In addition to cultural agendas, education has been used to further economic ones. The public education system in the U.S. was established on the tail end of the industrial revolution. As the world got smaller through transportation advances such as the train

and the car, young people needed to be literate in order to participate and be productive members of society. This is the beginning of public education as we know it today. Before the Industrial Revolution, education was the private responsibility of families and parents who organized how to educate their own children. It is important to note that after the Industrial Revolution, we saw the rise of schooling as organized education (Spring, 1989). As a national project, education has been viewed as increasing national wealth by creating a literate population and advancing technology. This happens by socialization of the future work force and by the sorting and training of the future labor force (Spring, 1989). Spring emphasizes that the goal of socialization for the workplace has been part of the project of public education in the U.S. throughout history.

Early on, the purpose of education was not to create a population of critical thinkers or to lay groundwork towards wealth but to create more workers that can already be accustomed to accepting orders. For example, the 19th century American Education system supported marching, drill, and orderliness and it was “justified in terms of training for factory assembly lines” (Spring, 1989). As mentioned in the beginning of this section, the purpose of education is for the dominant group to impose their political goals onto populations, thus reinforcing cultural hegemony onto the students. Coined by Antonio Gramsci, **cultural hegemony** is widely accepted as domination through coercion or consent. It is important to ask what is being taught in schools that ultimately benefits the dominant (wealthy, political) class.

Racial Capitalism

Racial Capitalism is a theory developed by Cedric Robinson in which he states that

> capitalism and racism, in other words, did not break from the old order but rather evolved from it to produce a modern world system of “racial capitalism” dependent on slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide. Capitalism was "racial" not because of some conspiracy to divide workers or justify slavery and dispossession, but because racialism had already permeated Western feudal society (D.G. Kelley, 2017).

In other words, it helps us understand the legacy of capitalism in the U.S. and how modern racialized labor is an updated manifestation of the racist ideologies infused within racial hierarchies.

Racialized labor is important to understand because it is the ontological experiences that attempt to enforce social orders of the past. In other words, how does labor today shape our existence? How is it informed from history? Labor functions most commonly as the selling of time, effort, blood and sweat in exchange for money while simultaneously making profits for someone else. The profits are always more than the labor is compensated for. It is also important to note that Robinson "encountered intellectuals who used the phrase “racial capitalism” to refer to South Africa’s economy under apartheid (D.G. Kelly, 2017).

How are our bodies racialized and exploited based on the legacy of white supremacy? In the U.S. racialized labor has been exploited and used to build the country, especially forced enslaved labor from Black Africans which became one pillar to white supremacy in the US. Labor has simultaneously been utilized as a method for making the exploiters of labor wealthy and to keep laborers in a controlled social space (economic, segregation, education, and psychological). Race, as defined by Michael Omi and Howard Winant, helps us to add more substance to connect how we are racialized to past history and how it informs our racialized experiences right now. Omi and Winant define race as “a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interest by referring to different types of human bodies” (Winant & Omi, 1994, p.55).

In his article “How Capitalism and Racism Support each other” economics professor Richard Wolff agrees with Cedric Robinson on how race functions in capitalism. Wolff agrees because he states that “every capitalism that we know of has always demonstrated a desperate, urgent, and ongoing desire to do what business schools call ‘economizing on labor costs’ (Wolff, 2016). That’s a polite way of saying - trying to figure out how to get away in the production process with paying less for the labor you need to hire to complete the process of production.” Historically, U.S. capitalism has utilized many methods to acquire free labor or to keep labor costs down such as slavery, child labor, racialized labor, immigrant labor, transnational labor, globalized labor, non-union labor, gig economy labor, automated labor, etc. Furthermore Wolff shares an example that racialized labor is taken advantage of especially when there is an incoming immigrant group with a different culture and treated like second class citizens and oftentimes used as scapegoats. According to Wolff’s analysis, racialized labor becomes a function of capitalism that is used as “the shock absorbers of capitalism’s instability, and that’s why capitalism works as hard as it does to maintain them and if not someone else in that role” (Wolff, 2016).

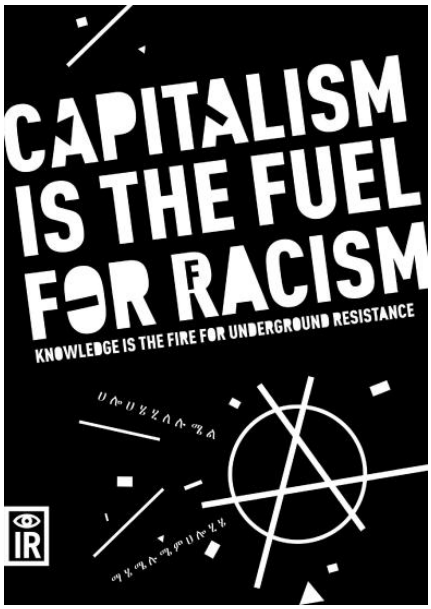

Figure 9.4.3: Capitalism is the fuel for racism: Knowledge is the fire of underground resistance. (Public Domain; Dubdem via Flickr)

The results of racial capitalism have been punishing as summarized in the quote below:

> Black boys raised in America, even in the wealthiest families and living in some of the most well-to-do neighborhoods, still earn less in adulthood than white boys with similar backgrounds, according to a sweeping new study that traced the lives of millions of children. White boys who grow up rich are likely to remain that way. Black boys raised at the top, however, are more likely to become poor than to stay wealthy in their own adult households. Even when children grow up next to each other with parents who earn similar incomes, black boys fare worse than white boys in 99 percent of America. And the gaps only worsen in the kind of neighborhoods that promise low poverty and good schools (Badger et al., 2018).

Employment disparities along racial lines have resulted in Black Americans losing out on $220 billion in wages they would be earning annually if their occupational numbers across business sectors were proportional to their percentage of the U.S. population (Alcorn, 2021). Black Americans are concentrated in lower-wage occupations and underrepresented in higher-paying careers (Alcorn). For example, Black workers, who represent 13% of the population, make up just 5% of the nation's physicians and 4.5% of its software developers (both highly-paid), yet are roughly 35% of all U.S. nursing assistants (an occupation with a median wage of just $23,000), and 33% of all security guards and school bus drivers (Alcorn).

Labor Unions

The struggle of labor and power has persisted in what is now the US since the initial contact with European Settlers. In his book, *A People's History of the US: From 1492 to Present*, Howard Zinn provides the background of the relationship between Virginians in 1617 and Native Americans. One of the premises of this relationship was the European settlers plotting to exploit indigenous labor. Zinn writes,

> They couldn’t force Indians to work for them, as Columbus had done. They were outnumbered, and while, with superior firearms, they could massacre Indians, they would face massacre in return. They could not capture them and keep them enslaved; the Indians were tough, resourceful, defiant, and at home in these woods, as the transplanted Englishmen were not (2015, p. 25).

Nevertheless indigenous people were enslaved in the Americas and “African blacks had been stamped as slave labor for a hundred years” (p. 26). This era of race and labor informs the representation or lack thereof Native American and Black labor in future labor movements because “the color line also subtly marked even… labor unions, which privileged whites over working-class people of color despite ideologies of equality” (Redmond et al., 2016, p.421). Ultimately racial and social identities have a basis where they impact who gets “the jobs, who owns homes, who gets racially profiled (p.242).

In the U.S. labor organizing has historically been met with suppression by employers who benefit from the profits the labor produces. According to the Department of Labor (DOL) a **labor union** is:

> a group of two or more employees who join together to advance common interests such as wages, benefits, schedules and other employment terms and conditions….Unions are membership-driven, democratic organizations governed by laws that require financial transparency and integrity, fair elections and other democratic standards, and fair representation of all workers (*Unions 101*, n.d.).

Although union organizing greatly benefits its members through collective bargaining in order to achieve its goals. BIPOC have been excluded at times from benefiting from labor unions. For example the president of AFL (American Federation of Labor), Samuel Gompers, in the early 1900s claimed that he only knew a few instances where "colored workers were discriminated against" and he blamed them "for their depressed economic condition in order to exonerate the discriminatory actions of his union" (Kendi, 2016, p. 274).

There are too many union organizing movements throughout U.S. history to analyze in this chapter. Fast forward to 2023, there has been a rise in labor organizing struggles. From teachers to Amazon workers and many other labor sectors have been fighting for collective bargaining rights. Labor unions have been under attack because they have been labeled as bad for business and ultimately bad for the consumer because of the "rise in production costs". Unions can produce the opposite effect, which is the best thing for consumers and good for business. How do these recent labor movements reflect the tainted histories of labor organizing in the past? How are these histories being reproduced? How are they being challenged?

The labor demographics in Amazon's workforce affirm the racialized labor exploitation which can be found in US labor organizing history. Did you know that "more than 60% of the nearly 400,000 U.S. workers Amazon hired into its lowest-paying hourly roles between 2018 and 2020 were Black or Hispanic, and more than half were women" (Long, 2021). Only about 18% of the corporate and tech are Black, Indigenous, or Latinx. Although Amazon is the second largest company in the US "its average starting wage is now $18 — the wealth generated by the company has largely not trickled down to its hourly workers, those employees say" (Long, 2021). Furthermore, "racial inequities were at the forefront of the union campaign, nearly 80% of the employees at the Bessemer [Alabama] warehouse are Black" (Long, 2021). Aside from the racial makeup of Amazon employees, most are designated to part time status and if they do work full time it is most likely during the holiday season.

Against all odds Amazon Labor Union (ALU) became a reality on April 1st, 2022 for Amazon workers at JFK8, a Staten Island Amazon fulfillment center, with the leadership of both Chris Smalls and Derrick Palmer (Tarasov, 2022). Their labor organizing efforts were met with the pushback of Amazon attorneys who filed 25 objections to the election results. One of Amazon's objections claimed that "union leaders bribed workers with marijuana" and another objection stated that the union leaders "harassed those who didn't support the union" (Tarasov, 2022). On the ALU website they state:

> Our demands are simple: better pay, better benefits, and better working conditions. Amazon workers know the only way we're going to pressure the company into treating us with respect is by uniting under one banner and exercising our right to come together as an independent union (*ALU Website*, 2022).

The ALU experienced and continues to experience countless struggles against expanding their organization to other Amazon warehouses.

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9.5: Counternarratives in Racial Wealth Disparities

Counternarratives

Many racialized groups in the U.S. have pushed back against these practices such as: the East L.A. Chicano walkouts, Black Panther Party Oakland Community Schools, and the Third World Liberation Front. These movements share in common the fight to gain control of how schools serve historically disenfranchised communities, what is taught, how it is taught, who does the teaching, and bringing a quality education.

The 1968 East L.A. Chicano Blowouts were mass student walkouts across the Los Angeles Unified School District to protest the treatment of high school Mexican American students. The treatment of these students included: corporal punishment administered by teachers and administrators, rules against speaking Spanish, not having access to bathroom facilities during school hours, irrelevant curriculum to the community, not enough teachers that shared a similar background to students, and educational tracking. A high school teacher, Sal Castro, and students organized many high schools in the district to walk out of schools in order to peacefully demonstrate against this treatment. This movement is also known as a catapult to the Chicano movement of the late 60's and 70's. Please see the Chapter 6, page 6.2: "Roots and Resistance" for more details on the impacts of the East L.A. Chicano Blowouts.

The Black Panther Party (BPP) is known for having a great impact on California social movements and on the U.S. imagination of what Black Power is and how to organize effectively. Among the many impacts of the BPP to culture and society they had a great impact on how to re-imagine education in the U.S. In 1973 the BPP established its own school in East Oakland called the Oakland Community School (OCS) directed by Ericka Huggins and Donna Howell. The school was active until 1982. The creation of the school was a direct response to the disinvestment of public education in Oakland and to provide a model for liberatory education. OCS was so impactful that it influenced the creation of the U.S. free lunch program to lower income children.

Point 5 of the Black Panther Party's 10 Point Platform:

> We want decent education for our people that exposes the true nature of this decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present-day society. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of the self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and in the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else (Ealey et al., 2016).

OCS offered much more than breakfast, lunch and dinner to its students; it was a true model for a well rounded education for its students. Students at OCS practiced meditation and mindfulness in order to focus on student's mental health. They also participated in martial arts classes and peer led justice committees. Just as important OCS provided youth with the opportunity to learn from people who looked like them and who were from their own community. Please see Chapter 2 and Chapter 11 on the creation of Ethnic Studies and the influences of the Black Panther Party.

Figure 9.5.1: Panthers Expand Free Breakfast for Children Program. A flyer announces the opening of a second location for the Black Panther Party free breakfast for children program in October 1970. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Washington Area Spark via Flickr)

Creation of HBCUs

The first established Historically Black College or University (HBCU) was Cheyney University of Pennsylvania in 1837 a little over 200 years after Harvard University (the first university of the U.S.). Cheyney University was established before the civil war, whereas most HBCUs were established post civil war.

According to the article “The danger of history slipping away: the Heritage Campus and HBCUs: HBCU presidents must learn to use preservation planning as a tool to leverage new resources” by Clement and Lidsky, HBCUs need over $1 billion to bring the many buildings up to code. “HBCUs are as diverse as higher education. These institutions have different histories, different cultures, and different resources. They are public and private, large and small, two-year and four-year, single sex and coed, religious and non-denominational. The common thread that binds them is their mission to provide access to higher education for African Americans, who were previously enslaved and later segregated in the United States” (Clement & Lidsky, 2011).

The Legacy of Ethnic Studies in Education

An important question to address is, what methods are being used to effectively teach children who attend underfunded schools without the same resources as children in wealthier neighborhoods? Underfunded schools are disadvantaged in many ways when attempting to close the achievement gap; some examples are they are not able to access the same teacher recruitment strategies, educational technology, and extra-curricular opportunities. Underfunded schools have found creative ways to implement pedagogical practices to help their students succeed for example, implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, hiring teachers of color from similar backgrounds as students, and in some districts finding alternatives to campus police presence.

California’s AB 101 is the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy. Through this bill all C.A. high school students are required to take one semester of Ethnic Studies before graduating. Although AB 101 requires C.A. K-12 school districts to implement ethnic studies by 2025 many districts are starting to offer Ethnic Studies courses (Karlamangla, 2021).

In a 2021, Stanford University study of Ethnic Studies courses in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD) found that these courses had long lasting positive impacts (Dreilinger, 2021). Ethnic Studies courses in SFUSD boosted attendance for at-risk students, boosted academic performance, helped them earn more credits, increased GPA, increased graduation probability, and likelihood of enrolling in college.

Furthermore, the study used social psychology theoretical perspectives to demonstrate that taking an ethnic studies course in 9th grade aligned with being a psychological intervention. Ethnic studies courses offering a “sense of belonging in school, affirm personal values and forewarning about stereotypes have all shown promise in improving student engagement and motivation.” (Dreilinger, 2021). Ethnic studies classes in this study also demonstrated that students were able to see their ancestors and other

groups in the curriculum, whereas these narratives have been omitted in the master narrative. Please see Chapter 2 for more information on the movement for Ethnic Studies in higher education and K-12 districts.

Occupy Wall Street

One of the largest and most recent popular movements to fight against income and wealth inequity was the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement, according to the OWS official website "the movement was a people-powered movement that began on September 17, 2011 in Manhattan and quickly spread globally. OWS fought back against major banks and corporations involved in the democratic process, and the role of Wall Street in creating an economic collapse that has caused the greatest recession in generations" (occupywallst.org, 2022). The OWS movement slogan was "we are the 99 percent" in contrast to the idea that the 1 percent of ultra wealthy hold much of the resources in the U.S. Some of the goals included better jobs, more equal distribution of income, less profit for bankers, and stricter policies on banks negotiating with consumer services, i.e. mortgages and debit cards. Other goals included bank reform, student loan forgiveness, and fixing the home foreclosures.

The Ongoing Struggle for Reparations

In his article, *The Case for Reparations,* Ta-Nehisi Coates makes a powerful statement of the morality of the US not coming to terms with the historic economic inequities the legacy of slavery has left on generations of Black American families. Coates writes,

Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole. (Coates, 2014).

In many ways, it seems simple enough. Wealth was forcibly extracted from Black laborers in the form of a lifetime of free labor, so in order to atone for it, financial compensation should now be provided. As a gesture, in 2008 Congress apologized for Jim Crow laws and Slavery, nine states have officially apologized for slavery (*Congress Apologizes for Slavery, Jim Crow*, 2008). How can the US repay the value of the economic extraction of labor during state sponsored slavery?

Reparations are righting the wrongs of a past injustice through resources or monetary payment. The idea of reparations for slavery and the recommendations for it is not new to the US and was first discussed after the emancipation proclamation as a policy of "40 acres and a mule" in 1865 (NAACP, 2019). Then again in 1894 the US senate would propose a bill to grant direct payments of "$500 to all ex-slaves plus monthly pensions." The US public would hear the demands for reparations during the 1960's Black Power movement, then again in the 1980's (NAACP, 2019). But the case for reparations has always remained controversial and politically challenging.

Any authentic conversation on reparations acknowledges the role of local, state, and federal governments and laws during and after slavery. After slavery ended, its legacy has sustained such disparate outcomes in wealth by race that some sort of "repair" must also occur for there to be economic equity. In recognition of this, California recently emerged as a leading state in the discussion for reparations. At the end 2022 California has still remained in discussion of how much financial reparations (possibly $350,000) and to whom (Mahdawi, 2022).

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9.6: Summary/Review

Conclusion

This chapter outlined many of the issues but highlighted residential segregation, assets including homeownership, education, and labor as the major areas of wealth inequity. We learned in this chapter about the challenges of fixing the racial and ethnic wealth inequities in the US. In fact, our intersectional identities are more connected to our access or denial to wealth than we may realize. For example, white families have higher wealth because they are more likely to receive inheritances, gifts and other family support than Black and Hispanic families. Furthermore, this chapter utilized testimonies as a decolonial methodology when learning about the collective struggles of wealth inequalities and the movements to break down those barriers.

Proposed as a solution to eradicate poverty, education has been called the "great equalizer" and viewed as a path towards wealth building for those who do not come from wealth. In fact, individuals who earn college degrees can outearn their counterparts who don't. However, low quality education (in combination with a variety of factors) can push out students from pursuing higher education and settling for dead end jobs. The economic injustice cycle persists because our income dictates where we can afford to live, access to quality education and proximity to well paying jobs.

Lastly, an important concept to understand from this chapter is racial capitalism, which explains how modern racialized labor is informed by the past racist ideologies and labor (i.e. unpaid African slave labor in US history). Thus, many of the racial economic inequalities in the US originated with the property and assets appropriated through colonization and the theft of native land, and through slavery. The struggles for economic justice persist in our society. For example, the continued fight for labor organizing by our teachers to Amazon workers to the nationwide, statewide, local, dialogue for reparations.

Key Terms

- **Testimony:** According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith testimonies are a project towards decolonization as they intersect with claiming because they are a means through which oral evidence is presented to a particular type of audience. Furthermore Smith states that in Latin America testimonies are used as a literary method "for making sense of histories, of voices and representation, and of the political narrative of oppression (Smith, 2021, p. 165).
- **Wealth:** having access to an abundance of money or valuable possessions or assets (such as stocks, land, houses, insurance, cars, and retirement accounts) after accounting for liabilities (debts). Assets are property or resources with value that can be borrowed against or invested to generate more money and can be passed down.
- **Racial and Ethnic Wealth Inequalities:** in the U.S. these inequities originated in colonization and slavery, they have endured because of the many legal and financial systems and policies that have been created and continue to operate to ensure this stolen wealth grows and passes to future generations.
- **Racial Covenants:** although they are now non-enforceable contractual agreements found in the deed to a house which explicitly states that non-white people cannot own or rent the house. In other words, there are rules that homeowners or developers could add themselves to their house deed to forbid certain races from buying or living on the property, even after the property was sold or passed through inheritance.
- **Redlining:** the practice of automatically denying mortgage loans based on a property's geographic (redlined) location, rather than assessing an individual's creditworthiness. Historically, the areas that were considered undesirable and were redlined were the areas where BIPOC residents were allowed to live, and the desirable (sometimes "greenlined" or "bluelined") neighborhoods were limited to white residents through racial covenants.
- **The Housing Crash of 2008:** was a bubble caused by racially predatory lending which "popped," wreaking havoc on financial markets while draining housing assets from largely Black and Latinx communities.
- **Cultural hegemony:** domination through coercion or consent. It is important to ask what is being taught in schools and reproduced in society (i.e. culture and laws) that ultimately benefits the dominant (wealthy, political) class. This term was coined by Antonio Gramsci.
- **Racial Capitalism:** a theory developed by Cedric Robinson in which he states that "capitalism and racism, in other words, did not break from the old order but rather evolved from it to produce a modern world system of "racial capitalism" dependent on slavery, violence, imperialism, and genocide.
- **Labor Unions:** are membership-driven, democratic organizations usually a group of two or more employees who join together to advance common interests such as wages, benefits, schedules and other employment terms and conditions (*Unions 101*, n.d.).
- **Reparations:** righting the wrongs of a past injustice through resources or monetary payment.

Discussion Questions

1. Did you ever hear of the **Housing Crash of 2008** before reading this chapter? Did your family or someone you know experience the consequences of this event? Is this new information to you, why do you think this happened?
2. In small groups of 2-4 students, please review the section and definition of **testimonies**. What does it mean? Please share a testimony with your classmates that relates to Wealth Inequality and Race.

Journal Prompts

1. Please choose one of the concepts used to explain **Wealth Inequality** from this chapter. Why does this explanation stand out to you? Have you or anyone from your family, friends, or loved ones experienced this in their lives?
2. What is the fight for **reparations**? What do proponents of it argue? Why do you think it hasn't happened in the US?

Class Activities

Zip-Code Activity

This is an activity that can be used in an in person classroom setting by going to The Opportunity Atlas website and allowing students to search their own ZIP code.

Zip-Code Activity Instructions:

- Ask students to journal and answer the following question.
  - How did your neighborhood growing up impact your life opportunities?
- Before allowing students to explore the opportunity Atlas website, the instructor should model the activity with the students by sharing their ZIP code and how it impacted their educational and career trajectories.
- Show a short excerpt (the first 5-10 minutes) from "Does my neighborhood Determine my Future?"
- Students reflect for 2-3 minutes about the ZIP code that had the most impact on them during their upbringing. Instruct them to write down what they remember about their ZIP code. Note: generally, the most impactful years for young adults vary, ask them if their childhood was the most impactful? or, Were their teenage years the most impactful?
- Have students write down their ZIP code on a piece of paper .
- Individually go to the Opportunity Atlas website
- Where are you from? Enter ZIP Code.
- Allow Students to Navigate the Website for 10 minutes and explore.
- Have students journal for 10 minutes:
  - What 3 pieces of information stood out to you? Why? For example,
    - Household income?
    - Incarceration rates?
    - Poverty rates?
    - Median rent prices?
    - Population Density?
    - Employment Rates?
- Students share with one student what stood out to them for 5 minutes.
- Students share with the class one thing that stood out to them for 10 minutes.
- Closing: Instructor provides insight to how our ZIP Codes impact our life trajectories and provides students with examples of people and neighborhoods challenging how our ZIP codes determine our future.

Race and Class, Song Activity

This is an activity that can be used in an asynchronous online classroom setting. In a discussion forum ask students to submit a song that has to do with race and class.

Part 1:

- Ask students to listen to the song "Why is it so hard" by Charles Bradley.
- Students should follow along with the lyrics to the song.
- Pose the following song analysis questions to students:
  - What are the problems that arise in the song?

- What is the narrator's life before and after an unexpected event?
- How does this song help the listener understand the challenges of race and class in the U.S.?
- Does the narrator of the song have a dilemma to face? What are the options now?

- Students will post a 100 word analysis about the song “Why is it so hard” by Charles Bradley to the discussion forum.

Part 2:

- Ask students to choose their own song that has to do with race and class in the United States. They can quickly review this chapter for specific examples of the intersection of race and economic class.
  - Note: The song a student chooses should be a “clean” version and appropriate for the learning environment. The instructor may ask a student to resubmit a new song if it is inappropriate.
- Students should listen to their song and take notes of the lyrics.
- Students can find the lyrics to their song online to help them analyze it.
- Pose the following song analysis questions to students:
  - What are the problems that arise in the song?
  - What is the narrator's life before and after an unexpected event?
  - How does this song help the listener understand the challenges of race and class in the U.S.?
  - Does the narrator of the song have a dilemma to face? What are the options now?
- Students will post a 100 word analysis of their chosen song to the discussion forum.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

10: The State of Human Caging- Incarceration, Policing and State-Sanctioned Violence

By Ulysses Acevedo and Kay Fischer

Learning Objectives

- Analyze representations of race and criminality in the media and its impact on law enforcement discretion;
- Analyze historical roots and contemporary consequences of mass incarceration and heavy policing among communities of color;
- Analyze the intersections of race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality in the context of the U.S. carceral state;
- Evaluate the impact of policing and incarceration as related to settler-colonialism, slavery, white supremacy, and racialization on communities of color;
- Describe and actively engage with anti-racist, abolition, and anti-carceral issues and the practices and movements in Native American, African American, Asian American and/or Latinx communities to build a just and equitable society.

10.1: Introduction
10.2: The Prison Industrial Complex
10.3: War on Drugs and the Age of Mass Incarceration
10.4: Policing, Colonialism, and Slavery
10.5: Is Policing Inherently Racist?
10.6: School-to-Prison Pipeline
10.7: Alternative Solutions
10.8: Summary/Review
10.9: References

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10.1: Introduction

Understanding the Carceral System through Ethnic Studies

> A dark, repressive trend in the business field known as “corrections” is sweeping the United States, and it bodes ill both for the captives and for the communities from which they were captured. America is revealing a visage stark with harshness. Nowhere is that face more contorted than in the dark netherworld of prison, where humans are transformed into nonpersons, numbered beings cribbed into boxes of unlife, where the very soul is under destructive onslaught.
>
> -Mumia Abu-Jamal, 1996, p. 73

In one of her many seminal works, *Are Prisons Obsolete?*, activist, former political prisoner, prison abolitionist, professor, and writer, Dr. Angela Y. Davis, reminds us that the abolition of slavery took one hundred years and that it took the Civil War to legally end this institution. She makes this point, because so many of us in the 21st century can’t imagine a society without the current carceral system. She and many activists and scholars have tied slavery, Jim Crow and the current mass incarceration of African Americans to white supremacy. Davis argues that the U.S. punishment system is entrenched in antiblack racism, and other racialized histories of minoritized people, including Native Americans, Latinx, Asian Americans, and more recently the Muslim and Arab American communities targeted by post-9/11 detention and deportation.

This chapter is organized into distinct themes in order to gain a well-rounded understanding of the carceral state in the U.S. Section 10.1 is a quick introduction to the chapter. Section 10.2 will define mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex (PIC). This section will also help the reader understand how the growing PIC organically created a demand for cheaply run private prisons in the name of profit. This section will also answer the question: "what does modern prison labor look like and where does it come from?" Section 10.3 will focus on the origins of policing and how it is connected to colonialism, western expansion, and slavery. Section 10.4 will contextualize whether policing is inherently racist. To this point, Davis asks, “Are prisons racists institutions? Is racism so deeply entrenched in the institution of the prison that it is not possible to eliminate one without eliminating the other?” (2003, p. 26). In this section, we’ll examine the ways that our current prison and policing systems are intertwined with white supremacy. Racial profiling, violence against indigenous women, controlling black women, and borderland enforcement will also be utilized in the analysis. Section 10.5 provides a deep understanding of the school-to-prison pipeline and the nuanced interconnections of testing and suspensions, schools as prisons, special-needs students, and the militarization of schools. Finally, section 10.6 introduces hope to this chapter by providing evidence of alternative solutions that are being applied such as: the abolition movement, alternatives to school police, redirecting funding for students to thrive, and restorative justice programs.

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10.2: The Prison Industrial Complex

Opening

Figure 10.2.1: Bars 2. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Josh MacPhee via JustSeeds)

When introducing the **prison industrial complex (PIC)** I often ask students what PIC means to them? Among many silent and contemplative faces there are students who share their thoughts: it's caging people, school-to-prison pipeline, unfair sentencing, racial profiling, the bail system, etc. In a class, students can often paint an accurate picture with their words. Critical Resistance, a non-profit organization, defines the prison industrial complex as "a term used to describe the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems" (What is PIC? What is Abolition, Critical Resistance, Accessed September 16 2022).

Private Prisons

In her book *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Angela Y. Davis states that "the term 'prison industrial complex' was introduced by activists and scholars to contest prevailing beliefs that increased levels of crime were the root cause of mounting prison populations. Instead, they argued, prison construction and the attendant drive to fill these new structures with human bodies have been driven by ideologies of racism and the pursuit of profit" (Davis, 2003, p.84). Furthermore, private prisons have effectively influenced public policy in the chase for profits by utilizing lobbyists to pass laws further criminalizing Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) communities.

Although there are legislative efforts to reverse private prisons in the U.S., especially in California, their impact on individuals, families, and communities are irreversible. The prison industrial complex and the privatization of prisons put the U.S. as the leader in the highest incarceration rates in the world. During the 1980s the rise of justifying harsher sentencing practices was perpetuated by elected officials and the media arguing "that this was the only way to make our communities safe from murderers, rapists, and robbers" (Davis, p. 91). Davis goes on to state that in the year 2001 there were 2,100,146 people incarcerated in the US but that only looking at population sizes erases the stories of those who are incarcerated (p. 92). "According to 2002 Bureau of Justice Statistics, African-Americans as a whole now represent the majority of county, state, and federal prisoners, with a total of 803,400 Black inmates—118, 600 more than the total number of white inmates. If we include Latinos, we must add another 283,000 bodies of color" (p. 94).

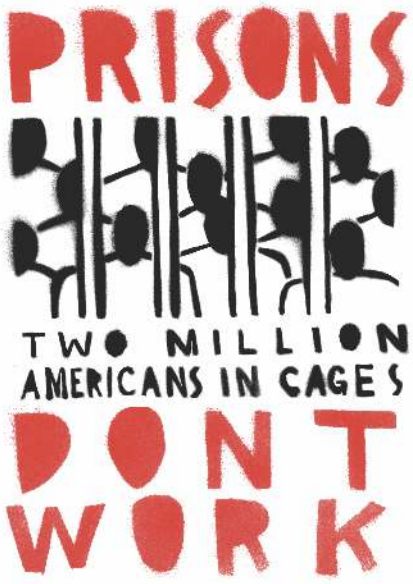

Figure 10.2.2: Prisons Don't Work - stencil stating "Prisons Don't Work" and "Two Million Americans in Cages" with an image of figures behind bars (CC BY-NC 4.0; Josh MacPhee via JustSeeds)

Private prisons function with public funding however work under their own systems in managing prisons and incarcerated people. How do private prisons make money? In answering this question we have to ask another question, how do hotels make money? Both private prisons and hotels share a similar business model whereas the more cells (rooms) and beds are occupied the more money the prison or hotel is making. An empty cell (room) is seen as a lost opportunity to make more profit. “In arrangements reminiscent of the convict lease system, federal, state, and county governments pay private companies a fee for each inmate, which means that private companies have a stake in retaining prisoners as long as possible, and in keeping their facilities filled” (Davis, 2003, p. 95). The business of private prisons is to keep their prisons full, more humans incarcerated ultimately equates to higher profit margins for the prison investors. Also, Davis utilizes the military industrial complex and the medical industrial complex as examples that are “driven by an unprecedented pursuit of profit, no matter what the human cost” (p. 91).

Furthermore, the trend of privatizing prisons is becoming the primary mode which became viable through corporations entering the prison economy and is “reminiscent of the historical efforts to create a profitable punishment industry based on the new supply of 'free' Black male laborers in the aftermath of the Civil War” (p. 93). After the Civil War, slave labor was no longer an option for planters and other emerging industries but the convict lease system, chain gangs, and debt peonage were used for cheap or free labor. One example of corporations doing business in prisons is selling the prisons and inmates products such as Dial Soap, Famous Amos Cookies, AT&T, and health providers (p. 99).

In the case of private prisons, the customers are non-incarcerated humans who expect society to deal with humans who have “broken the law” through punitive justice or incarceration. Non-incarcerated humans are the customers to private prisons because everyone between the working class to the upper class are paying the taxes to pay for the subsidies provided by the federal and state government to private prisons. The funding of prisons by non-incarcerated humans goes unnoticed and unchallenged most of the time. The free population is generally happy when they believe that "bad people" are in cages. For example, have you ever used the phrase *deadline*? An example of its usage- “the *deadline* for the assignment is by Friday at 5pm.” The phrase “deadline” is derived from prison lingo where a corrections officer can shoot and kill a prisoner for crossing over a physical line (or fence) around the perimeter of the prison, hence “deadline.” Prisons as a business use “public safety” to make non-incarcerated humans feel like they are getting their money's worth. Prisons make their customers content when they feel incarcerated people will not escape prisons (think Alcatraz Island).

In an article titled “Sweet deal, but for a few: Private prisons and immigrants,” by Kevin P. Soto (2014) includes a cycle chart titled “follow the money” to demonstrate how money and private prisons relate with one another. The “follow the money” cycle chart includes the following four themes as a fiscal flow to private prisons: incarcerated people, CEO’s getting paid, private prison lobbyist, and prison budgets and policies. This chart is an example of third theme for a business model framework, value capture which is “the fiscal flows and economic aspects of relations to main stakeholders, such as employees, suppliers, owners, and customers” (Soto, 2014).

Furthermore, the flow chart shows that for private prisons profits are central to the business model and not other factors such as justice or treating incarcerated people and their families with respect. In order to fine tune profitability for stakeholders and their CEO's private prisons have influenced public policy to secure the perpetual **criminalization** of people in order to fill prison cells and secure profits. It is helpful to understand the influence of private prisons on public policy to be able to reverse the over-policing of poor and BIPOC communities.

It is important to note that there is currently a moral shift (locally and nationally) in the U.S. to undo the damage caused by the practice of private prisons incarcerating humans in the chase of profits. For example in 2019 California passed AB32 which would ban private prisons (including private immigration detention centers) contracts in California and would take effect on Jan. 1, 2020 (Castillo, 2021).

Prison Labor: From Slavery to Convict Leasing

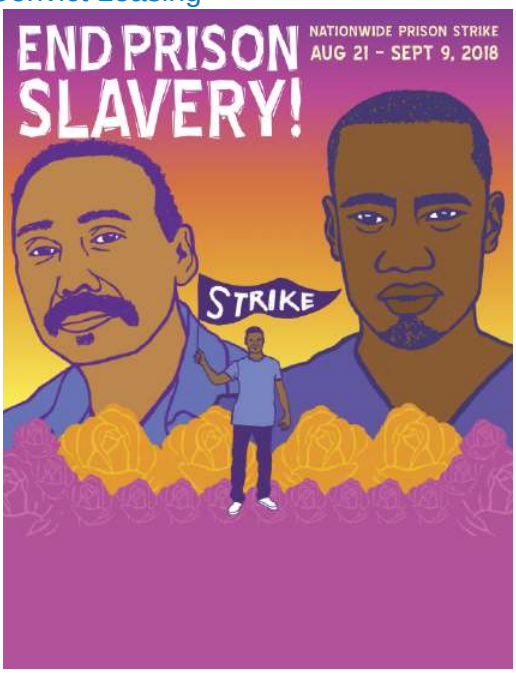

Figure 10.2.3: End Prison Slavery. A poster on the nationwide prison strike in 2018 that was organized in response to a riot in Lee Correctional Institution, a maximum security prison in South Carolina. Seven lost their lives when prison officials turned their backs on a riot they provoked. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Melanie Cervantes via JustSeeds)

The poster in Figure 10.2.3 by Melanie Cervantes calls attention to the Nationwide Prison Strike from Aug 21 - Sep 9, 2018, highlighting the exploitation of modern-day prison labor. Two prisoners are centered in the poster with a man holding a "Strike" flag. Angela Y. Davis explained that the penitentiary system was supposed to be about rehabilitation and providing convicts with time to reflect on the crimes they committed with "penitence." This was viewed as progressive at the time it was developed (during the era of the American Revolution), compared to the former system of corporal or capital punishment, inherited from England. But, Davis pointed out, such a concept ignored the impact of an authoritarian regime. She wrote:

> The ideologies governing slavery and those governing punishment were profoundly linked during the earliest period of U.S. history. While free people could be legally sentenced to punishment by hard labor, such a sentence would in no way change the conditions of existence already experienced by slaves (2003, p. 28).

Even Thomas Jefferson pointed out that penal labor made no difference in the condition of the slave. Citing the work of Adam Jay Hirsch, Davis summarizes how the daily routines of incarcerated people were controlled by their superiors, much like enslaved people. Both groups were also reduced to complete dependence on others for basic needs like food and shelter, were isolated from the general population, and forced to work for long hours with little to no compensation. Furthermore, Davis pointed out the similarities between prison rules and slave codes.

When slavery was abolished, new laws were passed in southern states rewriting slave codes to monitor the behavior of freed Black Americans. Black codes were applied to specific actions that were criminalized only if the person charged was Black, including vagrancy, absence from work, breach of work contract, owning firearms, or insulting gestures and acts. Davis wrote that there is a long U.S. history of race playing a "central role in constructing presumptions of criminality" (2003, p. 28). Furthermore, the

Thirteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution abolished slavery "except as punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been fully convicted" (U.S. Const. amend. XIII).

In fact, Davis argued that the post-slavery criminal justice system in the south was specifically developed in order to regulate the newly attained freedoms of former slaves. Historian Mary Ellen Crutin (2000) found that the prison population suddenly became overwhelmingly Black after slavery. Her research focused on the state of Alabama, where in the years before slavery was abolished, the prisoner population was 99% white. Despite this, Curtin pointed out that, "the popular perception that the South's true criminals were its black slaves" and many white Southerners believed that Black Americans were "inherently criminal and, in particular, prone to larceny" (p. 29). So much so that there were even cases of when white people dressed up to appear "black" or blame crimes on a Black person.

Furthermore, Davis wrote that, "Black people became the prime targets of a developing convict lease system, referred to by many as a reincarnation of slavery" (2003, p. 29). This meant that not only were formerly enslaved people subject to racist laws that criminalized them, but if their alleged crime was coded as a "black crime," their punishment would include forced labor, sometimes in a cruel fate at the same plantations that formerly "thrived on slave labor" (p. 29). To add insult to injury, the punishments inflicted on incarcerated Black Americans during the post-slavery era were the same ones used during slavery, including: whipping, lashes, and chains. Chain gangs and **convict leasing** was ultimately about controlling Black labor, and continued the legacy of slavery. Black prisoners were subject to constant supervision and under watch with the threat of the lash.

Davis found that many scholars researched how convict leasing was worse than slavery. Under slavery, the owners cared about the survival of individual slaves, who represented an economic investment. Competitively, prisoners were leased as groups under convict leasing and were literally worked to death without impacting the profitability. The work conditions were abysmal. For example, in the Mississippi plantations in Yazoo Delta in the late 1880s, prisoners were forced to sleep on the ground without blankets, often without clothes. They were punished with lashes for "slow hoeing" (ten lashes), "sorry planting" (five lashes), "being light with cotton" (five lashes). If people tried to escape and were caught, they would be whipped "till blood ran down their legs." Others had metal spirals riveted to their feet. Many dropped from exhaustion, pneumonia, malaria, frostbite, consumption, sunstroke, dysentery, gunshot wounds, and "shackle poisoning" (which is the constant rubbing of chains and leg irons against bare flesh) (2003, pp. 32 - 33).

Lichtenstein argues that the convict lease system, along with Jim Crow laws, acted as the "central institution in the development of a racial state" (Davis, 2003, p. 34). Capitalists in the South used state resources to access a convict labor force, never having to rely on a waged labor force. Georgia railroads were in fact constructed with Black convict labor. Davis argues that this supported industrialization in the South, including coal and iron mining. She further states, "Black convict labor remains a hidden dimension of our history," making connections to how today we may all take for granted the countless products made through prison labor, including college and university furniture (p. 35). More recently, there's been press covering how the state of California has relied on incarcerated labor to fight wildfires, who are paid only a few dollars a day, while facing life-hazardous conditions. Also, according to a recent report on "Captive Labor," incarcerated people were also on the front lines of pandemic responses, manufacturing hand sanitizer, masks, medical gowns and other personal protective equipment that they themselves were not allowed to use to protect themselves. Incarcerated labor also transported dead bodies, dug graves, and built coffins (ACLU and the University of Chicago Law School's Global Human Rights Clinic, 2022).

To boot, corporations and the government benefit the most from incarcerated labor, ultimately giving clear incentives to incarcerate a larger prison population. Despite convict leasing ending, the "structures of exploitation" remained and are repeated today. The "Captive Labor" report argues that the key beneficiaries of such labor are federal, state, and local governments who offset budget shortfalls by exacting incarcerated labor to maintain the very institutions they are caged in (including preparing food, laundry, cleaning, etc.). State and local governments rely on incarcerated labor for public works projects like maintaining public roads, ditches, and so forth. In Florida, it's estimated that the unpaid prisoner labor is valued at around $147.5 million over five years. There are also state-owned businesses that exploit incarcerated labor to produce certain goods and services. For example,

> In fiscal year 2020, …California's correctional industries program sold over $191 million in manufactured goods, services, and agricultural products produced by incarcerated workers in fiscal year 2020–21. In 2021, the value of goods, services, and commodities produced by the incarcerated workers employed in state prison industries programs nationwide…totaled over $2 billion (ACLU et al., 2022, p. 17).

Finally, Curtin (2000) argues that some newly emancipated Black Americans were made into criminals, being forced to steal in order to survive. Davis (2003) wrote, "It was the transformation of petty thievery into a felony that relegated substantial numbers of black people to the 'involuntary servitude' legalized by the Thirteenth Amendment" (p. 33). In her research, Curtin writes that

sometimes accusations of theft were false and charges fabricated, serving as “political revenge” for emancipation. Davis continues, “In this sense, the work of the criminal justice system was intimately related to the extralegal work of lynching” (p. 34).

The drive to chase profits extends beyond just housing humans in prisons. Prison labor is exploited because incarcerated people are a captive workforce with little to no choice in what type of labor they perform and for how much. Prisoners are the cheapest labor force in the U.S.

In her book, *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771-1965* (2017) Kelly Lytle Hernández focuses on the history of the carceral state in Los Angeles, California and how caging humans furthered the goal of settler colonialism. She argues that Los Angeles is an important place to study the carceral state because the U.S. is the leader in incarceration rates in the world and Los Angeles has the highest number of humans caged within the U.S., making it the metropolitan area which incarcerates the most people in the world. Hernández's book also aims to tell the story of how Los Angeles was built with prison labor via convict leasing and chain gangs. For example:

> On the chain gang, they graded the intersection of First and Flower streets. They filled in the western approach to the bridge on Buena Vista Street. They graded the intersection of Flower and Courthouse streets. By December 1887, the city council was rejecting bids from private contractors and instead deploying the chain gang to build roads and fix bridges. At the end of Workman’s term in January 1888, the city chain gang had participated in the paving of eighty-seven miles of city streets in Los Angeles (p. 58).

Convict leasing is the selling of prisoners' labor to the highest bidder by the prison; historically African American men have been exploited through this method. Typically the labor can be exploited at the prison grounds or prisoners are taken to do the work. There was a rise in the use of convict leasing after the end of the civil war during the Reconstruction period; the usage of convict leasing was one way that forced labor continued even after the end of slavery.

Additionally in Georgia for example, chain gangs were to replace convict leasing in 1908 and were labeled reform laws (Haley, 2013, p. 53). According to the article “Like I was a Man: Chain Gangs, Gender, and the Domestic Carceral Sphere in Jim Crow Georgia,” the application of chain gangs did not reduce the number of black women being incarcerated and was used to simultaneously codify what constituted a “woman” and “female” through an intersection with race and labor (Haley, p. 53). The intention for implementing chain gangs in Georgia was to slow down competition between free labor and convict labor but chain gangs continued the same culture of exploiting incarcerated human labor.

Prison labor is also exploited in the service sector. With climate change and historic droughts impacting climate disasters, in particular wildfires. Prisoners have been used as frontline firefighters, groups called fire camps, often being underpaid, undertrained, and under-resourced. In California there are over 35 fire camps made up of incarcerated men and women who are relied on to fight these wildfires and on average earning less than six dollars a day (From Incarceration, 2022). Fire camp critics call this type of labor a modern version of indentured servitude. Moreover, when formerly incarcerated firefighters re-enter society, how does their hands-on work experience help them survive and stay out of prison? Formerly incarcerated firefighters are excluded from a clear path towards becoming a firefighter due to their convictions record. Although there has not been a clear path for trained and experienced formerly incarcerated firefighters to become paid firefighters on the outside, there is a push to validate their firefighting experience and training to be utilized to pursue a feasible career in the field. In the YouTube video titled “From Incarceration to Firefighter” a group called *The Forestry and Fire Recruitment Program* is focused on helping formerly incarcerated firefighters get well paying jobs with fire crews (From Incarceration, 2022).

Criminalizing Immigrants

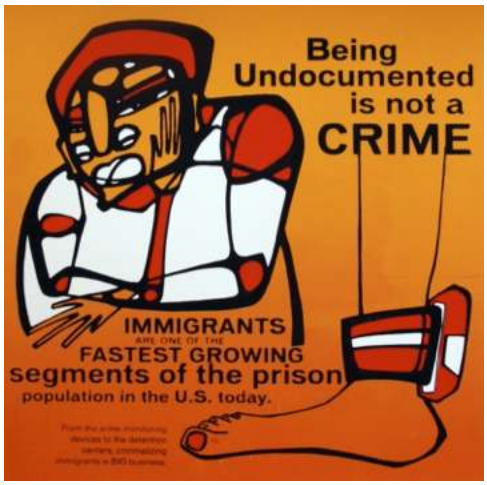

Figure 10.2.4: Undocumented. Created for the Critical Resistance ten year anniversary conference in Oakland, California, 2008. Poster reads: "Being Undocumented is not a CRIME" and "Immigrants are one of the fastest growing segments of the prison population in the U.S. today." (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Favianna Rodriguez via JustSeeds)

In Figure 10.2.4 by Favianna Rodriguez, it reads "Being Undocumented is not a Crime." In her book, *City of Inmates*, Kelly Lyttle Hernández highlights the history of the rise of incarcerating Mexican immigrants during the 1920s and '30s in Los Angeles and simultaneously attempting to make them legally not "convicts." One explanation was the rise of Mexican immigration due to labor demands during this time but also the "deliberate steered by particular changes in U.S. law and law enforcement, especially in the realm of immigration control" (2017, p. 131). Despite much pushback "according to the 1924 Immigration Act, an unlimited number of Mexicans would be allowed to enter the United States every year" but they were required to pay the $18 entrance fee, do a literacy test, and a health exam (p. 134). Nativists argued that Mexicans were "like the pigeon [and] he goes home to roost," that Mexican workers did not intend to settle in the US and therefore were not interested in US citizenship (p. 135). During this time Mexicans in Los Angeles were the largest group in immigrant detention and since the "1896 decision *Wong Wing v. United States*, immigrant detention had lingered in the nation's carceral landscape as a form of human confinement that was not imprisonment in the legal sense" (p.144).

The last immigration reform in the U.S. was during Ronald Reagan's presidency through the passage of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). Although Reagan is infamous for his neoliberal ideologies on the economy, to immigrants who benefited from IRCA he is remembered as the president who granted them legal immigration status. Undocumented immigrants who were living in the U.S. during the 1980s were able to apply for permanent residency if they were able to demonstrate that they were lawful and would not be a burden to the U.S. and use public resources. As a result, the application process included the following: paying legal fees to submit an application, provide letters of recommendation from employers, provide evidence of having access to housing, and providing evidence of being in the U.S. for the required time.

Since the passage of IRCA there has not been another comprehensive immigration reform policy. Immigrants, especially undocumented immigrants in the U.S., are criminalized for entering the U.S. without proper legal documents such as a traveling visa, work visa, permanent resident card, or passport. Although undocumented immigrants do have human rights in the U.S., because of their legal status many undocumented immigrants do not want to have any kind of interaction with law enforcement, even when they are victims of a crime. Although sometimes undocumented immigrants do report crimes, especially around the U-visa process.

Nativism, which is the belief that citizens of a country are superior over non-citizens, has fueled anti-immigration laws in the U.S. Nativist ideologies have also promoted the idea that citizens should have access to resources first, not so-called foreigners. There have been many nativist laws and policies in U.S. history barring immigrants from legally entering the country. Additionally, there have been another set of nativist laws and policies which have attempted to define the limits of access to resources for immigrants and undocumented peoples, further pushing them to the margins of society.

For example, California's 1994 proposition 187 was designed to create a citizen screening system in order to deny immigrants access to public services such as health care and public education. Soon after the proposition passed, it was challenged and found to be unconstitutional due to the federal government having the sole jurisdiction on immigration.

In 2005, H.R. 4437 also known as The Sensenbrenner Bill or The Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act was another nativist law proposed as a method to supposedly secure U.S. borders and further criminalize

undocumented people. The Sensenbrenner Bill was proposed as a result of the fight against the 9/11 attack on the twin towers in New York. A national discussion in the mainstream media emerged about the effectiveness of the U.S. border with Mexico and Canada.

Many of these anti-immigrant policies that came after the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act, which aimed at removing national quotas, are examples of crimmigration. **Crimmigration** is defined as the merging of immigration law with criminal law and posing immigrants as lawbreakers usually through a racialized lens (Sen & Mamdouh, 2008, p. 57). Some examples of crimmigration used as a modern nativist strategy are making it illegal to hire undocumented workers, The Sensenbrenner Bill, Arizona's SB 1070, and California's Prop 187. Rinku Sen (2008) argues that "casting foreigners as criminals protects that larger system from critique, and at the same time diverts communities from seeking real solutions" (Sen and Mamdouh, 2008, p. 58). Furthermore, through various laws and policies, crimmigration promotes the notion that an individual must be a citizen in order to be prequalified for basic civil and constitutional rights such as privacy, due process, and the right to not incriminate oneself (Sen and Mamdouh, 2008, p. 60).

A clear example of crimmigration in the US is Arizona's nativist S.B.1070 law (a.k.a. "show me your papers" law) passed in 2010. This bill not only allowed police in Arizona to work with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) but it required that police ask any person they interact with while on duty for their immigration status, thereby encouraging racial profiling. How did this law criminalize immigrants? According to the ACLU, there were four provisions against SB 1070 considered by the supreme court. First, police demand "papers" and investigate immigration status if they suspect a person is undocumented. Second, police arrest individuals without a warrant if they believe they are a deportable immigrant. Third, immigrants who fail to carry federal registration papers are guilty of state crime. Fourth, immigrants who seek or accept work without authorization are guilty of state crime (ACLU, 2012). Provision 1 was upheld by the supreme court and the other three were struck down (ACLU, 2012).

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10.3: War on Drugs and the Age of Mass Incarceration

The Impact of the so-called "War on Drugs"

> Mass incarceration is mass elimination.
>
> -Kelly Lytle Hernández

Alice Marie Johnson lost her job at FedEx in 1991 and eventually divorced and soon after her son died in a motorcycle accident. For these reasons and due to a gambling addiction, Johnson became involved as a drug mule. In 1993, Johnson was arrested for distributing cocaine and because of mandatory sentencing laws was sent to prison for life. Johnson claimed during the trial that she was never involved in the actual selling of cocaine as a drug mule; she was also not in the business of knowing what she was transporting. Despite having no prior convictions of distributing cocaine, she was made an example and sentenced to life.

After serving 21 years in prison, Johnson had a record of good behavior and because her conviction was non-violent, she requested to be freed earlier for good behavior.

Socialite Kim Kardashian learned about Johnson through social media. According to Kardashian's account, she felt bad for Johnson because she believed that Johnson was a victim of mandatory sentencing laws. How can this nice lady serve life in prison? Soon after learning about the case, Kim Kardashian got involved and used her social influence and network to set up a meeting with then-president Donald Trump to talk about the possible pardoning of Johnson. Kim Kardashian was successful in having Trump pardon Johnson and granting her an early release from prison. Was this a sign of a new wave of prison reform?

Although Kim Kardashian's political ability to have someone released early from prison can be inspiring, it is important to note the countless lawyers and advocates who worked day and night fighting for justice or individuals just like Johnson, but may never be released from prison because no celebrity stood behind them.

What happened to Johnson is not an isolated incident, but a part of a larger system of mass incarceration which amplified with the so-called **War on Drugs**. Richard Nixon's 1971 call for a “War on Drugs” made drug abuse the top political priority. During his presidency, Nixon helped the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and what would become the fight against the possession and selling of marijuana, cocaine, and crack cocaine.

The New Jim Crow and the Racial Caste System

Upon winning the Oscars for Best Original Song for the song, “Glory,” in the film *Selma* at the 87th Oscars in 2015, John Legend stated in his speech:

> We wrote this song for a film that was based on events that were 50 years ago, but we say that Selma is now because the struggle for justice is right now….We know that right now, the struggle for freedom and justice is real. We live in the most incarcerated country in the world. There are more Black men under correctional control today than were under slavery in 1850 (Penn, 2020, para. 3).

In the 2016 documentary, *13th* (directed by Ava DuVernay), Senator Cory Booker makes a similar assertion as John Legend, stating, “We now have more African Americans under criminal supervision than all the slaves back in the 1850s” (01:23:25).

Figure 10.3.1: Michelle Alexander giving an author talk at the Miller Center Forum, Dec. 3, 2011. (CC BY 2.0; Miller Center via Flickr)

Michelle Alexander, civil rights lawyer, legal scholar, and author of one of the most groundbreaking and influential best selling books of the 21st century, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, pointed out the same, writing, "More African American adults are under correctional control today—in prison or jail, on probation or parole—than were enslaved in 1850, a decade before the Civil War began" (2020, p. 224). The 13th amendment may have abolished slavery, but it led to mass imprisonment of African Americans for minor offenses. The system of mass incarceration is what Alexander names the *new* Jim Crow, once the old Jim Crow policies were abolished.

Alexander explains that the War on Drugs was the "colorblind" vehicle that drove millions into the prison system, legalizing the discrimination against system-impacted people in employment, housing, public benefits, and more (2020, p. 224). Disproportionately impacting poor communities of color, the War on Drugs requires little maintenance as incarceration of poor people of color is so widely accepted by our society: it is "the new normal." Exposed to decades of media "images of black men in handcuffs" and political messages that incarcerated people are "bad" and deserve to be there, Alexander asserts that we as a nation haven't cared much about this injustice. If you're white and middle class, you may not even be aware of this war. Today people of all colors "in every major political party" have internalized, even embraced, racist stereotypes of the criminality of poor people of color. The outcome is that mass incarceration is seen "as a basic fact of life, as normal as separate water fountains were just a half century ago" (p. 225).

Alexander (2020) writes that most Americans have a serious misunderstanding of how racial oppression works, assuming it's about attitudes, never focusing on how systemic oppression can enforce a type of "racial caste system" through seemingly colorblind methods. She describes how the War on Drugs worked in three stages to cage men of color:

1. Roundup: Black and Brown people are swept up into the criminal justice system due to large police presence and drug operations targeting poor communities of color. Police are allowed to use race as a factor in stop-and-search, despite the fact that people of color are no more likely than whites to be guilty of drug crimes.
2. Conviction: Once arrested, poor people are denied "meaningful legal representation and pressured to plead guilty" (p. 231), as prosecutors will often add additional charges and cannot be challenged for racial bias. Once convicted, the drug war's severe sentencing, including the impact of mandatory minimum sentencing, will lead to people spending more time under the system's control than anywhere else in the world, including under parole or probation, described as an "invisible cage" (p. 231).
3. Period of Invisible Punishment: A term coined by Jeremy Travis, this describes how formerly incarcerated people are legally discriminated against in employment and housing, leading many to eventually return to prison.

The War on Drugs has created a system that's impacted nearly anyone who lives in ghettoized communities in the United States, reinforcing a subordinated status for poor people of color. Alexander proclaims that the nature of the justice system is, "no longer concerned primarily with the prevention and punishment of crime, but rather with the management and control of the dispossessed" (p. 233).

"Legal Misrepresentation"

Figure 10.3.2: "Alameda County Superior Court." (CC BY 4.0; Photo by Jordan Burkart)

Michelle Alexander argues that when an individual is arrested, their chances of being free are slim to none, largely due to the arrested being denied “meaningful” legal representation. She continues,

> Most Americans probably have no idea how common it is for people to be convicted without ever having the benefit of legal representation, or how many people plead guilty to crimes they did not commit because of fear of mandatory sentences (2020, p. 106).

Despite what popular crime shows like *Law & Order* purport about a defendant easily accessing representation in the court system, tens of thousands go directly to jails without ever having spoken to a lawyer. Poor people are entitled to counsel, but most offices lack enough time, resources or even the "inclination" to offer competent representation. Public defense lawyers often face large caseloads and the quality of court-appointed counsel is poor due to “miserable working conditions and low pay discourag[ing] good attorneys from participating in the system” (p. 107).

Too often the most vulnerable people are pressured to a plea bargain through a threat of lengthy sentences and additional charges piled on by prosecutors, and never even go to trial. The 2004 American Bar Association reported that defendants plead guilty even if they’re innocent, not fully understanding their rights or what is happening, and there is even less regard for people who are mentally ill or who don’t understand English. Children are the least likely to have access to counsel. In Ohio, as many as 90% of children charged with crimes are not represented by a lawyer.

Prosecutors are the most powerful law enforcement officials in the system, as they are completely free to dismiss a case or add further charges as long as there’s probable cause. In fact, this is a practice known as “overcharging” (p. 109). Alexander explains,

> Never before in our history, though, have such an extraordinary number of people felt compelled to plead guilty, even if they are innocent, simply because the punishment for the minor, nonviolent offense with which they have been charged is so unbelievably severe (2020, p. 109).

This pressure to plead guilty has increased since the War on Drugs. The 1986 Anti-Drug Abuse Act created mandatory minimum prison sentences between five to ten years for low-level drug dealing and the possession of crack cocaine. The sentence for similar offenses in other nations is no more than six months, especially for first-time offenses. The three-strikes laws have also mandated life sentences for anyone convicted of a third offense, thereby transferring power from judges to prosecutors. This practice forces arrested people to plead guilty instead of having to risk a longer prison sentence.

Furthermore, prosecutors even admit to overcharging, including for crimes that they don’t think they could win in court, but that this tactic to “load up” defendants with charges is used to pressure them to plead guilty and get them to snitch. Snitching has increased in recent years due to pressures to “cooperate” with law enforcement through cash incentives but also through obtaining testimony on another case in order to avoid a long sentence. Such testimonies are in fact “notoriously unreliable” and the U.S. Sentencing Commission has admitted that “the value of a mandatory minimum sentence lies not in its imposition, but in its value as a bargaining chip to be given away in return for the resource-saving plea from the defendant to a more leniently sanctioned charge” (p. 111). Although it is difficult to ascertain exactly how many innocent people accept a plea bargain, or how many are convicted due to faulty testimony, some sources estimate that 2-5% of incarcerated people are innocent.

Figure 10.3.3: Who is Where? Poster with the words: hysteria, media, racism, poverty, and "Who is where and why? (CC BY-NC 4.0; Eric Ruin via JustSeeds)

Michelle Alexander clearly states that “the enemy is racially defined” in the U.S.’s drug war, the main targets being African Americans from poor neighborhoods. Decades of anti-poor and anti-people of color tactics have resulted in “jaw-dropping numbers of African Americans and Latinos filling our nation’s prisons and jails every year” (2020, p. 122). The Human Rights Watch reported in 2000 that African Americans constituted 80 - 90% of those sent to prisons on drug charges in seven U.S. states. Black men are sent to prisons on drug charges at twenty to fifty-seven times the rate of white men, and nationwide, the rate of Blacks convicted of drug offenses “dwarfs the rate” for whites. The War on Drugs has affected the Latinx community as well, with their rate of drug admissions in the year 2000 being twenty-two times the number in 1983. Even whites have been impacted by the rise in prison admissions, but at a much smaller rate when compared to Black and Latinx communities (p. 123).

An obvious racial disparity of drug charges against communities of color exist despite the fact that the majority of illegal drug users and dealers nationwide are white; yet three-quarters of the people incarcerated for drug offenses are Black or Latinx. The National Institute on Drug Abuse found that white students use cocaine at eight times the rate of Black students and a nearly identical rate of white and Black high school seniors were found to use marijuana. The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse reported that white youth are more than a third likely to have sold illegal drugs than African American youth. Regardless, the arrest rates and imprisonment of African Americans have been at “unprecedented rates,” even though Blacks were not any more likely to be guilty of drug crimes compared to whites. If any group were most likely to be guilty of illegal drug possession and sales, it was white youth, who visited the emergency room for drug-related causes at three times the rate for African Americans.

Despite the racist Hollywood trope of Black drug dealers and users, Alexander writes that “the prevalence of white drug crime… should not be surprising. After all, where do whites get their illegal drugs?” (p. 124). They don’t drive to the so-called ghetto to purchase drugs from the open-air market; they sell and buy from people of their own demographic. The former director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, Barry MacCaffrey, stated that if your child purchased drugs, “it was from a student of their own race generally” (p. 124).

Knowing this, why are Black and Latinx men more likely to be sent to prison on drug charges? Alexander claims that such glaring disparities cannot be explained by rates of illegal drug activity in African American communities alone, nor is it a result of “old-fashioned” racism in the criminal justice system. Such openly biased ideologies are not easily accepted in the aftermath of the Civil Rights Movements. Instead, there’s been a shift in the racial climate, where people who defend the criminal justice system insist that the system is colorblind - and instead point their fingers to the supposed violent crime rates in African American communities (2020, pp. 125 - 126). Yet, even when violent crime rates have fluctuated, incarceration rates continue to increase. In fact, homicide convictions make up a small fraction of the prison population growth - 0.4%, compared to drug convictions making up 61%. She

goes on that “The general public seems to imagine that our prisons are filled with ‘rapists and murderers,’ but they actually account for a small minority of our nation’s prison population” (p. 126).

Furthermore, 7.3 million are under correctional control, but only 2.3 million are in prison or jail, and of the 4 million on probation, only 19% are convicted of violent offenses. A staggering majority of people on parole were convicted of nonviolent crimes, most commonly drug offenses (Alexander, 2020, p. 127). However, such facts are easily ignored, especially by “politicians, law enforcement officials, and journalists [who] routinely create the false impression that most people branded criminals have been convicted of violent crimes” (p. 128). Alexander argues that these claims perpetuate the myth that prisons house violent people, keeping everyone else safe. Instead, she claims that the system is not concerned about safety, but about the control and marginalization of dispossessed communities, as stated earlier.

The drug war has effectively targeted people of color, creating what Alexander calls a “new racial undercaste - a system of mass incarceration that governs the lives of millions of people inside and outside of prison walls” (p. 129). And how might such a colorblind system lead to racist results? Alexander writes that it turns out that this happened very easily in two stages:

1. First, through the granting of “extraordinary discretion” to law enforcement;
2. and second, by making it virtually impossible to challenge racially discriminatory practices in the criminal justice system.

When police are given free rein to decide who to suspect and arrest, prosecutors given the full discretion to make drug charges, this ostensibly guarantees that both conscious and unconscious racial bias will influence decision making. Such policies also encourage law enforcement to increase their arrest and conviction rates, even when drug crimes are slowing down in certain communities, ultimately having “guaranteed racially discriminatory results” (Alexander, 2020, p. 131). A multitude of studies and surveys show that most Americans have violated drug laws, yet only a tiny fraction are ever arrested and incarcerated. Given that the sale and purchase of drugs are consensual with no reason for either party to contact the police, law enforcement often take a proactive approach and make strategic decisions about which communities to target, often influenced by the political climate.

For example, even before crack cocaine hit the streets, the Reagan administration of the 1980s started a media campaign to build support for the War on Drugs, often highlighting horror stories involving Black crack users and drug dealers. At its onset, most Americans weren’t generally interested in drug use as it was considered a private and public-health issue, but Reagan’s campaign helped to reframe drug-use and dealings as a threat to national order. After the War on Drugs was formally launched, the frame focused on “transgressors,” who “were poor, nonwhite users and dealers of crack cocaine” (Alexander, 2020, p. 132).

Suddenly law enforcement became experts on drugs and called for “law and order.” The evening news was filled with stories about Black drug criminals who, “left little doubt about who the enemy was in the War on Drugs and exactly what he looked like” (Alexander, 2020, p. 132). A 1995 survey found that when asked to “envision a drug user and describe that person to me,” 95% of respondents reported that they imagined a Black drug user, contradicting the reality that whites make up the majority of drug users (p. 133). Law enforcement are equally influenced by such “racially charged political rhetoric and media imagery associated with the drug war” (p. 133). Research on cognitive bias show that conscious and unconscious bias can lead to discriminatory practices, even if an individual doesn’t want to discriminate. This can apply to jurors and law enforcement officials even among individuals who believed in treating everyone equally under the law. Therefore, Alexander argues, it was ultimately *inevitable* that racial bias would shape the drug war, particularly after “blackness and crime, especially drug crime, became conflated in the public consciousness” (p. 135)

The second main reason we have racial discrepancies in drug charges against people of color is due to major court decisions that have made it enormously difficult to challenge racial discrimination in the criminal justice system. Alexander (2020) writes how the Supreme Court adopted “legal rules” that ultimately “maximized” racial discrimination. The 1996 *Whren v. United States* declared that police officers are allowed to use minor traffic violations as the reason to stop any driver and search the vehicle or driver for drugs.

The 1987 *McCleskey v. Kemp* Supreme Court ruling declared that racial bias in sentencing could not be challenged under the Fourteenth Amendment without obvious evidence of conscious, discriminatory intent. This translated to the Court condoning racial bias as long as no one actually admitted that they were consciously acting in a biased and discriminatory manner. This ruling made it impossible to charge patterns of racial discrimination despite surging evidence. For example:

- In Georgia, prosecutors sought the death penalty in 70% of cases involving Black defendants and white victims, but only for 19% of cases involving white defendants and Black victims (Alexander, 2020, p. 138).
- In California, a 1991 study of 700,000 cases showed that whites were much more likely to get a plea bargain than African American and Latinx defendants (p. 148).

- A 2000 report presented that Black youth were six times more likely than white youth to be incarcerated for the exact same crime among those who've never been sent to juvenile prison before (p. 148).

Alexander reminds us that prosecutors have the most power in the criminal justice system, as they are free to dismiss a case, file more charges, offer a good plea deal or not, and have the power to transfer drug defendants to the federal system, and juveniles to adult court. It's almost impossible to prove racial bias without evidence of "explicitly racist remarks" having been made. Alexander concludes that "It is difficult to imagine a system better designed to ensure that racial biases and stereotypes are given free rein - white at the same time appearing on the surface to be colorblind - than the one devised by the U.S. Supreme Court" (p. 149).

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10.4: Policing, Colonialism, and Slavery

Origins of Policing

Most of us are told that the police exist to maintain safety by keeping the "bad guys" off our streets. This narrative is often reinforced through mainstream media, including the news and TV shows that actually often "exaggerate the amount of serious crime and the nature of what most police officers actually do all day" (Vitale, 2017, p. 34). Professor of Sociology and Coordinator of the Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College and CUNY Graduate Center, Alex S. Vitale wrote in his book, *The End of Policing* (2017), that in reality, crime control is a very small part of policing work. He cited David Bayley, a veteran police scholar who argued that police in fact do not prevent crime, and that is one of the best kept secrets of our society. Bayley (1996) writes,

> Experts know it, the police know it, but the public does not know it. Yet the police pretend that they are society's best defense against crime and continually argue that if they are given more resources…they will be able to protect communities against crime. This is a myth" (Vitale, 2017, p. 35).

Vitali argues that the police work to maintain their legitimacy to the public and that politicians on both sides of the aisle support legitimizing police work. For example, when the shootings of unarmed Black men began to get some media coverage, the overall reaction by mainstream Democrats was to call for police reform, which Vitale argues is a way of restoring legitimacy for the police. This point of view that the issue of racist policing can be addressed by firing a few "bad apples" from our "unbiased system of law enforcement" and that through training, we can create better policing, completely ignores that ultimately the basic functions of police have never been about public safety. It also ignores the function of white supremacy and its impact on policing.

Vitale (2017) points out how the origins of policing stem from three racialized and classed systems of inequality: slavery, colonialism, and controlling the working class (2017, p. 36). Police forces grew in size and legitimacy largely in response to various revolts and social movements that challenged existing systems of exploitation, creating what Allan Silver (1976) called a "policed society" (p. 37). Mark Neocleous, professor of Social and Political Sciences at Brunel University London, wrote that the police exist to "fabricate social order" yet that "order" is rooted in a system of exploitation. If those with the most power feel that the system they're benefiting from is under attack (for example slave revolts, general strikes, and rioting), the police are there to control these activities (p. 37). Vitale concludes,

> Therefore, while the specific forms that policing takes have changed as the nature of inequality and the forms of resistance to it have shifted over time, the basic function of managing the poor, foreign, and nonwhite on behalf of a system of economic and political inequality remains (p. 37).

Additionally, author, organizer, and activist, Andrea J. Ritchie writes that generally people have "exceedingly low" awareness of violence against women of color, stating, "The history I learned in school rarely mentioned Indigenous women's experiences of colonial violence, Black women's encounters with slave patrols and Jim Crow policing, or immigrant women's experiences with policing at and beyond the border" (2017, p. 19). Ritchie asserts that the earliest example of policing in the U.S. came in the form of military violence in which indigenous women and children were indiscriminately violated against to further projects of settler colonialism. This section will also include an analysis of how the origins of policing impacted women of color and immigrant women.

Worker and Immigrant Suppression

Figure 10.4.1: Sir Robert Peel statue in Greater Manchester, England. (CC BY-SA 2.0; David Ingham via WikiMedia Commons)

The first formalized police force was the London Metropolitan Police founded in 1829 by Sir Robert Peel. The purpose for this force wasn't to "fight crime," but more about "managing disorder and protecting the propertied classes from the rabble" (Vitale, 2017, p. 37). In fact, Peel developed his policing ideas while participating in the British colonial occupation of Ireland. From its inception, policing was about social control to protect those in power against "growing insurrections, riots, and political uprisings" (p. 37). Peel noticed that with the armed occupying forces in Ireland, they dealt with resistance by firing into the crowds and creating martyrs. This would only agitate further resistance by the Irish. Peel instead offered a more "legitimate" force of policing called the Peace Preservation Force who would try to prevent disruption by infiltrating "rebellious localities" and pinpoint "troublemakers" to arrest or intimidate.

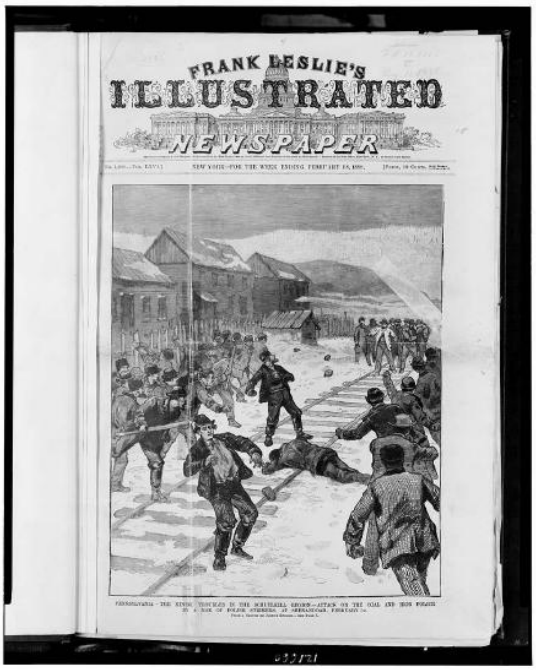

Figure 10.4.2: Striking Polish coal miners in battle with coal and iron police, near Shenandoah City, Pennsylvania.
Illus. in: Frank Leslie's illustrated newspaper, v. 66, 1888 Feb. 18, p. 1. (Public Domain; Joseph Becker via Library of Congress)

In the U.S. police forces were created in the North East to suppress workers' movements and strikes, largely led by poor and immigrant workers. Industrialization and immigration influxes from Europe created social and political upheavals in the early 19th century, and Boston for example, wanted a police force to "to manage riots and the widespread social disorder associated with the working classes" (p. 39). Police were used to deal with workers' strikes, riots, and suppress militant unionism. Privatized police forces backed by state legislation were used to break strikes, such as the Coal and Iron Police of Pennsylvania. The Coal and Iron Police killed 19 mine workers and wounded dozens in the Lattimer Massacre of 1897. The workers were on strike, protesting very dangerous working conditions and unpaid overtime.

Worker and immigrant suppression was also about controlling a largely poor, Catholic, militant immigrant population that were seen as socially inferior by elite protestants in Boston, New York and Chicago. “Morality laws” restricted drinking, gambling, prostitution, and even dress codes for women, giving more opportunities for police forces to disrupt their lives.

Colonial Police Forces

As early policing in cities was rampant with corruption, it was common for police to be used as “a tool of political parties to suppress opposition voting and spy on and suppress workers’ organizations, meetings, and strikes” (Vitale, 2017, p. 41). Soon, reformers called out the corruption and policing was professionalized through exams, training, and centralized hiring. A reformer by the name of August Vollmer developed police science courses, introduced fingerprinting and police labs. He got his ideas from participating in the U.S. occupation of the Philippines, which became a U.S. colony after the Spanish-American War in 1898. This transition wasn’t smooth, however, as revolutionary Filipinxs led by Emilio Aguinaldo, had been resisting the 400-year reign of the Spanish on their lands, and weren’t about to concede their homes to another colonizer. Filipinx resisters battled the U.S. for over three years in the Philippine-American War.

Unfortunately, the Philippines became a testing ground for new policing methods as U.S. occupation forces monitored anticolonial activities, suppressed demonstrations, and used agent provocateurs to “sow dissent” and arrest leaders and agitators (p. 43). The first state police force, the Pennsylvania State Police of 1905, were in fact modeled after the Philippine Constabulary used to maintain U.S. control. Other methods like militarized espionage and political suppression were also brought from the Philippines to be used on miners and factory workers.

Figure 10.4.3: Fences. (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0; Erik Ruin via Justseeds)

Washington, D.C. was also intimately involved in creating or influencing other colonial police forces throughout the globe. They sent weapons to and trained military officers in Central America and the Caribbean in order to support US-backed regimes. These U.S.-trained security forces committed “horrific human rights abuses, including torture, extortion, kidnapping, and mass murder” (Vitale, 2017, p. 44). The U.S. also set up forces in Japan, South Korea, and South Vietnam to support their objectives such as using intelligence to quell rebellions. Many who served in these militarized police forces in other countries went on to teach police science or influence policing in the U.S.

In the case of Nicaragua, military forces backing the repressive Somoza family dictatorship received training at the U.S. Army’s School of the Americas in Panama, with origins in the U.S.’s Cold War policy of containment against the spread of communism. Course topics ranged from surveillance to counterinsurgency techniques and interrogation methods. Many of their graduates have participated in military coups and human rights abuses throughout Latin America, alleging that “subversives” needed to be removed for national security. But these so-called subversives could include student groups, union leaders, religious activists and farmers and ultimately led to severely repressive and violent state-sponsored terrorism against civilians (Moulton, 2016, pp. 1373 - 1374).

Death squads conducted mass murders in El Salvador. By 1980, Salvadorians had faced decades of coups, dictatorships, mass land theft, and economic insecurity, including the mass slaughter of 30,000 Pipil Indians in 1932 by U.S.-backed General Maximiliano Hernández Martínez. When the people demonstrated against the government for being left landless and jobless, death squads responded with mass killings. This included the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero and later rape and murder of four American Catholic nuns. Instead of denouncing the government of El Salvador, the Bush and Reagan administrations rewarded the country with $3.7 billion in aid, 70% of which was used for weapons and war assistance (Gonzalez, 2001, pp. 133 - 135).

Colonialism and Violence Against Indigenous Women

When examining what Ritchie (2017) names “enduring legacies” of police violence, she starts with colonialism and that “the earliest manifestations of policing in the United States took the form of military violence” during the systemic seizer of land, genocide, and removal of tens of millions of indigenous populations. Citing work by Native American Studies author and professor, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, Ritchie points out that colonial armies and settlers didn’t differentiate treatment of women from men, nor children from adults.

In the 1630s, Puritan settlers began a war against the Pequot people of what’s now called Connecticut, “entering Indigenous villages and killing women and children or taking them hostage” (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014, p. 62). Another mercenary, John Mason, led soldiers to attack a fort occupied by only women, children, and old men, and “Slaughter ensued” (p. 62). After killing Pequot fighters, they set fire to structures and burned the survivors alive.

Upon setting their sights on discovering gold in California, the government supported settler-colonists in their extermination efforts against Native Americans in the state. The *Daily Alta California* wrote in 1849: “Whites are becoming impressed with the belief that it will be absolutely necessary to exterminate the savages before they can labor much longer in the mines with security” (Blakemore, 2020). White settlers were legally allowed to enslave California Natives, take custody of Native children and convict them for crimes and subject them to convict-labor. In 1851, California’s first governor, Peter Hardenman Burnett, used state money to pay and arm militias to kill thousands of Native Americans, including women and children.

Figure 10.4.4: "Gathering Seeds-Coast Pomo" - Cecilia Joaquin, Pomo woman, using seed beater to gather seeds into a burden basket. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Edward S. Curtis Collection. (Public Domain; Edward S. Curtis, photographer via Library of Congress)

Blakemore (2020) also noted that large massacres in California wiped out entire tribal populations, for example the slaying of 400 Pomo people, again, including women and children by the U.S. Cavalry and volunteers at Clear Lake. It’s estimated that 100,000 Native Americans died in the first two years of the Gold Rush and that the state spent $1.7 million to murder California Natives.

The mass killings and policing of Native Americans transitioned from armies to police forces, with the “explicit goal of targeting Indigenous peoples” (Ritchie, 2017, p. 24). As the “controlling narrative” of Native Americans was that they were “inherently dangerous and violent,” criminal, immoral, promiscuous, lazy, and drunk, such framing justified their criminalization (p. 25). For example, in 1850 the state of California passed a law that legalized removal of California Indians from their land and “indenturing children and adults to Whites” (Johnston-Dodds, 2002, p. 5). This legalized whites to claim Native children for labor, essentially authorizing one to have control over a child’s earning until they were eighteen. The Act also legalized the auctioning of any jobless Native American labeled a vagrant, making the Native person essentially an indentured servant of any white person who paid their fines.

Texas Rangers - A Western Expansionist Police Force

Figure 10.4.5: Statue outside Texas Rangers Museum. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Pi3.124 via Wikimedia Commons)

The U.S. also has our own examples of colonial policing on the domestic front. Tejana/o/xs found themselves to be subject to second-class status at the conclusion of the U.S.-Mexico War and the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848. Upon the discovery of gold in California and in accordance with the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, over half of Mexico was taken over by the United States, including the state of Texas. In fact, Anglos had already taken over parts of Texas by 1836, making it a state in 1845 (Martinez, 2009). For Mexicans who ended up north of the new border, their lands and political power were taken away, they were segregated in Mexican American barrios, and were concentrated in low-paying industrial, service, or agricultural work.

The U.S. established the Texas Rangers in order to "protect the interests of newly arriving white colonists, first under the Mexican government, later under an independent Republic of Texas, and finally as part of the state of Texas" (Vitale, 2017, p. 45). Their objective was to "hunt down native populations" who white settlers claimed attacked them and accused of stealing cattle. However, it was white settlers who would steal cattle from Mexican rangers, and when the *vaqueros* attempted to take them back, that's when whites would call on the Rangers and accuse Mexican Americans of stealing. Essentially the Texas Rangers acted as "a major force for white colonial expansion pushing out Mexicans through violence, intimidation, and political interference" (p.45). For example, if any Native American or Mexican American person resisted the Rangers, they might have been killed, beaten, or arrested. They were so ruthless that Vitale cited Texas author, Mike Cox, who described the Rangers' intent on driving out or killing the entire Native population of Texas an "extermination campaign" (2008).

In another example of mass violence, the Rangers killed fifteen unarmed residents at the 1918 massacre of Porvenir, Texas. The rest of the community fled to the south of the border. The state legislative hearings about these extrajudicial killings resulted in no formal charges and the records were sealed for fifty years in order "to avoid any stain on the Rangers' 'heroic' record" (Vitale, 2017, p. 45). The Rangers were often written as heroes in the press, where the killing of Mexicans they named as "bandits and outlaws" were celebrated. This praise of anti-Mexican violence continued to be "a model for American policing" into the 20th and 21st centuries, and the 1935 book on the Rangers by Walter Webb even inspired "generations of films and novels iconizing the Rangers, culminating in the 1990's television series, *Walker, Texas Ranger*, starring right-wing martial-arts expert Chuck Norris" (pp. 46 - 47).

Into the 20th century, the Mexican American and Chicanx communities of Texas experienced "Juan Crow," much like Jim Crow segregation and discriminatory practices of the Southeast. They were excluded from certain hotels, restaurants, public pools, and bathrooms. Chicanx residents who tried to vote were met with intimidation by local police, including the Texas Rangers. In Crystal City in 1963, Rangers were used to suppress voter rallies and Chicanx candidates for city council were assaulted and arrested. The Texas Ranger were also used to interrupt the Chicano Movement in Texas, including the farmworkers movement through tactics like intimidation, arrests, and beating protestors (Vitale, 2017, p. 46).

The Slave Patrol

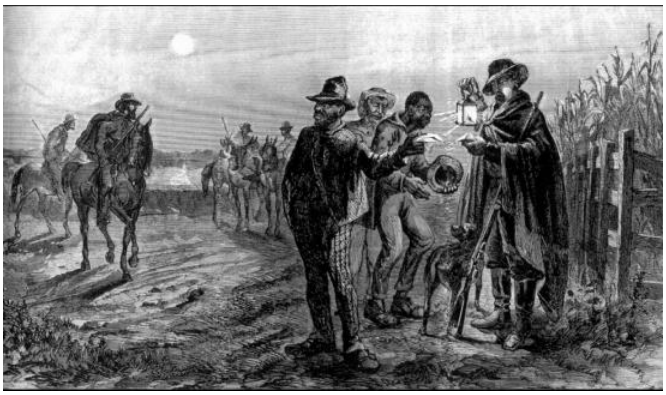

Figure 10.4.6: Passed by Congress in 1793, the "Fugitive Slave Act" not only gave legal credence to the objectification and debasement of black slaves as commercial property, it created a cottage industry of legal bounty hunters. 1863. (Public Domain; Frederic B. Schell via Wikimedia Commons)

Alex Vitale also wrote that, "slavery was another major force that shaped early US policing" (2017, p. 47). Policing in the South has roots in **slave patrols** which were organized to reinforce racist restrictions on enslaved African American populations in the 18th and 19th centuries and to make sure they were suppressing slave rebellions. Slave patrols were allowed to visit plantations and search the premises, making sure that slaves weren't hiding weapons or fugitives, meeting together, or learning how to read or write. Slave patrols also worked to prevent runaway slaves from crossing into the North (Vitale, 2017; James, 2009). Jessica James calls the slave patrol among the first organized and race-based methods of social control in the U.S. Many of these patrols were originally compulsory state militia called "musters," and patrol duty was shared across the classes, as some patrol captains owned slaves (2009, pp. 748-749).

For enslaved women, they were often subjected to "plantation justice," including sexual violence and rape, which were never considered a crime under slave codes (Ritchie, 2017, pp. 26 - 28). Angela Y. Davis (1981) wrote that "Slavery relied as much on routine sexual abuse as it relied on the whip and the lash….Sexual coercion was, rather, an essential dimension of the social relations between slavemaster and slave" (as cited in Ritchie, 2017. Pp. 27 - 28). For Black women, they were also subject to sexual assault if a slave patrol entered their home during a search.

The Charleston City Guard and Watch emerged from slave patrols and was professionalized in 1783. By the mid-1800s, Charleston had 100 City Guards and sixty State Guards who patrolled enslaved people who worked off the plantation property in the industrial era warehouses or workshops. These "unaccompanied" slaves who moved around the city freely with the potential to meet with free Blacks created anxiety among whites, so the City Guards were "deemed essential" (Vitale, 2017, p. 47). Consequently, the entire Black population ended up being surveilled or monitored by armed police, who would typically harass any Black person, demanding to inspect their passes from employers or documents proving they were free.

James (2009) explained that African Americans sometimes resisted by creating warning systems and pretending to be innocent or unknowing when caught. Some even rubbed cow manure on their feet to throw off their scent when dogs were used to track runaway slaves. Others used more force, for example using ropes to trip the patrollers' horses or by throwing hot coals. Although patrols were typically not allowed to kill an enslaved person, since they were considered "property," in these encounters both patrollers and the enslaved might end up dead.

When slavery was abolished, rural towns also transitioned from slave patrols to professionalized policing to deal with the newly freed Black population. Black codes replaced slave codes and were used to control the movement of newly freed people, forcing African Americans into "subservient economic and political roles" (Vitale, 2017, p. 48). Laws against vagrancy were used to submit Blacks into accepting jobs in the sharecropping system and poll taxes were endorsed by the police. For Black women, this meant being subject to working as a domestic servant. If a Black resident didn't have any proof of employment, they would be arrested and subjected to slave labor through the convict leasing system and prison farms. Some sheriffs and judges even received "kickbacks" for arresting Black people and created lists of "hardworking blacks to be incarcerated on behalf of employers, who would then lease them out to perform forced labor for profit" (p. 48). If Black women were not performing "their natural duties as washerwomen and domestic servants," they were subject to punishment (Haley, 2016, as cited in Ritchie, 2017, p. 30).

Furthermore, the Reconstruction era in the south falsely criminalized and targeted Black people to regulate and control this population. Black women were villainized in false newspaper headlines as monstress, crazy, biologically inclined to act "immoral" and deranged, allegedly killing their own children. Citing Patricia Hill Collin's work on how Black women are racialized and

gendered, Ritchie points out that Black women are simultaneously hypersexualized and masculinized, “thereby removing them from protective spheres” that are often granted automatically to white women. Ritchie continues, that portrayed as “subhuman, animalistic, to be violated, feared, and punished,” violence against Black women by the police is regularly accepted (2017, p. 36).

Soon Jim Crow segregation laws replaced the slave codes and Black codes from the early half of the 20th century. Ritchie (2017) informs us that there were many instances of police brutality cases against Black women during this era, both in the South and North. For example, the Civil Rights Congress filed a petition in 1951 presenting hundreds of cases between 1945-1951 proving genocide against African Americans as a people under the 1948 Convention on the Preventing and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Mrs. Lena Thomas was beaten by the police who were called after she got into an argument with a food checker in Harlem. She successfully sued the New York Police Department for $10,000 in damages (pp. 31-32). There were also instances of rape and sexual assault by police, such as in 1946 when Nannie Strayhold accepted a ride home from two police officers in Virginia and was instead driven to a deserted area and raped by at gunpoint. Women who were actively protesting Jim Crow were “singled out for particularly violent police abuse” such as the case of three women from the US Women’s Army Corps who were brutally beaten at a Kentucky bus terminal for sitting in a white section when the “colored” section was full (p. 33). Or how in 1942, years before Rosa Parks, Ella Ree Jones was violently beaten and threatened, then thrown into jail by her hair for refusing to give up her seat to a white man (pp. 33 - 34). Ritchie cites Angela Y. Davis’s research which reported how police regularly raped Black women activists who were arrested for their participation in the Civil Rights Movement. In fact, in 1964, Fannie Lou Hamer famously testified on national television about how she was assaulted by the police when under arrest, beaten and stripped naked (p. 35).

At the height of the Jim Crow era, policing became, “a central tool of maintaining racial inequality throughout the South, supplemented by ad hoc vigilantes such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), which often worked closely with - and was populated by - local police” (Vitale, 2017, p. 49). James wrote that in the end,

> Southern police officers adopted methods used by slave patrollers, such as enforcing curfews and vagrancy laws targeted at African Americans. These practices endured well into the 20th century, and terms used during slave patrols, such as *walking the beat* and *patrolling*, have become commonplace in American parlance (2009, p. 749).

Immigration Enforcement

Ritchie (2017) reviews the policies and practices set in order to police the migration of women of color, focusing on how especially women who were considered indecent or undesirable were restricted entry. For example, the first law to restrict migration by race and gender was the Page Act of 1875 which barred Asian women on the presumption that they were prostitutes (p. 38). Immigration laws also banned “homosexuals” or anyone perceived to be sexually deviant, such as the case of Sarah Harb Quiroz, a Mexican mother and US permanent resident who was denied entry at the US-Mexico border in 1960 because of her short hair cut and for wearing pants. She was deported to Mexico, “confirming that immigration enforcement was to operate as if there was no place in the United States for gender or sexual nonconformity, as gender and sexual norms were defined by whiteness” (p. 38). Women of color who were perceived to breed too many children also faced exclusion, such as how in 1920 Japanese women, the wives of Japanese immigrant men, were prevented from entering the U.S. under the idea that they bore too many children which was seen as a threat of Japanese conquest of the west (p. 39).

Chinese women were regularly surveilled under the belief that they were all prostitutes and “purveyors of disease and immorality” which threatened the ideals of the white family. Chinese and Mexican brothels in San Francisco were regularly targeted by the police and if anyone was found to be participating in sex work within three years of entrance to the US, they could be legally deported. Ritchie wrote, “...controlling narratives of immigrant women as importers of vice, disease, and uncontrolled reproduction were mobilized to justify state violence” (2017, p. 39). Asian women were profiled as immoral, hypersexual, and subservient, and Latina/xs were presented as hotblooded, promiscuous, gang members or thieves. Immigrant women of color’s motherhood were also “portrayed as a threat to the nation’s safety net” (p. 40). And more recently, Haitian, Arab, Muslim, and South Asian immigrant women have also been devised as a threat to the U.S. and as a result Ritchie argues that “these archetypal representations play out in police interactions” (p. 40).

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10.5: Is Policing Inherently Racist?

Racial Profiling under Police Discretion

Michelle Alexander explains that **racial profiling** by law enforcement has long been allowed, a "dirty little secret," legally affirmed by the Supreme Court in 1975 (2020, p. 163). In *United States v. Brignoni-Ponce*, the court upheld the use of "Mexican appearance" as a relevant factor for Border Patrol when deciding to stop someone under suspicion of unlawful presence. Justice Lewis Powell stated, "The likelihood that any given person of Mexican ancestry is an alien is high enough to make Mexican appearance a relevant factor" (Alexander, 2020, p. 164; Andrade, 2014, p. 723).

Despite this and the fact that police officers regularly use race as a factor when deciding whom to stop and search, most or all police departments claim they don't racially profile, convinced that it's only racially profiling if race is the sole factor for stopping someone. Alexander explains that if a group of Black youth are stopped in front of their high school and are dressed similarly in baggy pants, the police can argue that they stopped to search this group because "they look like drug dealers," claiming non-racial factors into their discretion. However, race is still a determining factor if a group of white youth were in the same situation, as they would not be stopped. She writes, "Similarly situated people inevitably are treated differently when police are granted permission to rely on racial stereotypes when making discretionary decisions" (2020, p. 165).

Additionally, seemingly race-neutral factors such as "prior criminal history" that will influence whether prosecutors will throw the book at Black youth with multiple arrests, are not actually race-neutral. This is because people living in racially segregated ghettos that face heavy policing are more likely to encounter police and be arrested for possession, let's say of marijuana, while, for example, a white college student who smokes pot in his dorm room will not have a record even if his use of drugs may be no less than the Black youth in poorer communities. Such practices actually "...often exacerbat[e] racial disparities created by the discretionary decision to wage the War on Drugs almost exclusively in poor communities of color" (Alexander, 2020, pp. 165 - 166).

Further, Alexander explains that police are "highly adept" at pointing to race-neutral explanations for overwhelmingly stopping and searching African Americans such as failing to use the turn signal or because one seemed nervous around police. As long as officers and prosecutors don't use explicitly racist terms, and "the good sense not to say 'the only reason I stopped him was 'cause he's black,' courts generally turn a blind eye to patterns of discrimination by the police" (2020, p. 166). Despite denial by police that they practice racial profiling, multiple studies have proven otherwise.

Driving While Black or Brown

Figure 10.5.1: "Stop Racial Profiling" - Supporters of Dontre Hamilton who was shot and killed by police, at the Police and Fire Commission Meeting, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. November 8, 2014. (CC BY-NC 2.0; Joe Brusky via Flickr)

A famous study was conducted in New Jersey and Maryland in the 1990s which demonstrated how a federally funded program called Operation Pipeline, stemming from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), "resulted in 'a dramatic pattern of racial bias in highway patrol stops and searches'" (Alexander, 2020, p. 166). Even though only 15% of all drivers on the New Jersey Turnpike were people of color, they made up 42% of all stops by police and 73% of arrests were of Black drivers. This was despite the fact that Black and white drivers violated traffic laws at the same rate. 77% of consent searches were of people of color. In Maryland, Black people made up 17% of all drivers on the I-95 outside Baltimore, yet they made up 70% of those stopped and searched by police (p. 167). Once stopped, whites were in fact more likely to be found carrying illegal drugs or contraband in their

vehicles in both states. In New Jersey whites were more than twice as likely than African Americans to be found with drugs and contraband and five times more likely than Latinx drivers. Despite this truth, whites are stereotyped to be less likely to carry drugs so they face far fewer stops, searches, and arrests.

Studies analyzing the racial demographics of police stops of vehicles support the claim of racial profiling by police:

- Of the 1,000 stops by state troopers on a Florida highway, 80% of drivers stopped and searched were African American or Latinx, despite making up only 5% of all drivers on the road (p. 168).
- In Illinois, Operation Valkyrie targeted Latinx drivers, making up 30% of those stopped and searched for drugs by state police, even though Latinx residents only made up 8% of the state's population and 3% of drivers. They were also much less likely than whites to carry illegal contraband.
- A racial profiling study in Oakland, CA in 2001 found that African Americans were twice as likely as whites to be stopped and three times more likely to be searched by police.
- The San Francisco Chronicle found in 2022, that despite decades of gentrification pushing out the Black population of this city, African Americans are *still* more than 5 times more likely to be stopped.

A recent San Francisco Chronicle article pointed out that racial profiling in the state of California is still a major issue, even after decades of new training and policies created to curb racial profiling and "confront the unconscious bias" among police (Gardiner and Neilson, 2022, para 1). The state attorney general's data revealed that Black people in California are still facing disproportionate stops by police between 2019 and 2020. In San Francisco and Los Angeles, Black people were six times more likely than whites to be stopped by the police even after factoring in relative city demographics. In Oakland, Black people were 5.3 times more likely to be stopped, in Sacramento, 3.7 times more likely. This study also found that even though African Americans were stopped and searched more often than whites, they were *less* likely to be carrying contraband than whites. Still Black people faced heavy use of force against them in their interaction with police.

Police agencies and officers were defensive, claiming that the racial disparities didn't consider how police more regularly patrolled low-income communities of color, which led to disproportionate arrest rates (Gardiner and Neilson, 2022, para 26). However, the state also analyzed data of police stops during the night, when officers can't see faces as clearly, and found that the racial discrepancy rates between Black, Latinx, and white people fell by two percentage points. This suggested that "officers' perception of race is playing a role on its own - not just the neighborhood type or arrest rates" (para 28).

Stop-and-Frisk

Figure 10.5.2: Tens of thousands of people, led by Rev. Al Sharpton and NAACP President Benjamin Jealous, marched silently in New York to protest the police policy of making random anti-crime street searches. June 17, 2012.
(CC BY-SA 2.0; Michael Fleshman, photographer via Flickr)

Found unconstitutional in 2013 (Goldstein, 2013), the **stop-and-frisk** policy enforced by the New York Police Department (NYPD) allowed officers to use discretion when deciding whom to stop, interrogate and search. Unsurprisingly, this practice led to the targeting of Black and Latinx people, who made up the vast majority of those harassed by police. Michelle Alexander wrote that the NYPD began collecting data after the violent killing of Amadou Diallo in 1999, an unarmed African immigrant from Guinea, fired at by four plainclothes officers a total of 41 times. The officers were found not guilty. Facing pressure after massive protests and outcry from the community, the NYPD released statistics from 2007 that showed that police stopped over 500,000 pedestrians, often making people lie face down on the concrete, stand spread-eagle against a wall, and searched and groped aggressively as people watched or walked by. Black people were stopped at six times the rate of whites, but resulted in less arrests

because they were less likely to be found with drugs (Alexander, 2020, p. 169). Data from 2008 showed that 80% of those stopped by NYPD officers were Black and Latinx (p. 170).

The highest concentration of stops were in the Brownsville neighborhood of Brooklyn, where a majority of residents were Black. They faced a stop rate of 13 times the average for the entire city. At its height in 2011, under the mayorship of billionaire Michael Bloomberg, NYPD made nearly 700,000 stops of largely Black and Latinx people (New York Civil Liberties Union, 2019). The justification was to reduce crime and get guns off the streets, but less than 1% of the stops resulted in finding guns and African Americans and Latinx people were less likely than whites to have guns.

Stopped by police in the summer of 2011, Alvin, a local teen, secretly recorded the interaction. He stated that he was just stopped two blocks back, and we can hear the police officer replying, "because you look very suspicious." Then we hear a scuffle between the officer and the teen, Alvin pleading, "why you push me like that for?" and the officer swearing at him. The recording also caught the officers threatening to hit Alvin, threatening to take him to jail, and stating that he was being arrested "for being a fucking mutt" (Tuttle, 2012).

Alexander wrote that stop-and-frisk operations functioned as

> …humiliating, demeaning rituals for young men of color, who must raise their arms and spread their legs, always careful not to make a sudden move or gesture that could provide an excuse for brutal—even lethal—force. Like the days when black men were expected to step off the sidewalk and cast their eyes downward when a white woman passed, young black men know the drill when they see the police crossing the street toward them; it is a ritual of dominance and submission played out hundreds of thousands of times each year (2020, p. 170).

More importantly, this routine contact between the police and men of color served as "a gateway into the criminal justice system" and as a way to collect personal information on individuals not yet in the criminal database; these are the very same data used by police, prosecutors, employers, and housing officials to create barriers for this community (Alexander, 2020, p. 171). Other metropolitan city police departments like the LAPD have also collected an overwhelming amount of personal data on young Black men in the city, including their names, addresses and more. In Denver, it was found that 80% of all people of color in the city were on the police's list of criminal suspects (p. 171).

Post-9/11 Racial Profiling and Surveillance of Arabs, South Asians, and Muslims

Figure 10.5.3: "Abolish Guantánamo." For 20 years, the U.S. has operated an extralegal military prison and torture facility for Muslim men on Cuban soil in Guantánamo Bay. This must end!
(CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Aaron Hughes via Justseeds)

Irum Shiekh, Ethnic Studies professor at University of Oregon, explained that she was inspired to research post-9/11 detentions because her own two brothers were investigated by the FBI. She wrote that they were targets of discrimination because of their ethnicity and religion, reminding her of "the Japanese Americans who, during World War II, were harassed and ultimately sent to internment camps because of their race and national origin" (2011, p. 2). In fact, a pattern of racial profiling by law enforcement of

"Muslim-looking" men and communities began after September 11, 2001, all in the name of national security. Shiekh continues that one major difference was that the sweeps by the government were on a narrower scale (compared to Japanese American incarceration) and based on "immigration status and Muslim appearance" (p. 2), a difference which allowed for a perception that they were targeting "real terrorists." Targeting immigrants, who were "much easier to harass and detail legally," helped sustain the U.S. wartime "tradition of creating domestic enemy aliens" (p. 2).

It's important to note that not all Muslims are Arab or from the Middle East and vice versa. However, due to the legacy of Orientalist framing of Arabs as "the Other," and a relatively newer history of anti-Muslim and anti-Arab framing rooted in U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East since the 1960s, Muslims and Arabs are often conflated in the U.S. There have been other law enforcement operations and surveillance of Muslim communities before 9/11 happened, including the 1996 Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act that impacted civil liberties of Muslims (Shiekh, 2011, p. 7). Shiekh points out how anti-Muslim framing demonized the entire Islamic religion as the enemy of the West, capitalism, democracy, and Christianity, helping to create "the image of Muslims as terrorists who are barbaric, savage fundamentalist, and inhumane" (p. 8). The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon ultimately "provided the catalyst for rounding up and deporting over 1,000 Muslims in the three months after 9/11" (p. 8).

The U.S. government initiated several policies that allowed law enforcement to question and detain Muslims on suspicion of terrorism. The U.S. PATRIOT Act adopted October 26, 2001, "expanded the state's power to wiretap, question, and keep individuals under surveillance" (Shiekh, 2011, p. 15). This "War on Terror" has wrongfully associated Muslim, Arab, and South Asian people to terrorism and 9/11 attacks, displacing blame on the most vulnerable of these communities. Further, the extralegal military prison camp, Guantánamo Bay opened in 2002, leading to the detainment, abuse, and torture of hundreds of so-called terrorism suspects sent to imprisonment without due process. Guantánamo Bay has become what the ACLU calls "a symbol of injustice, abuse, and disregard for the rule of law."

9/11 Detentions

"9/11 detentions" refers to people who were arrested after 9/11 on suspicion of terrorism and held under unrelated immigration or criminal charges. The number detained is unknown, but the government shared that they detained 1,182 people in the two months after 9/11 (Shiekh, 2011, p. 8). Of this group, the majority are from predominantly Muslim nations including Pakistan, Egypt, Turkey, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and more. They also included individuals who were British and French citizens. Shiekh speculates that even though none of the 9/11 hijackers were from Pakistan, many Pakistanis were targeted by law enforcement (33%) because they were working in low-paying jobs in public spaces (taxis, restaurants, newspaper stands) "and stood out because of their brown skin color" (p. 9). Furthermore, a majority of arrests (62%) happened in New York even though other areas had larger populations of Arabs and Muslims. The Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) report found that guards at the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn, New York had lost relatives and friends on 9/11 and "harbored anger and vengeance toward the detainees" (p. 9) perhaps explaining why so many arrests were concentrated in New York.

A majority of arrests since 9/11 happened because of tips and racial profiling, meaning "individuals who slightly resembled the 19 hijackers - those whom officers perceived as being from the Middle East - were subject to surveillance, questioning, scrutiny, and detentions" (Shiekh, 2011, p. 10). Due to the nature of racial profiling, many non-Muslims were stopped and questioned by law enforcement as well, especially Sikhs and Hindus, and depending on the individuals stopping them, sometimes arrested. The general public also called FBI tip hotlines which were mostly based on "fear, ignorance, and hearsay," the callers attributing "suspicious activities" to "Arab men" (p. 12). Undocumented immigrants were largely targeted and ultimately deported for immigration violations having nothing to do with terrorism. Michael Welch's *Scapegoats of September 11* (2006) argued that undocumented Muslim men were targeted because they were easy to hold under immigration laws, not because they had any actual links to terrorism (Shiekh, 2011, p. 14). Lacking political power, undocumented immigrants were the most vulnerable to abuse since they were not familiar with immigration laws, and many didn't have any family to support them outside the jail. Shiekh also states that undocumented immigrants "bore the brunt of antiforeign sentiments because they lacked public sympathy and support" (p. 15).

In the aftermath, many human rights organizations published reports on disappearances of people, the lack of transparency, and mistreatment of detainees, including a March 2002 report by Amnesty International which brought concerns about harsh conditions, prolonged detentions, and possible violations of international law (Shiekh, 2011, p. 17).

NYPD Spying on Muslim Communities

In 2001, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) established a secret surveillance program called Demographics Unit, targeting Muslim communities within the city and in surrounding states. With help from the CIA, this unit listened in on conversations at mosques, assembled databases on where Muslims shopped, worked, and prayed, and the police infiltrated Muslim student groups and placed informants in local mosques. The Associated Press (AP) were the first to report leaked documents about this program in 2011 and reported a year later that this unit "never generated a lead or triggered a terrorism investigation" (Goldman and Apuzzo, 2012, para 1). Once the report about this unit got out, Mayor Bloomberg and supporters defended the program, arguing it helped to keep the city safe, and held the police department's "counterterrorism tactics as a model for the rest of the country" (para 6).

Chief of NYPD Intelligence Division, Paul Galati admitted under sworn testimony that the police gathered information on individuals even where "there is no evidence of wrongdoing, simply because of their ethnicity and native language" (Goldman and Apuzzo, 2012, para 8). He gave examples of when police collected information on men speaking Urdu, one of the national languages of Pakistan, stating, "Most Urdu speakers from that region would be of concern, so that's why it's important to me" (para 15). In another example, Galati discussed eavesdropping on a conversation in a Lebanese cafe no matter the topic, simply because a customer could be "a sympathizer to Hezbollah because Southern Lebanon is dominated by Hezbollah" (para 17). Despite the request by some members of Congress that the Justice Department investigate the NYPD, John Brenna, President Barack Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, stated that he was confident that the NYPD was acting lawfully and is keeping the city safe.

But who is actually being kept safe? A report by the Creating Law Enforcement Accountability & Responsibility (CLEAR) Project of CUNY School of Law in collaboration with the Muslim American Civil Liberties Coalition (MACLC) and the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund (AALDEF) found among interviews with American Muslims in the city that the surveillance program caused "a climate of fear and suspicion," impeding on their constitutionally protected rights to political and religious freedom. The report also found that spying by the police resulted in mistrust in law enforcement (CLEAR Project, 2013, p. 4).

The report uncovered how places of worship were the focus of the NYPD's secret unit, mapping, surveilling, and infiltrating at least 250 mosques. Amira (aliases have been used to protect the identities of interviewees), a 22-year old Sunday school teacher stated: "Everyone in the community knows that our mosque is being surveilled.... A few years back they used to just park this undercover car outside the mosque. They would just watch people walk in and out" (CLEAR Project, 2013, p. 12). Many shared that people stopped attending mosques because "the risk of subjecting oneself to being featured in a police file is reason enough to cease attending the mosque or praying with other Muslims" (p. 14). Imams who were interviewed shared that they "felt that their own ability to fulfill their role as spiritual advisors and guidance were hindered by surveillance," unable to guarantee confidential consultations or that they avoided one-on-one consultations because they were never sure if someone was an informant or not (p. 15).

The report also found that American Muslims would be targeted for "appearing to be a certain type of Muslim" such as wearing a hijab (headscarf) or growing a beard. Assia (alias), an interfaith community organizer, stated that dressing in a certain way "has become charged with suspicion. A hijab or a beard isn't just about being different and not fitting in. But now, it's not just that, it's also that people will see me as prone to violence" (CLEAR Project, 2013, p. 15). Some younger people shared that their parents didn't want them to join the Muslim Student Association (MSA) at school or wear a Muslim hat, worried that it would draw "police scrutiny" (pp. 15-17).

Interviewees in this report also noted how their free speech and engagement in political expression were also stifled due to fears of police surveillance. Therefore, the report notes that "it is clear that the surveillance program has, in fact, quelled political activism, quieted community spaces and strained interpersonal relationships….many American Muslim organizations and individuals hesitate to participate in protests, to lobby, and to speak out" (CLEAR Project, 2013, p. 20). Police surveillance, especially on college campuses, have resulted in self-censoring in the classroom by Muslim students, out of concern of police scrutiny, but also classmates and professors misinterpreting their views (p. 44).

Many in the community have come out to criticize this spying program by the NYPD, attending rallies, press conferences, and participating in boycott and media campaigns. Some organizations have broadened their campaigns and collaborated with larger calls for police accountability, connecting issues of profiling Muslim communities with broader issues of racial profiling and policing in communities of color (CLEAR Project, 2013, p. 46). Activists and advocates have demanded an end to surveillance programs, hearings on activities by the NYPD's intelligence division, legislation prohibiting racial profiling and other bias-based profiling, and more. Some have filed discrimination lawsuits against the city, police department and mayor.

In 2018, a settlement from a suit on illegal spying of Muslims by the NYPD resulted in the dismantling of their surveillance unit and an agreement to end religious-based surveillance in the future in New Jersey as well as New York. The settlement also included a payment of damages to businesses and mosques totaling $47,500 and $25,000 to individuals targeted (Pilkington, 2018).

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10.6: School-to-Prison Pipeline

Punishing Children

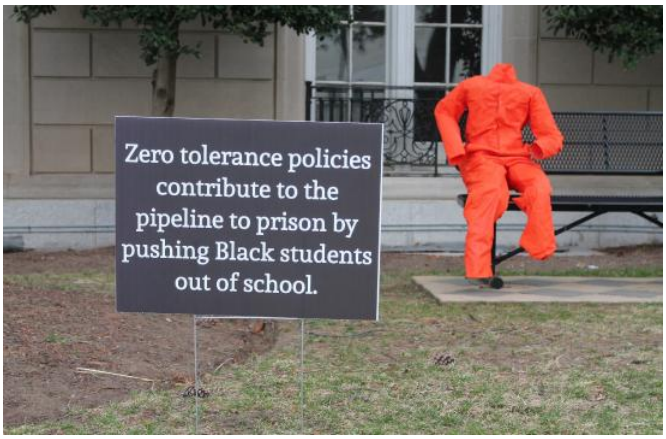

Figure 10.6.1: "Disrupting the Cradle to Prison Pipeline" Art Installation by Ndume Olatushani at the United Methodist Church Building, Washington, D.C. 7 March 2017. (CC BY-SA 2.0; Photographed by Elvert Barnes via Flickr)

Figure 10.6.1 is a photo of an art installation by Ndume Olatushani. Pictured is a stuffed orange jumpsuit placed in a sitting position on a bench with a sign reading: "Zero tolerance policies contribute to the pipeline to prison by pushing Black students out of school." Angela Y. Davis wrote: “When children attend schools that place a greater value on discipline and security than on knowledge and intellectual development, they are attending prep schools for prison” (2003, pp. 38 - 39). This is what many today now call the **School-to-Prison Pipeline**, a metaphor for the manner in which disproportionate methods of punishment are enforced against students of color, LGBTQ, and Disabled students, which often lead them to be entangled in the criminal justice system. How did we get here?

Alex S. Vitale wrote that trends in the late 1990s toward harsher punishment and the rise of prisons, in combination with the increased presence and role of School Resource Officers (SROs), have contributed to this problematic pattern. The phenomenon of children being policed in schools multiplied over the last twenty years and by 2017, 40% of all schools had police officers present on campus, and involved in school discipline enforcement rather than just maintaining security. The rise of SROs was due to our Justice Department’s “Cops in Schools” program which contributed $750 million to hire 6,500 school police. Vitale continues:

> While many of these officers work hard to maintain a safe environment for students and to act as mentors and advisors, the overall approach of relying on armed police to deal with safety issues has led to a massive increase in arrests of students that fundamentally undermines the educational mission of schools, turning them into an extension of the larger carceral state and feeding what has come to be called the school-to-prison pipeline (pp. 55 - 56).

Several reasons contributed to the justification of adding police in more schools, including a theory argued by conservative criminologist John DiLulio in the 1990s that the U.S. would be met by “a wave of youth crime driven by the crack trade, high rates of single-parent families” and other racist stereotypes used to blame supposed declining values. DiLulio argued that these youth were “hardened criminals,” quoting then-district attorney of Philadelphia, Lynne Abraham, who warned of “...elementary school youngsters who pack guns instead of lunches” with “absolutely no respect for human life” (Vitale, 2017, p. 56; DiLulio, 1995, para 2). This is the same DA who’s nickname was “the Queen of Death” for the unusually high number of death sentences she pursued during her tenure (Pilkington, 2016, para. 21). Such ideas were motivated by racist assumptions that are completely baseless and proven false since juvenile crime declined over the years. Regardless, the “superpredator” myth remained and led to new laws that more easily led to the caging of children and increased police presence in schools.

Another justification for increased policing of school children was the Columbine school shooting in 1999 in a white middle-class community. Two white high school students massacred twelve students and a teacher even though there were armed police on campus. The general response was to “get tough on crime,” calling for more armed police in schools, and ignoring the “underlying social issues of bullying, mental illness, and the availability of guns” (Vitale, 2017, p. 57). This, plus more punitive measures

including “zero tolerance,” led to increased rates of suspensions, expulsions, and arrests often based on little evidence and for very minor offenses.

Next, Vitale argues that the rise of “neoliberal school reorganization” prioritizing high-stakes testing, led to reduced school budgets and an enforcement of more punitive disciplinary policies. With the survival of schools and teacher pay being based on testing outcomes, “a pressure-cooker atmosphere” was developed, pitting student interests against those of teachers and administrators. Administrators were motivated to “get rid of” students who “dragged” the school’s scores due to low performance or disruptive behavior, giving them a substantial incentive to drive out students through suspensions, expulsions, or by letting them drop out.

Testing and Suspensions

Unfortunately, along with the reshifting of priorities on high-stakes testing in our schools, came the dismantling of the arts and also individualized learning. Students grew listless and uninterested, leading to more discipline problems in the classroom. There was a rise in suspension and expulsion rates, even arrests of students, helping to push youth into the criminal justice system.

In North Carolina, short-term suspension rates increased by 41% and long-term by 135%; racial disparities existed in suspension rates, as Black students were 3.5 times more likely to be suspended. By 2008, twice the number of SROs were employed, leading to over 16,000 arrests of students (Vitale, 2017, p. 58). The state of Florida adopted high-stakes testing by the late-1990s and out-of-school suspensions increased by 20% by the year 2003. In the next year, 28,000 students were arrested *at* school, a majority for reasons that were minor offenses that previously would have been dealt with by school staff. More students were classified as disabled, being taken out of the testing pool and graduation rates fell to 57% by 2006, the 4th lowest in the U.S (p. 58).

Vitale points out Texas as being at the “epicenter of this transformation…where privatization and drastic cuts to the public sector [met] the expansion of punitive mechanisms of social control” (2017, p. 58). Zero-tolerance policies supported the removal of low-performing and disruptive students from the school, and “suspension rates went through the roof - 95 percent of them for minor infractions” (pp. 58 - 59). By 2010, the state of Texas had 2 million suspensions, a vast majority for “violating local code of conduct.” Called “supermax schools,” by journalist Annette Fuentes in her ground-breaking book, *Lockdown High* (2013), she argued that these schools, backed by for-profit corporations with ties to Republican leaders, acted more like prisons than places of learning. Implementations of fingerprint scanners, metal detectors, surveillance, and punitive disciplinary systems treated students as criminals, and suppressed youth rights and educational freedoms. The scarce external evaluations of these schools “found terrible performance and prison-life conditions” (p. Vitale, 2017, p. 59).

Vitale continues that, “The ultimate expression of this transformation in education is the charter-school movement, which fully embraces high-stakes testing and punitive disciplinary systems” (p. 59). This allowed even less experienced teachers to be hired and led to even more restrictive and punitive rules that continued to target the removal of students who may have lowered the school test scores. Vitale cited a PBS NewsHour segment in 2015 that found a charter school suspending kindergarten students. A principal at Success Academy, part of the largest charter school network in the city of New York, suspended 44 kindergartners and first graders in 2014. The CEO of Success Academies, Eva Moskowitz defended this practice, stating, “If you get it right in the early years, you actually have to suspend far less when the kids are older, because they understand what is expected of them” (PBS NewsHour, 2015). Some Success Academy schools had a suspension rate of 23%, while the public school suspension rate was 3%. Some parents were threatened with calls to the police if a child’s behavior didn’t improve (Vitale, 2017, p. 60). He pointed out that this inevitably pushes out a high rate of students and the charter school system can claim a high graduation rate since students leave voluntarily.

Schools as Prisons

Boarding Schools enrolling kidnapped Native American children should be recognized as one of the first systematic ways that children of color have been incarcerated and punished in schools. To learn more, see Chapter 4, section 4.4 under "Assimilation, Boarding Schools and Adoption."

Today, schools are resembling prisons more and more, and relying on punishment of school children. Further, patterns of increased punishment in schools have coalesced with the rise of mass incarceration in general over the past few decades. In the setting of the rise in “three strikes” laws and mandatory minimum sentencing, President Bill Clinton instituted the Gun-Free Schools Act, preceded by “zero tolerance” school policies, and an overall increase of harsher punishment, metal detectors, video surveillance, and more school police. Vitale wrote that such policies actually “led to the growing criminalization of young people, despite falling crime rates” (2017, p. 61). The Department of Education, for example, reported that 92,000 arrests were made in the 2011-2012

school year and a study by the Justice Policy Institute expressed how campuses with SROs had five times the arrest rate of schools without SROs, even after controlling for the race and income of students.

Sidebar: graph on arrest rates at schools with SROs

Check out Vox's 2015 article, "The school-prison-pipeline, explained" and scroll down to a graph by Justice Policy Institute. The graph demonstrates how schools with SROs have higher arrest rates of students, showing that the presence of school police only serve to criminalize student behavior.

Figure 10.6.2: Schools Not Jails. From rally and teach-in at Manual Arts high school in L.A. October 8, 2009. (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0; ACLU of Southern California via Flickr)

The impact of such practices have been disastrous for marginalized students, especially students of color, students with disabilities, and LGBTQ students. Vitale reported that schools with more students of color are more likely to have these policies set in place and produce higher suspension, expulsion, and arrest rates. In a 2011-2012 survey by the U.S. Department of Education, they found that Black, Latinx, and special-needs students were disproportionately vulnerable to criminal justice actions in schools. Black students made up 27% of those referred to law enforcement, despite only making up 16% of school enrollment, and 31% were subject to arrests. White students made up 51% of school enrollment, yet only made up 41% of those referred to law enforcement and 39% arrested. In Chicago, Black students were 27 times more likely than white students to be arrested, and more than half were children under the age of fifteen (2017, p. 61). The arrests are often for small acts of disobedience or disruptions like using one's cell phone or disrespecting a teacher.

Vitale found that schools with SROs were more and more likely to turn over disciplinary actions to the police, "...finding it easier just to have a police officer come in and remove and arrest a student than to put in the hard work of establishing a reasonable classroom environment through enlightened disciplinary systems" (2017, p. 62). Creating an effective school environment takes time, work, and resources, and Vitale points out are "a lot cheaper than paying for extra armed police" (p. 62).

Similarly, suspension rates are racially disproportionate. A 2010 study by the Southern Poverty Law Center of 9,000 middle schools reported that 28% of Black male students were suspended three times as often as white male students. Black female students were suspended at four times the rate of white female students. Special needs students are targeted as well. The Children's Defense Fund, Ohio found similar disproportionate rates, with Black students being four times more likely than white students to be suspended. Vitale notes similar results in studies all across the nation (2017, p. 62).

A 2022 investigative report by ProPublica found that Gallup-McKinley County Schools in New Mexico state, which enrolls more Native American students than any other public school district in the U.S. (most of them Navajo), disproportionately disciplined Native students compared to white students. The district alone was responsible for at least 75% of Native expulsions statewide, while in the entire state of New Mexico, the expulsion rate for Native students was 13 times the rate for white students from 2016 - 2020 (Furlow, 2023; Jacobs and Furlow, 2022). According to ProPublica and New Mexico In Depth's analysis, "Students in Gallup-McKinley schools faced 735 disciplinary incidents involving law enforcement" (Furlow, 2023, para 22) four times the rate for the rest of the state. See also "Indian Education" under Chapter 4, section 4.5 Perspectives and Future Directions.

Girls of Color

As mentioned earlier, controlling images scrutinize Black women as criminal, immoral, to be punished, so that violence against Black women is normalized. This unfortunately extends to Black girls in school who are framed as "insubordinate," "disrespectful," and "oppositional." Monique Morris's *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in School* (2015), reveals many instances of young Black girls being criminalized, including several stories about six and seven year-olds getting arrested in school (Ritchie, 2017, p. 74). Jaisha Aikins was only 5 years old in 2005 when she was handcuffed and arrested in her school at St. Petersburg, Florida for essentially throwing a temper tantrum, something every 5-year-old does. Administrators claimed she "punched" the vice principal when video clearly demonstrated the vice principal wasn't hurt. After three fully grown white police officers arrived at the school, they handcuffed this kindergartener as she cried and begged them not to. She was only released to her mother after the prosecutor refused to file charges.

The New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU) uncovered several instances of young women of color getting physically handled by school police for minor things like leaving class a few minutes late or cursing in the hallway. Ritchie refers to another instance where 16-year-old Pleajhai Mervin was slammed on a table by a school safety officer in Palmdale, California, for failing to pick up cake from the cafeteria floor. The officer yelled, "Hold still, nappy head," as he held her down (2017, p. 75). On October 26, 2015, a viral video revealed a shocking incident of a school resource officer in South Carolina grabbing a young Black high school student by her neck and flipping her desk while she was sitting in it. He slammed her head on the ground then dragged both the girl and desk toward the door. Sixteen-year-old Shakara was sitting calmly at her desk when the officer, Ben Fields, demanded that she leave the classroom. He escalated quickly to physically assaulting her when she refused to comply, resulting in injuries to Shakara's neck, shoulders, and arm before placing her under arrest. Another young Black woman at the school, Niya Kenny protested this treatment and also was arrested. Both were charged with "disturbing school" (p. 72).

Due to protest and outrage expressed on social media, the charges against both girls were dropped and the officer was fired, but no charges were brought against Fields. Ritchie notes that this attack in particular "exemplifies how zero-tolerance policies…place disagreements between students and teachers, regulations of classroom behavior, and enforcement of school rules in the hands of armed police officers stationed in public schools, creating opportunities for violation and criminalization of young Black women" (2017, p. 73). The increased police presence in schools have led Black girls to be the fastest growing group to face suspension and expulsion as part of the school-to-prison pipeline. They make up around 33% of girls referred to law enforcement despite only making up 16% of the female student population, yet, Ritchie writes, "the discourse around…the 'school-to-prison pipeline' continues to focus nearly exclusively on boys and young men" (p. 77).

Ritchie also points out that Native youth are impacted by the school-to-prison pipeline as well, who are three times more likely to be referred to the police than white students. In Utah, for instance, Native students from kindergarten to sixth grade were referred to law enforcement more than any other group. Young Native women are five times more likely than white girls to be detained in juvenile hall. In South Dakota, the Rosebud Sioux nation successfully filed a suit challenging arrest practices in schools targeting Native girls. In one example, 13-year-old Mindi struck a white girl at her school after she scratched and cursed at her Native friend and the two Native American girls were arrested while the white girl was not. Mindi was charged with "disturbing school" and "disorderly conduct" (2017, p. 79). In another instance, Josei Traversie was arrested for defending herself against students who spit on her, placed on probation, then held in a juvenile detention center.

Sexual harassment and assaults by police officers on campuses also impact girls of color including inappropriate comments about their bodies, or degrading and violating pat-downs by male officers through security checkpoints. Jacquia Bolds from Syracuse, New York testified to a UN committee in 2008, "It is more uncomfortable for girls because sometimes they check you around your most private areas" (Ritchie, 2017, p. 80). A 14-year old Chinese American student stated, "The security guard accused me of having a knife….They took me to a room and made me take off my shirt and pants to check my bra. They didn't call my parents or let me talk to a teacher I know" (p. 81). Muslim students shared that school safety agents would pick on girls wearing scarves and hijabs, one stating, "For some of us…it's like you're covered up too much" (p. 81). In one survey, young South Asian women shared that they experienced gender-based and sexual harassment by school police who made lewd comments during security checks, and almost half of the surveyed stated that they were asked about their immigration status. Sadia, a 17-year-old Pakistani woman shared, "I am in constant fear that my immigration status will be revealed" (p. 82).

Young women of color are organizing against police violence directed toward them, both inside and out of schools, such as calling for an end to school policing, decriminalizing offenses, or closing jails. Ritchie calls for action by writing,

> It is our responsibility to create spaces in which girls' and young women's experiences of policing can be seen and heard, and to support their leadership and their demands to get police out of schools…and promote conditions under which young

women of color can be safe and thrive (2017, p. 87).

Special Needs Children

Students with special-needs, who have physical or learning disabilities, are also disproportionately represented among students referred to law enforcement at about 26% while they only make up 14% of the entire student population. Black and Latinx students are referred in disproportionate numbers to their enrollment rate (Ferris, 2015; Vitale, 2017, p. 62). In 2015, an 11-year-old African American student with autism from Lynchburg, Virginia, Kayleb Moon-Robinson, was charged with criminal offenses by the school's SRO multiple times. Once for kicking a garbage can and another time for resisting the officer who was trying to grab and drag him out of the classroom. The student was charged with a misdemeanor for disorderly conduct and a felony for assaulting a police officer and a family court judge found the child guilty of all charges (Vitale, 2017, p. 62).

Kayleb stated that the school police, "...grabbed me and tried to take me to the office…I started pushing him away. He slammed me down, and then he handcuffed me" (Ferris, 2015). A teacher confirmed that the officer grabbed Kayleb's chest and he cursed and struggled. School officials only defended the presence of police in schools. Kayleb's mother, Stacey Doss shared, "I thought in my mind - Kayleb is 11…He is autistic. He doesn't fully understand how to differentiate the roles of certain people" (Ferris, 2015). In the same report Ferris found that Virginia schools referred students to law enforcement at nearly three times the national rate. The Center for Public Integrity found that thousands of complaints filed in courts against students were mostly for disorderly behavior and against preteens or middle school students.

In another incident, a 12-year-old girl from Virginia was charged with four misdemeanors including "clenching her fist" at a school police officer. In Green County, Virginia in 2014, the school police handcuffed a 4-year-old child for throwing blocks and kicking at teachers. He was driven to the sheriff's department. In August of 2015, a Kentucky sheriff's deputy handcuffed two disabled students, an 8-year old and 9-year old for minor disorderly behavior that were related to their disabilities and for one child, related to trauma (ACLU, 2015; Vitale, 2017, p. 62). Video footage of the arrested third-grader showed that his arms were so small that the officer had to handcuff his biceps behind his back, as he cried, "Ow, that hurt" (ACLU, 2015). The ACLU filed a lawsuit and explained that this particular child who was filmed was crying out in pain for 15 minutes. They also stated that disabled students made up 75% of all students subject to physical restraint at school according to the U.S. Department of Education. The ACLU pointed out that the school's reliance on armed police to manage the behavior of special-needs students was a "fundamental violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and civil and human rights" (Vitale, 2017, p. 63). In the video description, an update from October 13, 2017 states that a federal judge in Kentucky found this act of cuffing disabled students unconstitutional and Kenton County is liable for the deputy sheriff's actions.

Being arrested and charged is an introduction into the school-to-prison pipeline for students. It can create a record that further stigmatizes special-needs students at schools. Judges can order them to conduct community service, meet with probation officers, wear electronic monitors and place students in detention before and after a hearing, essentially criminalizing youth in a severe matter with serious life-long consequences.

The Autistic Self Advocacy Network reported that all charges against Kayleb were eventually dropped after petitions were filed in defense of Kayleb and most likely because his story got some media attention (Autistic Self Advocacy Network, 2016). This should be celebrated, but how many more thousands of children are punished cruelly and unnecessarily every year in our schools, just for having disabilities?

Militarization of Schools

Those glued to the TV or social media in the summer of 2014 witnessed armored tanks and police in military gear pointing semi-automatic rifles at protestors in Ferguson, Missouri. Large demonstrations demanded justice for Michael Brown, who was killed at only 18-years of age by Ferguson Police Department officer Darren Wilson on August 9, 2014. The protest scenes looked more like a war battle scene. Since when did local police forces have access to such military equipment, typically used in a war? One analysis by National Public Radio found that the Pentagon has given local police forces close to $2 billion of military-grade equipment like mine-resistant vehicles, assault rifles, and grenade launchers. In the case of Ferguson Police, they received gear from private companies including computers and utility trucks at Urban Shield (Bauer, 2014, para. 7).

Funded through a counterterrorism grant from the Department of Homeland Security, Urban Shield claimed to be the largest first-responder training in the world, bringing in people from across the globe including Israel and South Korea. Started by the Alameda County Sheriff's Office in California, Urban Shield offered militarized police training and a weapons expo and also received funding from over 100 corporations including Verizon, Motorola, and military supply companies (Critical Resistance; Bauer, 2014,

para. 4-5). Urban Shield in Alameda County was stopped in 2018 due to the grassroots organizing and legislative advocacy amongst various community organizations, most notably under the Stop Urban Shield Coalition.

Mother Jones reported that "outfitting America's warrior cops" is major business, with the Department of Defense having given $5.1 billion worth of equipment to local and state police departments since 1997, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) giving out $41 billion since 2002 in the form of grants, specifying that they can be used to shut down protests, serve warrants, and search homes (Bauer, 2014, para 7). Such programs have led to the proliferation of SWAT teams and raids, the ACLU finding that SWAT raids were more likely to hit Black neighborhoods than white neighborhoods (Lopez, 2016, para 7).

Vitale reported that school police are also joining in and purchasing military-grade equipment and weapons including AR-15 assault rifles, shot guns, and mine-resistant ambush protection (MRAP) vehicles, and school children in largely Black or Brown neighborhoods are facing SWAT raids as well (2017, p. 63). In 2003, Goose Creek High School in South Carolina coordinated a massive SWAT raid for drugs and guns. Police had their guns drawn out, brought in police dogs, searched students, and ordered the largely Black student body to get on the ground. No drugs were found. Vitale wrote, "The use of guns and militarized equipment undermines the basic ethos of school as a supportive learning environment and replaces it with fear and control" (p. 63). He stated that the National Association of School Resource Officers has become the "bastion of this process," where at its annual conference we can find military contractors selling schools security systems and training officers in paramilitary techniques. Once a keynote speaker at this conference told the audience:

> You've got people in your schools right now planning a Columbine….we have Al-Qaeda cells thinking of it. Every school is a possible target of attack...You've got to have enough guns and ammunition and body armor to stay alive...You should be walking around in school everyday in complete tactical equipment, with semi-automatic weapons and five rounds of ammo...You must think of yourself as soldiers at war (p. 64).

The Southern Poverty Law Center filed a class-action lawsuit in 2010 against Birmingham, Alabama schools for systematically using excessive force on students, alleging that close to 200 students were sprayed with pepper spray and tear gas, causing extreme pain, skin irritation, and problems with breathing and vision. All the students targeted were Black, one student was pregnant, and many were bystanders. The school district was found guilty in 2015 and the use of sprays were banned (Vitale, 2017, p. 64). In 2013, a Texas student, Nino de Rivera was tasered by a school resource officer and critically injured by the resulting fall and blow to the head. He had to have surgery to repair a "severe brain hemorrhage" and was in a medically induced coma for 52 days.

In 2015, *Mother Jones* reported that at least 28 students had been seriously injured between 2010 and 2015, in one case a student was shot to death by an SRO. They reported that there is a lack of government data on police conduct in schools and they seem to lack training and oversight, disproportionately impacting students of color and disabled students (Lee, 2015, para 1-2). At a middle school in Louisville, an officer punched a 13-year-old student in the face for cutting the cafeteria line, and the same officer put another middle-schooler in a chokehold, knocking him unconscious (para 3). In May of 2014, a high school student in Houston, Cesar Suquet, was hit at least 18 times by a baton by police officer, Michael Y'Barbo (para 4). On November 10, 2010, 14-year-old Derek Lopez punched another student outside Northside Alternative High School near San Antonio, Texas. Officer Daniel Alvarado witnessed the event, ordered Lopez to freeze, then chased Lopez to a shed behind a house and shot him, ending Dreke Lopez's life. Lopez was unarmed, yet the officer claimed he "bull-rushed" the officer. A 2012 grand jury declined to indict Alvarado (para 6).

Vitale wrote that there is no evidence to suggest that the presence of School Resource Officers (SROs) reduce crime, or reduce thefts or violence. There's only been a few instances where officers averted a potential gun crime. In fact, schools with police presence report that they feel less safe than similar schools with no police (2017, p. 65). Data show that reported crimes increase with more SROs, partially because they treat more things as criminal matters.

Ultimately, schools are places of learning and student learning improves when students feel safe and supported. Even well-intentioned school policing and punitive discipline practices undermine that, because it can create a climate of distrust which can increase disruptive behavior. Armed police have not shown to improve the safety of students and won't protect schools from intruders. School Resource Officers are mostly effective at driving out youth from schools and into the criminal justice system. Vitale summarized, "Our young people need compassion and care, not coercion and control" (2017, p. 73).

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10.7: Alternative Solutions

Building a Youth Support Complex

Figure 10.7.1: No Justice in a Racist System. An illustration of the scales of justice on fire with skulls on both sides and the phrase, "There is no justice in a racist system" written across. (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; Roger Peet via JustSeeds)

When thinking of alternative solutions to modern day incarceration, we must examine and learn from the culture of policing before colonization of the Americas and how policing has been used to further the efforts of colonization. For example, the modern day Tribal Police found on many Native American reservations are the product of various attempts to police Native Americans who were relegated to segregated and isolated communities.

American Indians were not allowed to participate in policing reservations until the 1860s (Wakeling et al., p.41). Although at that point most of those who were policing reservations were Native American (local tribal members and from other reservations), some continued to be non-native. However, because they were a part of the policing institution Native Americans were seen as representatives of the U.S. government and in many cases not trusted (p. 41). “Their duties included determining whether a fellow tribesman was working enough to merit his sugar, coffee, and tobacco rations” (p.41). This relationship between tribal members and Tribal Police caused much animosity which the federal government was more than happy to take advantage of. Moreover, the federal government believed that utilizing Native Americans as Tribal Police was more viable than utilizing white officers due to the shared experiences that native officers had with the local population.

In his book, *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*, Dr. Victor Rios, who teaches Sociology at UC Santa Barbara and has a PhD in Ethnic Studies, tells us how young Black and Latinx boys in Oakland’s Fruitvale district have not been abandoned by the state but instead are hypercriminalized by what he theorizes as the **Youth Control Complex**. Rios defines the Youth Control Complex as a system of criminalization molded by the synchronized, systematic punishment meted out by socializing and social control institutions (Rios, 2011, p. 21). Rios emphasizes that there are many approaches to interrupting the hypercriminalization of young Black and Latinx boys and the school-to-prison pipeline and the following are some of his solutions toward dismantling the Youth Control Complex.

This section will focus on the solutions Rios proposes in the closing chapter, especially those found in: “Building a Youth Support Complex, Facilitating Dignity and Freedom for All Young People, and One Youngster at a Time” (Rios, 2011, p. 161). When creating a **Youth Support Complex** Rios states that youth will need many mentors along the way with academic, cultural, and affirmative action programs (p. 162). Furthermore, when poor, young, Black and Latinx boys make mistakes they should be given the opportunity to learn and grow from their mistakes in order to allow transformation (p. 162). Rios also emphasizes that their resistance should be redirected toward learning to navigate mainstream institutions to become more productive citizens. By remaining free from prison, the boys in this study demonstrated that they were resisting the system: “freedom is work.” Rios adds that “the social movements of the new millennium among the most marginalized classes will be centered on dismantling punitive

social control" (p. 163). These sections also suggest that when policymakers want to be supportive they will have to take risks when proposing (and implementing) new policies to dismantle punitive social control (p. 164).

Furthermore, Rios recommends that schools and criminal justice institutions "respect and embrace the work that young people do for dignity and freedom" (2011, p. 164). He also advocates having participation from young people when creating programs that can support them and in turn empower them simultaneously (p. 165). Rios writes, "the key is to provide all marginalized youths a stage with good props, good lighting, and a supportive audience" (p. 166). Ultimately Rios urges the reader that "redistributing resources from criminal justice institutions back into nurturing institutions must become a priority" (p. 166).

Abolition Now

Figure 10.7.2: Black Unity marching in Eugene, Oregon. (CC BY 2.0; David Geitgey Sierralupe via Flickr)

In her book, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (2003) Angela Y. Davis mentions that prison abolitionists are stereotyped as utopian dreamers and naive. Davis goes on to state that the general free population have a passive role in consenting when new prisons are being built. The logic of the free population is that when more prisons are built, the more the free population feel that their rights are being protected. Ultimately, the Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) has distorted the free population's sense of harm and attributed abolition to "letting people off easy."

In order to address how prison abolitionists are stereotyped as utopian dreamers we need to critically analyze prisons as a racial or racist project. How is prison abolition a racial project?

For example, the original idea of a stimulus check in 2020 to financially aid the unemployed and financially impacted during the COVID-19 pandemic was an idea of utopian dreamers. This immediately caused uproar from right wing proponents. Questions arose, such as: Who would be worthy of getting a stimulus check? Who would pay for it? Was this a band aid solution that would have major repercussions? It is imperative to highlight how the pushback against the idea of a stimulus check to those facing economic hardships during COVID-19 may have had racial undertones.

When examining the pushback against even the very idea of prison abolition, we need to be fully aware of the racialized undertones. When prison abolition is seen as a goal synonymous with utopia, what does that utopia look like? Whose utopia? What do the racial demographics look like in an abolitionist utopia? As we have covered throughout this chapter, the creation of police and prisons have led the US towards a carceral dystopia.

The first book from Kaepernick Publishing is called *Abolition for the People: The Movement for a Future Without Policing & Prisons (2021)*. Many important authors involved in the **abolition movement** are included in this work such as: Angela Davis, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Robin D.G. Kelley, among others. One purpose of this work is to "ensure that the book before you is useful and that it inspires you to take action to build a world without and beyond police and prisons" (Kaepernick, 2021, p.13). The book argues "that the efforts to reform police and prisons have nearly always enhanced their power, reach, and legitimacy" (Preface). Furthermore, *Abolition for the People* aims to answer the following questions: What is abolition? Is abolition practical? and what does abolition look like in the real world? Abolition is defined by Dylan Rodriguez as "the work of constantly remaking sociality, politics, economy, place and (human) being against the duress that some call dehumanization, others name colonialism, and still others identify as slavery and incarceration" (Kaepernick, 2021, p.15).

In *Abolition for the People*, Robin D.G. Kelley writes in "Change from the Roots: What Abolition Looks Like, from the Panthers To The People" that the abolitionist movement is not new and that the "Black Panther Party (BPP) was formed in 1966 in Oakland,

California, precisely to monitor police violence" (Kaepernick, 2021, p.189). Through their abolitionist work the BPP provided many services to their communities such as the free breakfast program, patrolling the streets, know-your-right workshops, exposing the names of brutal police, and liberation schools for children (Kaepernick, 2021, p.189). Furthermore Kelley defines Abolition as,

> Work[ing] to dismantle systems that have caused harm, namely police and prisons, and reallocate funds to social and economic resources, and to develop new systems of community-controlled public safety and restorative justice (Kaepernick, 2021, p.187).

The abolitionist movement is very real such as the Movement for Black Lives, a coalition that is made up of over 150 abolitionist organizations. Abolitionist efforts have intentionally worked to center the experiences of gendered violence as a key abolitionist issue (Kaepernick, 2021, p. 187). For more analysis of gender-based violence, please see the sections in this chapter titled "Colonialism and Violence against Indigenous Women," "The Slave Patrol," "Immigration Enforcement," and "Girls of Color."

Figure 10.7.3: Defund the Police, taken June 5, 2020. (CC BY 2.0; Taymaz Valley via Flickr)

Defund the Police

Leading police and prison abolitionist, Mariame Kaba wrote "enough" to police reform and giving police departments hundreds of millions of dollars. In a New York Times Op-Ed, Kaba wrote, "Enough. We can't reform the police. The only way to diminish police violence is to reduce contact between the public and the police" (2020, para 2). She pointed out that there's never been a moment in U.S. history when police were not a force of violence against marginalized populations, in order to "protect the status quo" (para 3).

As an abolitionist, Kaba calls for an immediate demand all of us can make, which is to defund the police: "Cut the number of police in half and cut their budget in half. Fewer police officers equals fewer opportunities for them to brutalize and kill people" (para 9). Kaba reminds us that reforms have never proven to reduce violence nor protect vulnerable communities. She points out that, "The philosophy undergirding these reforms is that more rules will mean less violence. But police officers break rules all the time" (para 16) without ever facing serious repercussions.

By defunding the police, Kaba writes that "We are not abandoning our communities to violence" (para 19). Kaba and other abolitionists call to redirect those billions toward health care, housing, education, and jobs so that there would be less need for police in the first place. She calls for trained community care workers to respond to mental-health checks and implement restorative justice models instead of simply throwing people into jail cells. As for the crime of rape, Kaba reminds readers that our current approach isn't working, and that most rapists never go to court. Two-thirds of people who face sexual violence don't report it and people who do file a report with the police are typically "dissatisfied with the response" (para 22). Furthermore, it's police officers themselves who commit sexual assault "alarmingly often" (para 22).

In conclusion, Kaba calls on us to imagine a different approach:

> As a society, we have been so indoctrinated with the idea that we solve problems by policing and caging people that many cannot imagine anything other than prisons and the police as solutions to violence and harm. People like me who want to abolish prisons and police, however, have a vision of a different society, built on cooperation instead of individualism, on mutual aid instead of self-preservation. What would the country look like if it had billions of extra dollars to spend on housing, food and education for all? This change in society wouldn't happen immediately, but the protests show that many people are ready to embrace a different vision of safety and justice (2020, para 23-24).

Alternatives to School Police

There has been some push back recently from the community, youth, and organizers to remove school police. The Oakland School Board, for example, unanimously passed the George Floyd Resolution in June of 2020, after a decade of organizing and advocacy work led by the organizers and youth of the Black Organizing Project (Black Organizing Project). The school board committed to eliminating the Oakland School Police Department and reinvesting the $6 million budget to a safety plan that will work to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline (Getachew, 2021, para. 1-2). In 2021, Los Angeles Board of Education voted to eliminate a third of the Los Angeles School Police Department's police force and ban the use of pepper sprays. Other major cities including Seattle and Denver have also recently taken steps to remove funding from school police.

As some districts are pivoting away from an over reliance on ineffective SROs, Vitale calls for non-punitive disciplinary measures in school and to include school staff to be a part of the solution, instead of relying on the criminal justice system. Furthermore, resources that support the *whole* students can benefit the entire learning community, especially students who shouldn't have to just focus on testing at the expense of emotional and bodily health (2017, pp. 68 - 69). This includes increased investment in training, counselors, and support staff to provide effective services to students and their families.

For example, the American Federation of Teachers have supported the establishment of "community schools" where they provide wraparound services including medical and mental health care, counseling, tutoring, and social justice programming, as well as adult education for parents. Such services are provided through partnerships with local community organizations (Vitale, 2017, p. 69). In Salt Lake City, the United Way partnered with eleven community schools, with over half of the students coming from low-income families and 25% English learners. This partnership increased academic achievement amongst students and reduced chronic absenteeism. In Baltimore, they have 45 community schools serving a majority poor and student of color population, and such restructuring has improved attendance, reduced suspensions, increased graduation rates and test scores. Some of the schools have uniformed police, but they are unarmed and the community are pressuring to reduce their presence even further (pp. 69 - 70).

Restorative Justice Programs

Restorative justice is considered to be the most established of alternatives to school police and punitive policies against youth. More and more school districts are adopting these methods and turning away from punishment based approaches to student behavior. Based on indigenous practices from across the globe, restorative justice programs address underlying causes and involve students as responsible members of the community.

The program may implement peer juries, problem-solving circles, conflict mediation or community service and requires time to build buy-in from school staff and student trust. Vitale writes that at the center of these programs lies,

> ... the desire to make schools a welcoming place for young people regardless of the problems they bring to school and to try to work out those problems cooperatively in a way that is in the best interest of the student and the larger school community (2017, p. 70).

One of the core principles involves conflict resolution that requires participants to take on "meaningful responsibility" for their actions and work toward changing them in order to build healthy relationships. It's about reducing and repairing harm, and restoring positive relationships. In order for this program to be effective, a substantial amount of time and resources must go into training. Vitale also notes that if schools face stress about testing affecting school budgets, it will be difficult to cultivate support and buy-in if teachers will be reluctant about taking time away from instruction. Simply replacing suspensions with forced community service won't make much of a difference (2017, p. 71).

Figure 10.7.4: Exterior view of Oakland's Fremont High School's Library. April 19, 2013. (CC BY-SA 3.0; Syghost via Wikimedia Commons)

Fremont High School in Oakland, CA has reported a complete turn-around thanks to a $2.5 million investment into restorative justice programs in their school district. The high school once had the highest student suspension rate in Oakland Unified, but in 2022, the school focused on improving campus climate. Their enrollment has gone up 20%, and the number of students qualifying for college admission has tripled. Tatiana Chaterji, Fremont High's restorative justice facilitator stated that they've "...worked hard on building community, relationship, trust" (Jones, 2022, para 4).

Although the focus of the program started with resolving conflict, now, Fremont High students use restorative justice circles to welcome new students and build bridges across different ethnic groups. They are held in multiple languages including Arabic and Mam, a Mayan language spoken by indigenous migrants from Guatemala. Ebrar Wasel, a junior, expressed that circles in Arabic and English helped her adjust to a new school, especially after fleeing a war in Yemen. She stated, "I used to be scared people would laugh at me…But then in circles, I learned that it was the same for other people, too" (Jones, 2022, para. 14 - 15).

Fremont High students even lead circles at a nearby elementary school, Horace Mann. Aaron Gray of the program at the elementary school shared that "it's never too early to teach children about restorative practices" and that such skills "will help them feel safer and more comfortable at school, which in turn leads to better academic performance and an overall improved campus climate for everyone" (Jones, 2022, para. 26). He stated that when he first started working at the school, "I was dealing with conflicts all day. But now, there's been a shift. Kids are resolving their own issues and organizing their own RJ circles….There's been a huge change in the culture" (para. 27).

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10.8: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In this chapter we reviewed the various institutions, policies, laws, and practices that have led to the creation of the Prison Industrial Complex and mass incarceration of largely Black Americans and poor communities of color. The media and rhetoric by politicians and police have helped to normalize imprisonment and criminalization of people of color, when in fact decades of research and activism has proven how ineffectual imprisonment and policing are when it comes to increasing safety. Instead, many scholars and activists cited in this chapter have expressed that policing and caging people is an extension of white supremacy, slavery, Jim Crow, and settler-colonialism.

We've reviewed the ways in which drug use has been criminalized for political reasons in the War on Drugs. Due to this shift and continued heavy policing in poor communities of color and extraordinary discretion given to law enforcement, we've witnessed the normalization of caging millions of people and allowing system-impacted people to be legally discriminated against after having served their time.

This chapter has also explained the ways in which our punishment system is, as Angela Y. Davis (2003) argues, entrenched in antiblack racism, and other racialized histories of minoritized people. Michelle Alexander poignantly states that the U.S. justice system is "no longer concerned…with the prevention and punishment of crime, but rather with the management and control of the dispossessed" (2020, p. 233). We see this in how policing is drenched in the legacy of systemic violence related to settler-colonialism, worker suppression, slavery, and anti-immigrant practices, including practices that target women and girls, and members of the LGBTQ community. We see institutional racism tied to policing that targets people of color for stop-and-search, even though whites are more likely to use and carry weapons and drugs. We also see racial discrimination in the conviction process, as many are denied legal representation and forced to plead guilty or snitch for a lesser sentence. Despite pages of data proving racial discrepancies in sentencing, the Supreme Court has made it impossible to challenge racial discrimination practiced by law enforcement unless it's explicitly admitted.

Furthermore, this chapter has reviewed the ways in which children are increasingly policed in our schools with shocking and tragic outcomes that push more youth into the criminal justice system.

Still, this chapter has also reviewed the ways in which our communities have and continue to resist policing and caging and fight back against systemic oppression. Some examples are prison abolitionists organizing for a prison and police free future. Others are working toward dismantling school police and instead instituting effective programs like Restorative Justice. The authors of this chapter hope readers will see how these struggles are intrinsically tied to anti-racist movements for justice and equity.

Key Terms

- **Prison Industrial Complex (PIC):** the overlapping interests of government and industry that use surveillance, policing, and imprisonment as solutions to economic, social and political problems.
- **Criminalization:** Criminalization is the act of making something or someone illegal. It also applies to practices, prejudices, and policies that frame certain groups of people as a criminal, or someone who doesn't deserve to have rights or be treated with respect. Many scholars and activists point to how poor people, undocumented immigrants, and people of color are often criminalized by politicians or specific policies that scapegoat communities without much political power. Criminalization of such communities rely on the perpetuation of negative stereotypes that simply being undocumented, or Black, or poor is viewed as criminal. Criminalization leads to over-policing in poor communities of color, racial profiling of Arabs, Muslims, and South Asians at the airports, punitive policies against youth of color, and mass deportations of Latinx communities.
- **Convict Leasing:** A practice of forced labor, where incarcerated people are leased to work for private and public institutions, typically for the financial benefit of the carceral system. Many scholars agree that the convict lease system was a reincarnation of slavery, and some of the similar methods of labor control and intimidation were used. Prisoner labor essentially supported agricultural labor and industrialization in the South. Today, we continue to rely on prisoner labor for countless products, to fight wildfires under dangerous conditions, and they've been on the frontlines of pandemic response, manufacturing masks and other PPE that prisoners were not allowed to use to protect themselves. Prisoner labor is also relied on to maintain the costs of running a prison.
- **Crimmigration** is the merging of immigration law with criminal law and posing immigrants as lawbreakers usually through a racialized lens. Through various laws and policies, crimmigration promotes the notion that an individual must be a citizen in

order to be prequalified for basic civil and constitutional rights such as privacy, due process, and the right to not incriminate oneself.

- **The War on Drugs:** A “colorblind” vehicle that’s driven millions, particularly poor people of color, into the prison system. A shift in the modern criminal justice system framed drug abuse as “public enemy number one” during Richard Nixon’s presidential term in 1971. Exposed to decades of media “images of Black men in handcuffs” and the narrative that “bad guys” are in prison, the “new normal” includes: the rapid establishment of prisons, jails, and immigration detention centers, the Drug Enforcement Agency, over-policing of communities of color, legalized discrimination against system-impacted people in employment, housing, and public benefits, mandatory minimum sentencing, and plea deal bargains.
- **Slave Patrols:** These were early policing groups that would extend the reinforcement of racist restrictions, or slave codes, against enslaved African Americans both on and off plantations. Slave patrols were created to suppress slave rebellions and they would surveille, intimidate, search for weapons or evidence of learning how to read and write, and interrogate and lash anyone they pleased. They also worked to prevent runaway slaves from crossing into the North. Slave patrols turned into some of the earlier policing agencies in the South.
- **Racial Profiling:** The discriminatory practice by law enforcement of stopping, interrogating, arresting, harassing, or searching an individual based on their race, ethnicity, religion or national origin. Some examples of racial profiling including border patrol stopping someone with “Mexican appearance,” highway patrol pulling over Black and Latinx drivers, the Stop-and-Frisk policy of targeting Black and Latinx pedestrians, and Arab, Muslim, and South Asian people being targeted at airports or for detention and minor immigrant violations.
- **Stop-and-Frisk:** A policy enforced by the New York Police Department that allowed officers to use discretion on deciding who to stop, interrogate, and search. The practice almost exclusively targeted Black and Latinx people, who were regularly harassed by the police, for some, multiple times in the same day. This routine contact between the police and men of color served as “a gateway into the criminal justice system” and as a way to collect personal information on individuals not yet in the criminal database, which create barriers for jobs, housing, and access to resources. Similar practices have been endorsed in other police departments across the nation. The practice has been found unconstitutional as of 2013.
- **School-to-Prison Pipeline:** A set of institutional practices, policies, and culture that inflict methods of punishment that end up disproportionately being enforced against poor students of color, LGBTQ, and disabled students. Such punitive institutional practices often lead disenfranchised students to be entangled in the criminal justice system.
- **Youth Control Complex:** A term coined by Victor Rios, it is a system of criminalization molded by the synchronized, systematic punishment meted out by socializing and social control institutions. Examples are parole officers, police officers, school principals, teachers, parents, social workers, and the media.
- **Youth Support Complex:** Approaches or resources used to interrupt the hypercriminalization of young Black and Latino boys and the school to prison pipeline. Examples are mentors, educational programs, affirmative action programs, and after school programs.
- **Abolition (Movement):** Dr. Dylan Rodriguez defines it as "the work of constantly remaking sociality, politics, economy, place and (human) being against the duress that some call dehumanization, others name colonialism, and still others identify as slavery and incarceration."
- **Restorative Justice** is a growing alternative to school police and punitive policies against youth and based on indigenous practices from across the globe. Restorative justice programs address underlying causes and involve students as responsible members of the community. They may implement peer juries, problem-solving circles, conflict mediation or community service. The core principle is creating a welcoming space for students to work on issues in a cooperative manner, in a way that is in the best interest of the student and the school community.

Discussion Questions

1. The first book from Kaepernick Publishing is called *Abolition for the People: The Movement for a Future Without Policing & Prisons*. Many important authors involved in the abolition movement are included in this work such as: Angela Davis, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Robin D.G. Kelley, among others. One purpose of this work is to “ensure that the book before you is useful and that it inspires you to take action to build a world without and beyond police and prisons” (Kaepernick, 2021, . The book argues “that the efforts to reform police and prisons have nearly always enhanced their power, reach, and legitimacy”. Furthermore, *Abolition for the People* asks the following questions: What is abolition? Is abolition practical? and What does abolition look like in the real world? Please answer the three above questions to the best of your abilities.
2. According to this chapter, what is crimmigration? How have immigrants been criminalized in the United States? Please provide specific examples (policies and laws). How have immigrants pushed back against laws that criminalize them because of their

immigration status?
3. Summarize and explain 2-3 myths and truths about our criminal justice system, such as “prisons work to put away ‘bad’ guys so that the rest of us can be safe.”
4. What is the School-to-Prison pipeline and explain 2-3 practices that create hostile schools, especially for students of color and special needs students.

Journal Prompts

1. Are prisons racist institutions? Can we eliminate one without the other?
2. What can we do to abolish prisons, resist the prison industrial complex, or dismantle what Michelle Alexander calls the “New Jim Crow” – this social system used to control racial minorities in the U.S.?
3. Are you, or is anyone you know locked in a second-class status—unable to vote or legally discriminated against in employment, housing, education, or access to public benefits?
4. Did you attend a school with School Resource Officers (SROs)? If so, what was your experience with campus police or what did you observe?

Class Activities

In-person - Racial Profile while Driving

1. In small groups students will review the California maps providing geographical information on Driver’s License Suspension Rates and Poverty Rates. What patterns do you see? What problems do you see in the patterns found in the map? (15 minutes)
2. Students then read and take notes from the *Back on the Road* website and understand “the problem” of this project and the solutions. Also, please review the section of this chapter titled "Driving While Black or Brown" on page 10.5 "Is Policing Inherently Racist?" (10 minutes)
3. Students share their small group analysis with the class. Any experiences being pulled over? Students should explore the following themes someone may experience while being pulled over: racial profiling (driving while black/brown), immigrant status profiling, socioeconomic class profiling, etc. (15 minutes)

In-person - Four Corners:

It is suggested to conduct this activity before students read this chapter and learn about Incarceration, Policing, and State Sanctioned Violence. “Four Corners” is an activity that allows students to move around the classroom and discuss their opinions or share their experiences with different classmates in response to general statements read by the instructor. The statements may be generalizations or based on stereotypes related to Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

Materials:

4 pieces of paper

Tape

Statements (use ones below or write your own)

Instructions:

Write the following words on a piece of paper (one per paper) and tape in the four corners of the classroom: “Agree,” “Disagree,” “Strongly Agree,” and “Strongly Disagree”

Instruct students to gather in the center of the classroom and listen to each statement (see samples below) read by the instructor. Once a statement is read, students will quietly decide which corner they move to. For example, if a student “agrees” with the statement read by the instructor, they will move into the corner labeled “Agree.” Students must choose a corner - if they are stuck between two, ask them to move to a corner that’s the closest to how they feel about the statement.

Once students choose a corner, they may discuss the following with people in their corner:

Why did you choose this corner?

Why do you think others chose their corners?

After giving students 5 minutes or so to discuss in smaller groups, the instructor can ask a representative from each corner to share a summary of what was discussed in their respective corners. A healthy debate may ensue after students hear each of the corners’ responses and individuals may decide to move if they’ve changed their minds based on what is shared by their classmates.

Repeat steps 2 to 4 for each statement.

Once completed, you may have students debrief on this experience.

Review these Vocabulary words before the 4 Corners Statements:

- **Punishment**: penalties imposed as a result of a criminal offense (i.e., incarceration). The goal is to penalize the offender and to deter others from committing criminal offenses.
- **Rehabilitation**: actions and programs designed to change the behavior of an offender or help them with specific issues. The goal is for offenders to successfully re-enter society as productive citizens.
- **Restorative Justice**: specific approaches (such as mediation and sentencing circles) that focus on the offender understanding and addressing their actions harmed the victim and community. The goal is reconciliation and healing for all parties involved.

Sample Statements:

- Our public schools and public colleges/universities should have police presence at all times.
- The point of the criminal justice system is to punish criminals. Offenders should be punished harshly to deter others from committing crimes.
- Our correctional system should have opportunities for education, therapy, and other types of rehabilitation.
- Someone who commits a crime deserves a second chance if they apologize for their actions. Criminal offenders should have the opportunity to work with victims and do things to make amends for their actions.
- When previously incarcerated people re-enter society they usually have a lot of support from society.
- Because of the internet, previously incarcerated people have an easy time getting a job.

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CHAPTER OVERVIEW

11: Social Movements- Resistance and Solidarity

By Dr. Mario Alberto Viveros Espinoza-Kulick and Kay Fischer

Learning Objectives

- Identify and evaluate social movements, labor movements, and various resistance struggles led by communities of color;
- Analyze the connections between social movements, including solidarity across ethnic groups and the influence of historical movements on contemporary activism;
- Describe principles of anti-racism and social justice, including equity, self-determination, liberation, and decolonization;
- Critically discuss the role of solidarity across liberation and resistance struggles as experienced by communities of color and how they are relevant to current issues;
- Demonstrate active engagement with anti-racism, practices and movements to build a diverse, just and equitable society beyond the classroom.

11.1: Introduction
11.2: Frameworks for Action
11.3: U.S. Civil Rights and Liberatory Movements
11.4: Labor Movements- Domestic Workers
11.5: Labor Movements- Agricultural Workers
11.6: Transnational Organizing in the Diaspora
11.7: Contemporary Environmental, Racial and Gender Justice Movements
11.8: Summary/Review
11.9: References

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11.1: Introduction

Ethnic Studies on Resistance and Solidarity

A major element in the discipline of Ethnic Studies is understanding but also participating in liberation struggles, particularly those resisting white supremacy, capitalism, colonialism, imperialism, and patriarchy, or any intersecting powers that have suppressed communities of color. In fact, the genesis of Ethnic Studies as an academic discipline came out of student struggle and solidarity across racial and ethnic groups, as reviewed in Chapter 2. In this chapter, the authors will first introduce frameworks of resistance, such as Indigenous sovereignty and the impact of digital and artistic activism. We will also review key influential US-based liberatory movements and organizations, such as the Black Panthers and American Indian Movement, including the role of solidarity in these organizations. In the section on labor movements, we focus on domestic workers' and agricultural workers' struggles to understand how capitalism, white supremacy, colonialism, and patriarchy function as interlocking systems of oppression. Then we examine the fight for justice for so-called "comfort women" as a transnational movement with a prominent base in the U.S. Finally, we wrap up with a section that highlights more contemporary movements with a focus on environmental justice, racial justice, and gender justice. This section also analyzes how movement work has transitioned in the 21st century and how our communities adapt to continue addressing important issues that affect our lives today.

What is incredibly inspiring about the history of struggle in the United States is that contrary to popular view, people of color have a legacy of being defiant and have fought for our freedom from the beginning. We believe it is of absolute necessity to understand our history of resistance and solidarity within an Ethnic Studies framing so that students are able to identify the ways people of color have often been at the center of these struggles. Overall, we hope that students will be able to understand our rich history of resistance and be inspired to apply our collective power to demand change and organize for a more equitable, anti-racist, and liberatory future for our communities.

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11.2: Frameworks for Action

Ethnic Studies in Action

In Ethnic Studies, there are multiple frameworks for action to address the complex process of dismantling structural hierarchies and working toward racial justice, decolonization, and equity. Activism has driven the field and community action is a recurring principle in Ethnic Studies classrooms and scholarship. These frameworks reflect the different standpoints that advocates and community organizers bring into the process of creating change and how activism takes place. The picture included in Figure 11.2.1, "I Get it From My Mama" by Melanie Cervantes highlights the importance of intergenerational knowledge in shaping social movement activism.

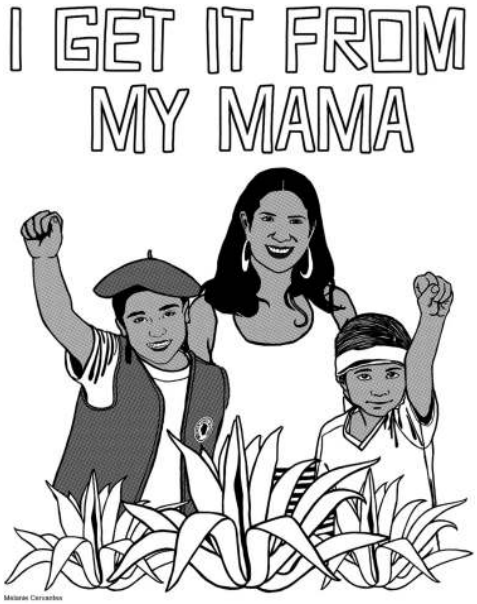

Figure 11.2.1: I Get it From My Mama. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Melanie Cervantes via JustSeeds)

Indigenous Sovereignty

Indigenous sovereignty refers to the self-determination and legal standing of Native and Indigenous peoples. Sovereignty is distinct from other forms of justice because it refers to the historical relationship between peoples and governments, including the system of government within a particular society or territory. Sovereignty is an explicitly political project that concerns land rights, treaties between tribes and other governments, including the United States, and the political standing of Native Americans and Indigenous peoples. Sovereignty is also a matter of economic capacity and spiritual integrity. Native and Indigenous peoples work to ensure that there are resources to support and grow self-determination, as well as the continuation of cultural, religious, and spiritual traditions that sustain political processes and traditional knowledge.

The project of decolonization refers to the continued struggle to assert and restore tribal sovereignty in the face of settler-colonialism and systems of genocide. Decolonization is a far-reaching agenda that requires us to commit to changing how we think about ourselves and our history, in tandem with political and cultural advocacy that affirms sovereignty (Tuck and Wang 2012).

Queer and Trans of Color Critiques and Intersectionality

Intersectional and queer of color approaches to collective action have worked to address justice for historically minoritized and exploited groups by focusing on those who experience multiple forms of oppression. The term intersectionality was coined by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) to describe the unique experiences of Black women, whose claims of illegal discrimination based on race and sex were denied in the court system. Beyond the legal system, intersectionality has been used to highlight how mainstream narratives erase the unique experiences of women of color and other multiply marginalized groups. The notion of intersectionality resonated with other groups like Chicanas, Native and Indigenous feminists, and womanists, who have developed the framework for over 30 years. See also Chapter 8, section 8.2 "What is Intersectionality?"

The phrase intersectionality is a key term for emphasizing experiences of race, gender, sexuality, immigration status, and more. The idea behind intersectionality was developed within social movements and activist communities, including within the Black feminist lesbian tradition (Lorde 2007). The Combahee River Collective statement in 1977 articulated some of the key aspects of intersectionality, including a focus on power relations, systemic oppression, and the importance of continually taking action to make change. You can read this statement in full on the Black Past website. Similarly, Brazilian Black feminists like Lélia Gonzalez also articulated these ideas long before 1989.

These key principles are also utilized in queer and trans of color frameworks (Ferguson, 2003). For example, while many are familiar with the parades and community gatherings held for Pride celebrations today, these would not have been possible without the leadership of queer and trans people of color like Sylvia Rivera and Marsha P. Johnson. These figures were fearless advocates for the trans people of color and queer people of color experiencing vulnerability and risk based on discrimination and exclusion. Cisheteropatriarchy has been resisted within Ballroom culture, which provides a unique social setting for People of Color, including Black drag queens, to celebrate diversity and cultivate spaces to disidentify with dominant cultures (Muñoz, 1999).

Sidebar: Ballroom Culture

Ballroom culture originated in the late 20th century in big cities around the country, with Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ communities celebrating culture and community through dance, performance, and fashion. The styles of Ballroom dancing have had major impacts on popular culture, including being the source of Madonna's *Vogue* and popularizing dance moves like the "death drop" that appear in RuPaul's Drag Race and on memes circulated online. Despite this mainstream influence, many of the performers and organizers of Ball culture remain in precarious housing and economic situations, with little resources or security. The 1990 documentary, *Paris is Burning*, introduces Ball culture with a more serious consideration of participants' lived experiences. More recently, the TV series *Pose* (2018-2021) featured a popular, fictional retelling of the inner-workings of New York City Ball culture in the late 1980s.

Disability Justice Framework

Working in solidarity for social transformation includes many groups that have been marginalized and oppressed. In addition to ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality, people with disabilities have built movements for self-representation, advocacy, and social change using a **disability justice framework**. The category of disability is broad and can include physical disabilities, emotional disabilities, and cognitive disabilities. Within any of these categories, a disability may be visible or invisible, and temporary or permanent.

The group Sins Invalid has put forward a framework to organize work for disability justice, which has ten components.

1. Disability justice must be intersectional and take into account the range of experiences and identities that overlap with disability experiences.
2. Disability justice means centering the leadership of the most impacted individuals and communities. This means prioritizing people with disabilities based on their own perspectives and not their family members, doctors, or other "experts."
3. Disability justice means taking up anti-capitalistic politics. Capitalism places value on people based on their productivity and ability to create monetary gains, and many people with disabilities cannot or do not translate their worth in terms of paid employment.
4. Disability justice is a commitment to cross-movement organizing, such as economic justice movements, racial justice, and gender justice.
5. Disability justice is recognizing wholeness. This means taking a broad perspective on our humanity, and not defining people solely based on one aspect of themselves, such as a single identity. Some people with disabilities intentionally chose "person-first" language like, "people with disabilities" as opposed to "disability-first" language like "disabled people" to emphasize humanity and wholeness. Notably, some people with disabilities choose to use terms like "disabled" so that it draws attention to the process of society disabling people through active choices and policies.
6. Disability justice is sustainability, meaning that at an individual, social, and environmental level, we must be able to sustain our movements and support ongoing activism.
7. Disability justice is a commitment to cross-disability solidarity. This means working together across different experiences of disability. People with physical disabilities, emotional disabilities, and cognitive disabilities may have little in common within their day to day experiences, however, through intentional movement building and solidarity, everyone's concerns can be brought together.

8. Disability justice is interdependence, which involves a recognition that we are all implicated with each other. It is sometimes characterized that people without disabilities are independent and people with disabilities are dependent. However, all people are both independent and dependent, and when we recognize our interdependence, we can be more effective in supporting each other.
9. Disability justice is collective access. This builds on the notion of interdependence to think beyond the individual level when considering disability issues. Collective access can mean considering how groups, families, and communities can access spaces and institutions. For example, are ramps, elevators, and sidewalk cutouts present throughout entire neighborhoods? And, which neighborhoods have these supports available in the built environment? Are caretakers and family members of people with disabilities included in accommodations and accessibility procedures?
10. Disability justice is collective liberation. This emphasizes that when working for inclusion, justice, and equity, marginalized groups can support each other to reach further and create change.

Together, these principles are essential for understanding disability justice, and they can also be applied and adapted to consider a range of social issues and movement organizing.

Sidebar: Disability Advocacy and Pop Culture

Disability justice advocates help to identify when words or phrases are exclusionary to people with disabilities. For example, in June 2022, fans discovered that Lizzo's upcoming song featured an offensive term and Twitter user @hannah_diviney posted this to express her disappointed. Many more began to join in the conversation and speak out against this particular term, along with other commonly used words that maintain derogatory meanings against people with disabilities. Lizzo revised her song and made a public apology, which was met with widespread admiration on social media. However, the reading of "spaz" as a derogatory term has been challenged by Black disabled people who recognize that it has a different history and context among Black people. However, as a non-disabled person, Lizzo acted as an ally to the people who were harmed by her word choice, a concept which is covered further in the next section.

Allies, Accomplices, and Co-Conspirators

When considering the use of these structural frameworks for sovereignty and justice, it is important to recognize that change is carried out by individual people working in community. Individuals may carry a range of marginalized or privileged statuses, including in combination. When thinking about working from the space of privileged identities, scholars and activists have described opportunities to be an accomplice, ally, or co-conspirator.

Allies are members of a dominant group who take an active role in understanding their own privilege and working to support members of a marginalized group. Some examples of actions that allies take include: educating themselves about historical and contemporary injustice, being vocal advocates for anti-racism, interrupting acts of bias, and supporting people who have experienced discrimination. There is no one right way to be an ally, but many opportunities to practice allyship when a person is operating from the standpoint of privilege. This practice builds relationships across differences and encourages listening, learning from mistakes, and continually taking action. Allies take action without centering their own identity or seeking validation of their allyhood. When individuals from a privileged standpoint recenter themselves and their own validation, they are no longer acting as an ally or working against a pattern of marginalization.

Allyship is just one component of acting in solidarity against systems of marginalization. For instance, **accomplices** go beyond supporting members of a marginalized group to take sustained and proactive action. This includes white people who actively work toward anti-racism, men committed to ending patriarchy, and straight/cisgender people who work against the oppression of LGBTQ+ people. Accomplices have already developed substantial knowledge and cultural humility to align their actions with the leadership and goals of marginalized group members. The concept of solidarity is visualized in the image contained at the end of this section. Another term that is often used to describe this kind of solidarity practice is co-conspirator. This refers to the necessity of working actively in continual collaboration with people of color and other marginalized groups and taking active risks to unsettle the status quo. In Figure 11.2.2 you can see an artistic rendition of solidarity, with a group of individuals protesting together, including a sign that says, "We work in solidarity with everyday people impacted by U.S. wars and militarism. We prioritize solidarity with the demands of grassroots liberatory movements wherever possible, not state powers."

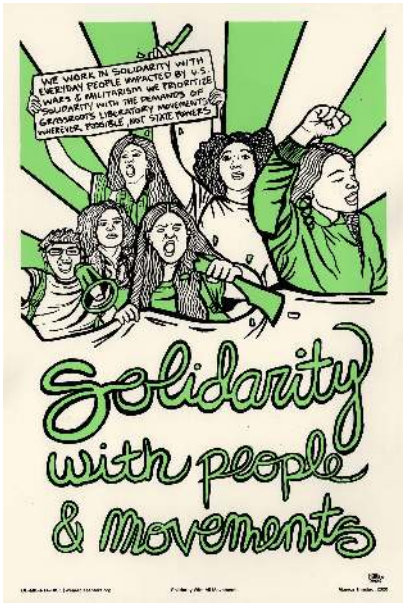

Figure 11.2.2: Solidarity with All Movements. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Monica Trinidad via JustSeeds)

Digital Activism

The Internet has created many new opportunities for activism, social movement building, and connecting people together to help create change in our communities and society. In the early 21st century, Internet-enabled devices like computers, tablets, and smartphones became increasingly more accessible to the public. New forms of social media allowed for direct communication between individuals at a global scale without the same barriers and gatekeepers involved in broadcast media, like television, radio, and publishing. This became a major asset for activists in repressive countries with strict governmental controls, leading to events like the “Arab Spring” in 2010 and 2011, where activists staged massive protests against authoritarianism and corruption. In the United States, the Occupy Wall Street movement in 2011 was an early example of social media being used to spread information about protests. You can learn more about the Arab Spring from the 11-minute radio report on NPR linked here. Occupy Wall Street originated the slogan of the “99%” for economic solidarity among working-class and middle-class communities, and you can find out more about the movement on their website linked here. The tweets that brought activists together to protest capitalism and economic exploitation in New York City quickly spread around the country and eventually the globe, spawning “Occupy” demonstrations in cities and towns where people set up camps in public places that functioned on a collectivist ethic, prioritizing horizontal leadership, as well as raising awareness about economic inequalities.

Now, digital activism is included in nearly every social movement and social justice issue. According to an article by the Pew Research Center (2021), 60% of adults in the U.S. use their smartphone, computer, or tablet often. The rising popularity of social media activism has also led to critiques of what some refer to as “slack-tivism” where people post something on social media but do not engage in sustained action beyond a single post. In these instances, digital activism is mostly seen as a performance that is disconnected from the sustained work of movement building, collective action, and social change. However, digital activism emphasizes the multiple potential targets of social movement organizing. For instance, Twitter users can post messages and start hashtags that seek to raise awareness about political issues and elections, hold corporations accountable, share and critique cultural productions, and organize public discussions. Hashtags are used to raise awareness and inspire people to join in the movement and make it their own. In Figure 11.2.3, the artist has rendered the hashtag "#JusticeForGeorgeFloyd," demonstrating how social media conventions have permeated all forms of representation, including art.

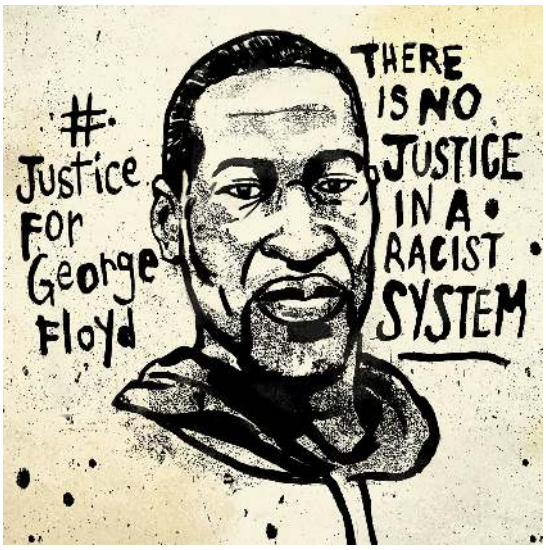

Figure 11.2.3: Justice for George Floyd. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Damon Locks via JustSeeds)

Artistic Resistance

Arts and culture are vital domains for activism and social movements. Artistic expression can be used to communicate critiques of social institutions and authority structures and as a way of building and mobilizing collective identities. Art is a powerful communication tool and has the advantage of having multiple meanings for multiple audiences. Phrases and melodies used in hip-hop, poetry, and music of various genres can illuminate social structures and build connections in place of isolation. Art is also used to spread messages through the built environment through monuments, sculptures, murals, tagging, posters, and stickers.

For example, memorials are an important site of collective identity both for social movements and social institutions. For example, in the southeastern United States, many statues honor Confederate leaders and soldiers from the U.S. Civil War. The Confederacy existed from 1861-1865 as a last-ditch attempt to maintain the system of U.S. chattel slavery. However, many Confederate memorials and symbols are circulated both within and beyond the former Confederate states in the U.S. South. The supporters of these monuments often claim to recognize their historical or cultural value, but they communicate support for slavery and racism among white people. Similarly, in 2021, First Nations activists in Canada toppled a statue of both Queen Victoria and Queen Elizabeth II in response to the discovery of mass graves of Native children in the country's Boarding Schools.

Art can be powerful in conveying messages through symbols. For example, in the image shown in 11.2.4, the long shadow behind students conveys the heavy weight of fear in living in a society where school shootings are normalized.

Figure 11.2.4: Protect Students Not Guns. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Pete Railand via JustSeeds)

Images can also communicate complex social realities and contradictions. For example, in the activist poster in Figure 11.2.5, a Latina migrant woman is shown looking backward over a coastal landscape with a traditional scarf, a monarch butterfly perched on her shoulder, and the circular halo associated with Catholic saints, but mirroring the color and pattern of the monarch butterfly's wings. Accompanied by the text, "Migrar es resistencia anticolonial" ("Migration is anticolonial resistance"), this image signals a transnational identity rooted in liberation and faith.

Figure 11.2.5: Migrar es Resistencia Anticolonial (Migration is Anticolonial Resistance). (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Pilar Emitxin via JustSeeds)

Because of art's ability to challenge conventional thinking and reveal important social realities, it has always been a crucial tool for social movements. One way this can be seen is that authoritarian regimes often target artists and scholars to help maintain social control and oppression. Creativity can be dangerous to those in power who seek to divide and exploit. Culture plays an important role in shared struggles over who we are, how we remember the past, and what that means for the future.

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11.3: U.S. Civil Rights and Liberatory Movements

The Civil Rights Movement

The Montgomery bus **boycott** of 1955 is widely recognized as the start of the modern **Civil Rights Movement** in the United States, with the arrest of Rosa Parks who refused to give her seat to a white passenger. Still, it should be noted that earlier court cases, direct actions, and civil disobedience all led to the development of this movement, and Parks was not the first to refuse giving up her seat on the bus. However, Parks' actions *did* lead to the Montgomery bus boycott becoming one of the most impactful boycotts in the U.S., ushering in a mass movement to dismantle the Jim Crow South and legal segregation of schools, businesses, and public transportation. The Civil Rights Movement also instituted voting rights for African Americans and other disenfranchised communities. This era culminated into significant legislative victories including: the U.S. Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education (1954), the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the Fair Housing Act of 1968.

The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged as a leader for this movement, although there were many others who haven't been as widely recognized for their contributions including women and gay men. Bayard Rustin, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, and Septima Clark, to name a select few, played instrumental roles in what is considered one of the most effective mass movements in U.S. history.

One year since the start of the boycott, buses were desegregated following a Supreme Court ruling and Dr. King quickly became a national political figure. He established the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and led multiple nonviolent protests against "the moral injustices of a segregated society" (Paulson, 2020, p. 144). Dr. King led more than 200,000 supporters of the movement in the 1963 March on Washington, D.C., and led another major protest of the movement in 1965, marching from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama to pressure Congress to pass the voting rights bill. In most instances, peaceful demonstrators were met with violence, harassment, arrests and even death by white mobs and police.

Figure 11.3.1: Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C. (Children near the Washington Monument), August 28, 1963. (Licensed under Public Domain; U.S. National Archives and Records Administration)

An earlier landmark decision was the 1954 Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which overturned the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* ruling on "separate but equal" in public education, making racial segregation in schools illegal (pp. 142-143). The decision was met with severe resistance from whites, with some school districts preferring to close their schools instead of integrating with African American students. When a violent white mob attempted to stop the integration of Black students in Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, President Eisenhower sent federal troops to protect the "Little Rock Nine" (p. 143). See also "Challenges to Legal Segregation" under Chapter 2.

It is important to note that the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* case was not the first to address segregation and discrimination in schools. In 1884, Chinese Americans Mary and Joseph Tape were not allowed to enroll their daughter in the San Francisco public school district because she was Chinese. The Tapes sued the school board and the landmark California Supreme Court Case, *Tape v. Hurley* (1884) ruled that all children, including children of non-white immigrants, were entitled to public education in the state.

However, the state assembly passed a law that established racially segregated schools under a separate but equal doctrine and the Tapes' daughter, enrolled in a separate school in Chinatown that was created for Chinese and other Asian American children.

The 1946 *Mendez v. Westminster* case was another landmark decision challenging school segregation, and this was a crucial precursor to *Brown v. Board of Education.* Gonzalo Mendez (Mexican American) and Felicitas Mendez (Puerto Rican) tried to their enroll their three children in a public elementary school in Orange County but were denied because the school didn't allow Mexican Americans to attend. They and 5,000 other similarly aggrieved parents filed suit against multiple Orange County schools districts and ultimately the Supreme Court declared that segregation on the basis of a Spanish surname was unconstitutional. See also "Sidebar: *Mendez vs. Westminster* and Discrimination in California's Public Schools" under Chapter 2.

Figure 11.3.2: A 2007 stamp commemorated the Mendez v. Westminster case that ended school segregation in California. (CC BY 2.0; USDA photo by Bob Nichols).

“Sit-ins” were another useful tactic for the Civil Rights movement, started by four Black college students protesting the discrimination of Black patrons at the local Woolworth’s lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. These students and supporters formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1960, and they played an important role in voter registration drives.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 prohibited literacy tests and an amendment in 1970 and 1975 banned literacy tests in all fifty states permanently (p.142). Literacy tests, poll taxes, white primaries and other policies were adopted in the Jim Crow South at the end of Reconstruction as a way to eliminate the African American right to vote (p. 141).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal to discriminate on grounds of “race, color, religion or national origin,” adding the banning of discrimination in employment practices, and it was followed up by the Civil Rights Act of 1968, also known as the Fair Housing Act, which prohibited discrimination in housing.

Black Panthers

The Black Panther Party for Self-Defense, often called the Black Panther Party (BPP) was a political organization founded in 1966 in Oakland, California by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale. The BPP was rooted in the ideology of Black nationalism, socialism, and armed self-defense, and the organization based its practices on the logic of separatism, rather than the integration approach taken by other civil rights organizations. This debate is a profound and existential one for many activists and movements, who must decide when to operate within the systems that exist and when to challenge the system as a whole and work for transformation. Stokley Carmichael was a BPP leader who led the party to form educational and social programs, in addition to political activity. Women also played an important role in the BPP, and can be seen in formation in Figure 11.3.3

Figure 11.3.3: Black Panthers Women. (CC BY-SA 4.0; Rainalee111 via Wikimedia Commons)

Leaders like Bobby Seale sponsored initiatives like the Free Breakfast Program, which provided meals to low-income children, helping them to be better prepared and engaged throughout their school day. This was an effective strategy because it directly helped people in need, it demonstrated the capacity and funding for a group of people to provide and distribute food for free, and it raised awareness about one way that economic condition (the ability to provide breakfast) was influencing academic outcomes (participation and engagement in school). Because of their high-profile successes, the BPP quickly became a target for the FBI, headed at the time by J. Edgar Hoover, who created the COINTELPRO program to infiltrate, surveil, and divide members to bring down and dismantle domestic organizations that challenged the status quo, including the Black Panther Party. An image showing the targeting of Black Panther Party leaders is included in Figure 11.3.4

Figure 11.3.4: Black Panther Party poster - Featuring Black Panther Party leaders, which reads, “Revolutionary Intercommunal Day of Solidarity for Bobby Seale, Chairman of the Black Panther Party, Political Prisoner, Ericka Huggins, Black Panther Party, Political Prisoner, Angela Davis, Political Prisoner, Ruchell Magee, Political, Prisoner, and a Post-Birthday Celebration for Huey P. Newton, Minister of Defense and Supreme Commander of the Black Panther Party, Speakers: Huey P. Newton, Kathleen Cleaver, Communications Secretary, Black Panther Party, Music by the Grateful Dead, Friday March 5th, 1971, 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM, Oakland Auditorium Arena, 10-Tenth Street, Oakland, California.” (CC BY 2.0; CIR Online via Flickr)

Asian American Movement, 1960s - 1970s

In the wake of the Civil Rights Movement and Black Power, Asian Americans were inspired to forge their own way based on a pan-ethnic identity. Rejecting the label, “Oriental,” young Asian Americans of the 1960s adopted the term “Asian American” to describe their identity and movement. Resisting both the “model minority” and “yellow peril” stereotypes, they organized for economic and racial justice in education, labor, and housing, along with fighting in solidarity with Black, Brown, and Native communities who faced related oppressions rooted in white supremacy, capitalism, and imperialism.

Asian American Studies historian, Daryl Maeda, pointed out how the Asian American movement "drew heavily from the African-American movement" in order to inform Asian American subjectivity and racial commonality, such as embracing the militant style of dress, adoption of the "Black Power" slogan to "Yellow Power," and deeper connections between the Asian American and African American movements. For instance, the work of Japanese American activist Yuri Kochiyama's dedication to Back liberation struggles and close friendship with Malcolm X (Fujino, 2005) (Dhingra and Rodriguez, 2021, p. 73).

Figure 11.3.5: Illustration of Japanese American activist, Yuri Kochiyama (watercolor and collage). (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0; By Kay Fischer)

Asian American activists and organizations participated in **"serve-the-people" programs** fighting for affordable housing, access to healthcare and social services, labor rights, women's rights, and LGBTQ rights. For example, one of the major campaigns for housing was the decades-long effort to save the International Hotel (I-Hotel) in San Francisco, which primarily housed elderly Filipinx and Chinese men who lived in the single room occupancy building. When in 1969, the owners of the I-Hotel attempted to evict residents who had nowhere else to go, the Asian American movement rallied to protect the residents, even forming barricades and facing 250 riot police (Lee, 2015, p. 307 - 308).

Similar to what many other women of color activists faced in that era, Asian American women called out the sexism and secondary status they faced, being relegated to background work like taking notes, making coffee, and even cleaning toilets. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Asian Americans felt marginalized both within the mainstream white gay liberation movement and within the Asian American movement. Activist and journalist, Helen Zia remembered being put on trial by other Asian American and Black liberation activists in Boston, stating, "I had not yet come out, and they made it clear that if I did, I would also be out of the liberation community. That threatening message kept me in the closet for the next several years" (pp. 309 - 310).

The Asian American movement was uniquely transnational as well, as members organized against U.S. wars, militarism, and imperialism in Asia. For example, they protested against the Vietnam War, critiqued US military occupation in Okinawa and Korea, and aligned with other anti-colonial, anti-imperial, socialist, and communist struggles in Asia. As noted by Maeda, the Asian American movement "sought to achieve radical social change by building interracial coalitions and transnational solidarities" with the goal of dismantling interlocking systems of oppression (p. 304, p. 308).

The Asian American movement was formed across college campuses, including the Asian American Political Alliance (AAPA) started by Yuji Ichioka and Emma Gee in 1968 at UC Berkeley. They were the first organization to use the term "Asian American." AAPA was intentionally pan-ethnic, bringing together Asian Americans across generations, class, and ethnicity. AAPA also "explicitly critiqued the United States as a racist, imperialistic, and exploitative society," pointing out how Asian Americans have been systematically affected by racial injustice. AAPA also committed to interracial solidarity with other "Third World people," both abroad and within the United States. AAPA played a major role at both SF state (1968) and UC Berkeley's (1969) Third World Liberation Front (TWLF) strike to bring about Ethnic Studies at colleges and universities across the nation (pp. 304 - 305).

Young Lords (1968 - 1972)

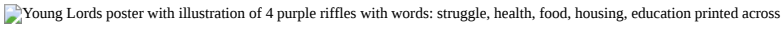

Figure 11.3.6: Young Lords Party: Health, Food, Housing, Education. (Public Domain; Smithsonian Institution)

The Young Lords started in 1968 with Puerto Rican youth in Chicago, many of whom were former gang members. The socialist organization advocated for grassroots services controlled by and for the people. They also organized for Puerto Rican independence (a U.S. territory since the 1898 Spanish-American War), including leading a march of 10,000 in 1970 in New York City. The Young Lords Organization (YLO) chapter in New York City, founded by Puerto Rican college students, became the Young Lords Party. Chapters were formed mostly o the east coast and also briefly in Hayward, California (Ruíz and Sánchez, Korrol, 2006, pp. 815 - 816). The Young Lords were inspired by global liberation struggles and the Black Panther Party (BPP). The original Chicago group gained a national spotlight when taking over a local church to provide community services for the poor. Similar to the Black Panthers, the Young Lords dressed in military style with army jackets, combat boots, and purple berets with a YLO button (Hulst, 2013, pp. 636-639).

The Young Lords' community organizing centered on the social needs of working class and poor Puerto Rican communities, including garbage collecting, free hot breakfast for children, clothing drives, child-care services, Puerto Rican history classes, health programs, and entertainment through poetry readings, music, etc. Their health offensive focused on taking over the Lincoln Hospital in the South Bronx and organizing a lead poison and tuberculosis testing site. Another offensive focused on prison conditions for incarcerated Puerto Rican and African Americans, who were reporting high suicide rates, in addition to addressing police violence, drug addiction, and the war in Vietnam (Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 816).

Puerto Rican women were active in the Young Lords from the beginning, confronting "male chauvinism" within the party. In 1971, Denise Oliver, the first woman on the Central Committee, called for women's participation, stating,

> when the Party got started, there were very few sisters….We saw that we really weren't gonna be able to do any kind of constructive organizing in the community without sisters actively involved…because most of the people that we're organizing are women with children, through the free-breakfast program and through the free-clothing drive and health care programs (Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 816).

Women in the party called out how they were often relegated to domestic and office work, such as typing, taking care of children, and being sexualized by male members. Female Young Lords formed a women's caucus, recognizing the need to discuss and dismantle machismo culture in the community. The party recognized the intersection of women's oppression, capitalism, and imperialism, and eventually revised their Thirteen Point Program to assert gender equality and an end to homophobia (Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006, p. 816). The program also addressed the group's desire for self-determination, anti-racism, community control over institutions like hospitals, schools, and law enforcement, for Puerto Rican history and Spanish language to be taught, and they demanded a socialist and nonviolent state (Hulst, 2013, pp. 636-639).

The Young Lords didn't last a very long time, but they still made an impact by asserting Puerto Rican independence and rights for Puerto Ricans in the U.S. They experienced some divisions within the organization as well as infiltration by the FBI's COINTELPRO, similar to what happened to the BPP. In 1972, the remaining Young Lords became the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Workers Organization (Hulst, 2013 & Ruíz and Sánchez Korrol, 2006). Former members continued the fight for Puerto Rican freedom, by occupying the Statue of Liberty in 1977, demanding the release of Puerto Rican political prisoners and protesting against U.S. military exercises on the island of Vieques (Hulst, 2013, pp. 636-639).

Brown Berets

In the 1960s, heightened awareness of racial injustice inspired many groups to stand up and take action. The Brown Berets were one such group that formed among Chicana/o/x activists. It began with a group of high school students who were part of a civic participation program inspired by the Black Panther Party to take a stance of radical nationalism. Chapters formed in California and around the country, and many are still active today. The group shared ideological positions with the Black Panther Party, including resistance to police brutality, opposition to the Vietnam War, and a militant commitment to revolutionary social change. This position also made them a regular target for government interference and sabotage. They implemented free medical and food programs to help community members affected by disparities in access. The Brown Berets have always taken on a coalitional standpoint and embraced a commitment to Third World alliances with other communities of color in the U.S. and around the world. The image shown in Figure 11.3.7 features a young activist in 1994 as part of the Brown Berets preparing to participate in a protest for immigration equity and against Proposition 187.

Figure 11.3.7: 1994 No On 187 March Kings Canyon Rd Fresno. (CC BY 2.0; David Prasad via Flickr)

American Indian Movement

During the 1960s, Native American communities were dealing with many of the same issues as communities of color in the United States. The US government embraced an urban relocation model that forced Native Americans off of reservations and traditional lands into low-income jobs and neighborhoods in cities and urban areas. Although the government promised jobs, housing, and healthcare, these were few and far between. The mixture of many tribal groups in large cities led to the embracing of a pan-Indian identity united by shared experiences of settler-colonialism, genocide, and displacement. This included dealing with tensions between urban Native communities and those living on reservations, the highest unemployment rates of any racial or ethnic group, and disparate rates of child abductions and children being taken into foster care and adopted by non-Native families. The pan-Indian community acted as a support system and buffer against racism and poverty and fostered resilience. Today, there is a backlash against the pan-Indian identity because it erases cultural specificity and traditional tribal knowledge.

The American Indian Movement (AIM) was first formed in Minneapolis in 1968 before expanding to other chapters around the country. Some of the key figures in AIM include Russel Means, Dennis Banks, Clyde Bellecourt, John Trudell, Leonard Peltier, and Mary Jane Wilson. Roberta Downwind suggested the name “AIM,” which lends itself to graphic interpretation in the form of arrows and targets, signaling the legacy and importance of resistance. One major difference between AIM and other civil rights movements was that their focus was less on integration with dominant society and more on maintaining cultural integrity, the enforcement of treaty rights, and empowering tribal sovereignty. Key issues for AIM included: economic independence and opportunity, police brutality and abuse, and culturally relevant healthcare. Women leaders played a key role in speaking up to both anti-Native issues but also the unique experiences and perspectives of Native feminists. AIM was involved in many demonstrations, including the occupation of Alcatraz Island in the San Francisco Bay from 1969-1971, as well as the Longest Walk from Alcatraz to Washington, DC.

One major success of AIM was lifting the ban on Native American spiritual ceremonies that was established by U.S. law in 1884 through the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in 1978. This built on a decade of legal reform, including the 1965 Indian Self-Determination and Education Act, 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act, 1972 Indian Education Act, 1975 Indian Education Assistance and Self-Determination Act, and 1978 Indian Child Welfare Act. Like the Black Panthers and Brown Berets, AIM was targeted by the FBI for infiltration and disruption, and the national organization disbanded in 1978, although it was outlived by local chapters of AIM that continue to mobilize and inspire Native American and Indigenous activists today.

AIM was not the only organization to mobilize Native peoples from multiple tribes. For example, the National Congress of American Indians was founded in 1944 to face off against the federal government and improve the conditions of Native Americans. The group was somewhat more moderate in advocating for reforms. The National Indian Youth Council was formed in 1961 to advocate for sovereignty and human rights. Youth were dissatisfied with the advocacy and leadership of elders. Similarly, Women of All Red Nations (WARN) formed out of AIM and focused on the leadership and experiences of Native women.

Women advocates were key to many aspects of Native American and American Indian movements. For example, the occupation of Wounded Knee was a protest designed, organized, and implemented by older women. After spearheading dissent at Pine Ridge, the Oglala Lakota Sioux women took on more responsibilities, including carrying weapons. Leaders like Bisonette and Moves Camp were key elders who carried out negotiations on behalf of the movement. See also "Alcatraz, AIM and Wounded Knee" under Chapter 4.

Sidebar: Political Prisoners

As part of the strategy of intimidation and subversion, the U.S. federal government has taken activists as political prisoners. Mumia Abu-Jamal was 14 years old when we has beaten by white racists and a police officer. He found the Black Panther Party (BPP) and embraced its approach to change, moving to Oakland to live with BPP members and organize for the movement. However, he also came under surveillance by the FBI, which made him a target. He was charged and convicted with killing a police officer and has been held in prison ever since, currently serving a life sentence without parole. Similarly, Leonad Peltier was arrested shortly after his involvement in the Wounded Knee occupation and general community leadership. He was charged for the death of two police officers, although there is much evidence that was missing from the trial. Peltier maintains his innocence and substantial evidence was not reviewed in the first trial and appeal for the case. However, the targeting of activists for their outspoken advocacy can lead to a “chilling effect” where activists are less likely to take risks out of fear of imprisonment or other consequences. You can view artistic renditions of both individuals in Figure 11.3.8 and Figure 11.3.9

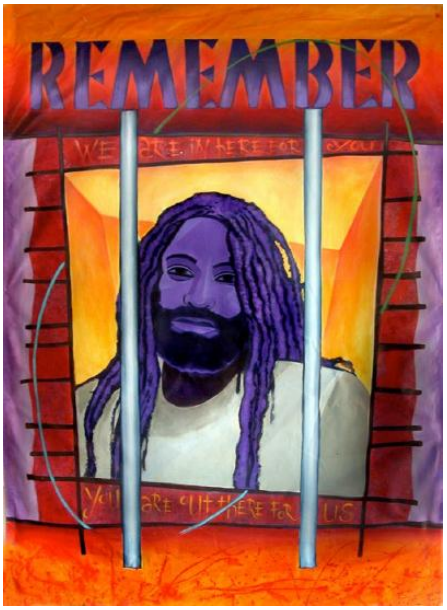

Figure 11.3.8: Mumia. (Free Cultural Works; Mike Alewitz via Wikimedia Commons)

Figure 11.3.9: Leonard Peltier. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Bec Young via JustSeeds)

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11.4: Labor Movements- Domestic Workers

11.4.1: Worker-led Struggles

> Institutionalized rejection of difference is an absolute necessity in a profit economy which needs outsiders as surplus people.
>
> - Audre Lorde, 1998

Although many workers in the U.S. today might take for granted the 8-hour work day, the end of child labor and slave labor, minimum wage, and more, these basic workers' rights weren't simply handed down from our government, "generous" companies, nor bosses. These were hard-won rights that took decades and unfortunately many lives. Even when workers' rights were won, they weren't always equally applied, such as when the National Labor Relations Act was passed in 1935, and African Americans and other workers of color were largely excluded from such legislative protections until decades later. Lately however, even those important wins stemming from our rich and violent history of labor struggles have been taken away due various structural changes, including the rise of mega-corporations, the consolidation of wealth, deindustrialization, and the continued hyper-exploitation of contract, part-time, undocumented, immigrant, and female workers.

Along with the capitalist exploitation of the masses (intersecting with white supremacy and colonialism), there are worker-led struggles whose legacies have most definitely made an impact and continue to influence current workers' movements. In this section, we'll examine the domestic workers labor struggle through an Ethnic Studies lens. In the next section, agricultural workers.

11.4.2: Domestic Workers

Paramount to understanding the significance of labor movements, we should start by examining the experiences and movements of the most exploited workers, who often end up being women of color, including colonized women, enslaved women, and immigrant women of color.

In this section, we'll examine the political impact made by domestic workers movements. As pointed out by Premilla Nadasen in her book, *Household Workers Unite* (2015), social movements and activism by domestic and household workers are often ignored in the media, overshadowed by narratives of helplessness and domestic workers needing rescue. Contrary to popular discourse, women of color domestic workers have resisted oppression for hundreds of years, from colonization to slavery to modern-day systemic racism, patriarchy, and capitalism. Through it all, they have attained political power, commanded respect in their work, and continue to make significant legislative, economic, and social transformations for domestic workers.

Sidebar: "A History of Domestic Work and Worker Organizing" Timeline

Take a look at the "A History of Domestic Work and Worker Organizing" digital timeline by the National Domestic Workers Alliance and activist-scholars Jennifer Guglielmo, Michelle Joffroy, and Diana Sierra Becerra. Using vibrant images and informative text, the timeline offers an in-depth examination of the rich history of domestic workers "resilience and resistance."

11.4.3: Enslaved Indigenous and African American Domestic Workers

We start with the impact of European colonization on indigenous populations of the Americas and the congruent enslavement of people from Africa. Although approaching the first Europeans with generosity and peace, Indigenous peoples were met with perverse violence and cruelty, their estimated population of 100 million slashed severely by 95% within the first 200 hundred years of colonization. By the 1600s, the Spanish were prominent settler-colonists of the Americas and had coerced, often violently, both Indigenous and African populations into a permanent servant status. This included unpaid domestic labor at Catholic missions, where Indigenous women were abused. They resisted in both covert methods, such as slowing down work, or more openly by leading revolts and setting missions on fire. One such resistor was Toypurina, a Gabrielino Tongva medicine woman, who led an armed rebellion against the San Gabriel Mission in 1785 (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 03:02).

Amongst early New England settler-colonists, the developing society began to rely on enslaved African labor by the mid-18th century. Tera W. Hunter, professor of American History and African American Studies, noted that enslaved Black women were creative in "seiz[ing] time…which they weren't given" (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 03:59). This included passing around abolitionist newspapers in secret, joining rebellions, going on strikes, or running away from slave-owners. One of the most well known household names for abolitionists was Harriet Tubman, who was also a former domestic worker. Famous for leading

some 13 expeditions to free others from slavery, Tubman also led African American union soldiers to free over 700 enslaved people in South Carolina in 1863 (04:45).

11.4.3.1: Legacy of Slavery Among Domestic Work in the South

Despite slavery being abolished through the 13th amendment, Black domestic workers continued to labor in slave-like conditions. Although technically free people, the legacy of slavery remained steadfast (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 05:47). Black domestic workers organized for better pay and set parameters around their labor, such as insisting that if they were hired to be a cook, they should not have to clean the house or become a child nurse. They created mutual aid groups and pooled their resources so that they could support one another economically during times of need.

In 1881, the largest domestic workers strike of the 19th century took place in Atlanta, Georgia, where a group of 20 Black washerwomen collectively decided on a standard rate for their work. They named themselves the Washing Society and within three short weeks, they had already recruited 3,000 members (including Black cooks and housekeepers, and Irish immigrants). They threatened to go on a general strike and were met with arrests and fines as retaliation. Regardless, the movement spread and washerwomen struck across various states. In North Carolina, strikers declared: “Let the white people learn to serve themselves” (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 09:30).

By the 1930s when the Great Depression hit, workers and unemployed people demonstrated on the streets, demanding labor protections, soon compelling the federal government to pass some of the first labor protection laws. Professor Nadasen stated how 8 hour days and overtime pay were all a part of labor laws “that established a broad safety net for workers across the country.” Yet two categories of workers were excluded from such legislation: agricultural and domestic workers, populations that disproportionately included African American and Latina women, “so racism played a big role in how labor protections were allocated in the 1930s” ((Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 10:30).

11.4.3.2: Kidnapping Native American Children

Figure 11.4.1: Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle, Pa. Cooking class. Frances Benjamin Johnston Photograph Collection, Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Reproduction number LC-USZ62-26783. (Photo by Frances Benjamin Johnston)

From the late 19th century into the mid-20th century, the practice of kidnapping Indigenous children from their families and imprisoning them at government sponsored, so-called Indian Boarding Schools was common practice. The motto “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” was used to justify the violent and abusive treatment endured by 20,000 Native children at these schools, with the purpose of destroying Indigenous cultures and families. Native girls were tracked to provide domestic work, trained to do ironing, cooking, and housekeeping. Brenda Child (Red Lake Ojibwe) wrote, “Indian students in the government boarding schools were constantly bombarded with the notion that they were best suited for menial labor” (Guglielmo, et al., 2021, “Menial Labor as Civilization”). Outing programs placed Native teen girls to be live-in domestic workers in white homes across the southwest in cities like Los Angeles, Tucson, and San Francisco. The practice of separating Native American children from their parents and families continued until 1978, when the Indian Child Welfare Act gave Native American parents the legal right to resist their child’s placement in Indian Boarding Schools. See also "Assimilation, Boarding Schools and Adoption" under Chapter 4.

11.4.4: Domestic Work in the Borderlands

Indigenous and Mexican women of the borderlands had been resisting slavery, kidnappings, and deplorable working conditions as domestic workers for over 100 years. Workers fought back in various ways, from work stoppages to leaving ranchos, to violent insurrections like the one at Rancho Jamul near San Diego, California in 1837 (Guglielmo, et al., 2021, "The Rancho Jamul Raid"). After U.S. conquest (1848) led to a remapping of borders, Indigenous populations faced land-theft, removal, containment, and surveillance. Chicanx people now on U.S. territory lost property as well, being "relegated to low-paid, low-status work, such as domestic and agricultural labor" ("We Didn't Cross the Border, the Border Crossed Us").

Mexican domestic workers were paid a third of what white domestic workers (largely European immigrants) were paid for the same work. In 1933, Chicana domestic workers established the Asociación de Trabajadoras Domésticas (The Association of Domestic Workers), organizing 700 domestic workers to demand higher wages. By the 1930s, almost all domestic workers were Mexican women from El Paso, Texas or Ciudad Juarez, just south of the border in Mexico. Employers in Texas would pit domestic workers from El Paso and Juarez against one another through low wages (Guglielmo, et al., 2021, "On Strike in El Paso"). If a worker in El Paso wanted fair wages, the employer would simply hire women from Juarez and pay them even less.

Despite the perpetual threat of deportations looming over workers, domestic workers continued to organize. When the Asociación de Trabajadoras Domésticas organized a strike, employers tried to have one of the leaders deported, even though she was a U.S. citizen. But after other unions joined in support, the employers conceded and met the strikers' demands, agreeing to pay domestic workers a dollar more per week.

11.4.5: Domestic Workers in the Civil Rights Movement

The modern Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. is recognized as having started with the arrest of Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott. More than a half century later, much of the labor and leadership by African American women have been erased from historic accounts of this movement, including the role of Black domestic workers in bus boycotts. In fact, most bus riders in the South were Black domestic workers, and *they* were the ones to initiate bus boycotts to bring an end to racial segregation. Depending on public transportation to get to their place of employment, domestic workers faced abuse and patronizing treatment by drivers. If the women didn't give up their seats for a white passenger, they risked getting kicked off the bus, arrested, hit, or even killed for their resistance, as some drivers carried weapons (Guglielmo, et al., 2021, "The Struggle Against Everyday Violence").

Georgia Gilmore, a cook and maid, had stopped riding the bus in protest of her mistreatment, years before Rosa Park's famous arrest. Of the boycott, Georgia said,

> This new generation had decided that they just had taken as much as they could….After the maids and the cooks stopped riding the bus, well, the bus didn't have any need to run. And so instead of riding the bus, they would walk. And then they began to form a carpool (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 16:16).

Domestic workers organized their friends to join the boycott, passed out flyers, and fundraised by selling pies and other meals, leading to a successful boycott of over a year when on November 13, 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling that segregation on buses violated the Fourteenth Amendment. According to Professor Nadasen,

> The Montgomery Bus Boycott was the moment that signifies the ways in which domestic workers were really the leaders of the boycott. And without their support, without their involvement, the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and much of the Civil Rights Movement would not have been possible (2022, 17:25).

11.4.6: The Rise of Workers Centers and Domestic Worker Organizing Today

Also during the 1970s and '80s, African American women began shifting out of domestic labor, as job markets started to slowly open up due to reforms that came out of the Civil Rights Movement. In the aftermath of U.S. wars, occupations, changing immigration laws, and interventions in Asia and Latin America, millions were uprooted from their homes resulting in migrations to the United States (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 28:05). With limited access to citizenship, women of the Caribbean, the Philippines, Mexico, and Central America were starting to find scarce opportunities for employment other than domestic work. Linda Burnham of the National Domestic Workers Alliance notes that because some of these women came as experienced organizers from their countries of origin, the domestic workers movement evolved to be primarily led by immigrant women. With this came **workers centers** - places that addressed "particularly high degrees of exploitation" that the largely undocumented immigrant labor force faced, such as wage theft and "absolutely no rights to the basics" (29:20).

Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA) was an early workers center, established in the Bay Area. One of their co-founders, Clara Luz Navarros, used to be a nurse and community leader in El Salvador, fled political persecution, and brought her skills to the San Francisco Bay Area (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 30:31). Still active today, MUA is a grassroots organization led by Latina immigrant women advocating for "personal transformation and building community power for social and economic justice" (Mujeres Unidas y Activas, "MUA mission"). MUA pushed for the California Domestic Worker Bill of Rights, which passed as state law in 2016, and continues to fight for sanctuary protections in Alameda County to advocate for women seeking asylum or facing deportation, including the right to asylum for domestic violence survivors.

11.4.6.1: Transnational Movement Building by Filipina/x Domestic Workers

In the case of the Philippines, their economy, labor, and education continue to be heavily tied to and influenced by U.S. colonialism and militarism. Asian American Studies professor, Dr. Robyn Rodriguez, argues that the Philippines has become a "labor brokerage" state that "actively mobilizes and facilitates the export of workers…because it benefits from remittances (money sent to the homeland from immigrants…working abroad)" and therefore commonly migrate to the U.S. as workers (Dhingra & Rodriguez, 2021, p. 196). Neoliberal policies that further impoverish so-called "third world" nations have made it difficult for ordinary Filipinx people to find jobs and care for their families in the Philippines, and therefore end up working in a foreign country as temporary migrant workers. This is such a phenomenon that an acronym was created: OFWs or Overseas Filipino Workers, who were at 1.77 million in 2020 (Republic of the Philippines Statistics Authority, 2021). Remittances sent from OFWs in Canada, the United States, Japan, and more are what many in the Philippines depend on for survival, and remittances sent from domestic workers abroad are the "third-largest source of tax revenue for the Philippine government" (Guglielmo, et al., 2021, "Exporting Domestic Workers for Profit"). Some are even trafficked into domestic work, tricked into false contracts, having their pay withheld, and must endure living in an abusive setting (Benitez, 2018).

The Damayan Migrant Workers Association in New York City organizes with low-wage migrant workers to end labor trafficking and demand worker rights. Lead organizer, Riya Oritz, who considers herself a product of forced migration and a child of one of Damayan's co-founders, explained how being put in a desperate situation made thousands vulnerable to placement agencies that would often exploit and profit off OFWs. Ortiz's mother, Linda Oalican, pointed out how the struggle for domestic workers rights is multifold: addressing immediate conditions for workers, but also addressing larger systems of exploitation, such as patriarchy, imperialism, neoliberalism, and white supremacy, that created oppressive conditions for domestic workers in the first place (Benitez, 2018).

11.4.6.2: Domestic Workers Bill of Rights

At the first U.S. Social Forum in Atlanta, Georgia in 2007, domestic workers across the country gathered and established the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA). Along with various organizations and workers centers, they helped to pass the first comprehensive **domestic workers bill of rights** in New York in 2010, and soon similar campaigns sprang up across the nation. Silvia Gonzalez of Casa Latina, Seattle, stated (translated from Spanish): "There is more power and we start winning more bills of rights in more places. It's like popcorn when they start popping: we won one state, we won in another state" (Domestic Workers Make History, 2022, 35:05). In 2019, NDWA introduced the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights at the federal level. Central to NDWA's organizing mission is "building a multi-racial alliance to address the impact of anti-Black racism, unjust immigration policies, and other systems of oppression" (35:26). Allison Julien, of We Dream in Black, NDWA-New York, stated that she's "inspired by the domestic worker history. I'm inspired by their resilience, their ability to build community, their ability to build relationships in order to advocate for the change needed in the domestic work industry" (36:38).

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11.5: Labor Movements- Agricultural Workers

California's Dependence of Immigrant Farmworkers

Figure 11.5.1: A crew of Filipinx farmworkers cut and load lettuce in the Imperial Valley, California. 1937. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number: LC-USF34-T01-016206-E. (Public Domain; Photo by Dorothea Lange)

Since the early 20th century, the California agriculture sector has largely depended on immigrant farmworkers. This started with Chinese immigrant laborers who shoveled irrigation channels and cleared the land in the Sacramento-San Joaquin River deltas, helping to transform this region into one of the most fertile farmlands in the nation. Anti-Asian racism persisted and with each iteration of Asian exclusion laws, the agricultural industry of California depended on the labor of different groups including Japanese, South Asian, Filipinx, and Mexican laborers. In the 1930s, some 400,000 white laborers impacted by the Great Depression came with the Dust Bowl migration and were also hired to work in the farm fields (Sowards, 2019, p. 19).

The Bracero Program (1942 - 1964) was another important moment in California's agriculture worker history. A joint agreement between U.S. and Mexican governments resulted in the "importation" of male agricultural laborers, also referred to as *braceros*, from Mexico to the U.S. to help fill the labor shortage during WWII. The second initiation of recruitment resulted from a U.S. executive order, and was essentially a guest worker program where *braceros* were hired cheaply to work temporarily and returned to Mexico. During such back and forth migration by Mexican workers, the lines of being documented and undocumented became blurred, resulting in a large-scale migration of undocumented workers to the United States (Quintana, 2018).

Figure 11.5.2: Mexican agricultural workers in Stockton, California in 1943. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Reproduction Number: LC-DIG-fsa-8d29109 (Public Domain; Photography by Marjory Collins)

Growers benefited from hiring immigrant laborers with limited access to other work opportunities and civil and human rights. According to Marshall Ganz, "Growers, in other words, learned how to recruit a workforce too powerless to give them much trouble—a workforce of impoverished new immigrants, noncitizens, and people of color" (2009, p. 24). This naturally resulted in not only abysmal pay, but enormously challenging working and living conditions. In addition to the physically tasking labor of bending over repeatedly under harsh weather, workers were exposed to dangerous chemicals, and families were forced to continuously move with the crop seasons, keeping their children out of school. By the 1960s, life expectancy for farmworkers in California was around forty-nine years (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 241).

Large growers in California had developed a tried and true strategy of hiring workers of different ethnicities and pitting them against each other through segregated housing and a racially and ethnically stratified wage scale, relegating the least desirable jobs and lowest pay to those on the bottom of the racial hierarchy, often Filipinx laborers (Mabalon, 2013, p. 66). Filipinx laborers were a part of "a massive army of seasonal migratory workers toiling up and down the West Coast" (p. 69), working in what writer Carey McWilliams called "factories in the fields." Growers claimed that Filipinx and Mexican workers were more physically suited for these harsh working conditions that oftentimes kept white workers away (Lee, 2015, p. 180).

The Start of the Delano Grape Strike

The Delano Grape Strike of 1965 is arguably the most important and successful farmworkers' strikes in California labor history. The strike was initiated by Filipinx labor leader Larry Itliong, with the eventual merging of the Filipinx union and the Mexican union headed by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta. The strike ended up lasting five long years, and Chicano Studies historian, Rudy Acuña, pointed out that César Chávez emerged as a civil rights leader and an icon for the Chicano movement ("Struggle in the Fields," 1995, 19:05 - 19:48). This strike is also recognized by Alex Fabros, Filipino American Labor Historian, as the Filipinx "civil rights movement in California" (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 01:22 - 01:26). Yet there is a notable "historical void regarding the role of Filipinos in this important labor movement" (Scharlin and Villanueva 2000, xxv). Larry Itliong and Philip Vera Cruz, both longtime Filipinx labor organizers and farmworkers were instrumental in the development of the United Farm Workers (UFW) union and approaching César Chávez about the grape strike in Delano.

By the 1960s, Filipinx agricultural workers had spent over three decades working crop cycles up and down the west coast, striking "for a few cents more each season," and therefore had a strong labor consciousness (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 08:19 - 08:42). Dolores Huerta, labor organizer with the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), later with the United Farm Workers, explained how Filipinx workers had a reputation for leading many strikes and were known to be militant (07:29 - 07:52). The strikes would result in wage increases, but workers continued to face challenges because a contract was never signed, which would institute more long-term changes in favor of the workers (07:53 - 08:18).

These older Filipinx farm laborers were also affectionately called *manongs* by the 1960s, a term of respect meaning “elder brother” in the Illocano language spoken by this community (from Luzon, Philippines). The *manongs* were in their twilight years by this decade and faced discriminatory policies that banned them from owning property, voting, and the most devastating were the anti-miscegenation laws that banned interracial marriage. This caused what many call the “lost generation” - the second generation of Filipinx people that might have been, had it not been for racist laws. The *manongs* were largely bachelors with no children of their own (04:19 - 04:55). With no property, barely any savings for their retirement, and no children to rely on, the *manongs* had everything to lose if their work conditions didn’t improve.

Figure 11.5.3: A mural depicting UFW organizers, Philip Vera Cruz, Larry Itliong, and Cesar Chavez in Los Angles. (Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0; Photo by Kenny Chang)

Filipinx workers were encouraged when they won a “wildcat” (spontaneous, grassroots) grape strike in Coachella Valley in the summer of 1965. The strikers decided to move north and attempted another grape strike in Delano, under the banner of the largely Filipinx led, Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC), AFL-CIO (Chávez, 2005, p. 247). Philip Vera Cruz who had spent over three decades working in the fields and in canneries and restaurants, ended up an organizer with the AWOC, AFL-CIO (Lee, 2015, p. 301-302). Vera Cruz noted that this strike changed his life, reflecting that “As a Filipino it gave me the opportunity to participate in the political struggles of this country” (Scharlin and Villanueva, 2000, p. 33).

Larry Itliong, a dynamic and respected leader of the Filipinx labor movement, known to be tough and always have a cigar in his mouth, was the southern regional director of the AWOC. Like Vera Cruz, Itliong had a long history as a laborer in the United States, starting at age fifteen, working in the farmlands of California and in the Alaskan salmon canneries. Described as brave and strong, Itliong called himself “a son of a bitch…in terms of fighting for the rights of Filipinos in this country” and stated that he wasn’t scared of anyone (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 07:12 - 07:27).

On September 8, 1965, Filipinx members of the AWOC met at the Filipino Hall in Delano and made the decision to strike. The night before, Itliong warned strikers that even if they voted to strike, there were plenty of Mexican workers in Delano who would likely break the strike. He told them, “you’re going to suffer a lot of hardships, maybe you’re going to get hungry, maybe you’re going to lose your car, maybe you’re going to lose your house.” Workers replied, “We don’t care” (Mabalon, 2013, p. 261). As Itliong predicted, the strike was brutal. The growers responded with violence, used intimidation tactics, and attacked homes in the labor camps by turning off the lights, gas, and water (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 13:41 - 14:26). Strikers lost their jobs and homes, and ended up having to sleep in their cars.

The United Farm Workers: A Filipinx and Mexican labor union

The growers used race to pit workers against one another, regularly hiring Mexican workers to cross the picket line. Filipinx strikers understood that in order for their strike to be successful, they needed Mexican workers to join them. Filipinx and Mexican community members of Delano would socialize together, but out on the fields, they were segregated (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 10:09 - 10:22). Itliong knew Dolores Huerta from when she used to be an organizer for the AWOC. He approached Huerta and Chávez days after the grape strike in Delano began with a determination to convince the NFWA to join the strike. Chávez initially said no, that they needed more time to organize. Huerta pointed out that the NFWA had planned to organize discreetly and wanted five more years to organize the whole San Joaquin Valley before striking (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 247).

Itliong convincingly argued “that if the Mexicans did not stand with the Filipinas/os, if they were scabs while the Filipinas/os struck, then when the Mexicans went on strike, the Filipinas/os would be scabs” (Mabalon, 2013, p. 261). Fabros provided context

by stating,

> …you have to remember, the Filipinos were getting old. For them, for every penny, for every quarter, for every dollar, for every lug that they got paid extra, that went into the retirement fund (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014,15:53 - 16:30).

For Mexican workers and the NWLA, it would be risky to join the strike. They didn't have a strike fund nor any savings to support a walkout. Artist Ester Hernandez, who was a child of farmworkers during this era explained that, "...the bosses of the fields were threatening everybody left and right that they would lose their jobs, or that they would not be hired, or there were even threats of deportation….So it was pretty frightening" (The Struggle in the Fields, 1995, 09:01 - 09:25). Eliseo Medina, a labor organizer with the NFWA, remembered being moved by Chávez's words at a union meeting, sharing that he gave everyone hope that they could win despite their fears (10:17 - 10:53). Hernandez added that her family realized there was a lot at stake, but that, "even if we starved to death, that we would not be alone….we had to stay and fight because otherwise nothing was going to change" (11:28 - 11:52).

Figure 11.5.4: United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFW) president, César Chávez. (Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0; By Movimiento)

Mexican workers voted to join the strike on September 16 (Mexican independence day) and then Filipinx and Mexican workers were united, fighting for the same cause. The AWOC and NFWA combined and formed a new union, the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee (UFW), with Larry Itliong as second in command under César Chávez (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 18:38 - 18:45).

Strikers met challenges on the fields, as growers brought in bus loads of replacement workers and attempted to halt the effectiveness of the strike with legal injunctions, limiting where strikers could picket. Strikers were also met with violence and arrests (The Struggle in the Field, 1995, 20:42 -22:08). Soon strike organizers orchestrated a grape **boycott** campaign, involving the average consumer who were encouraged to boycott purchasing grapes at their local supermarket until a deal was made with the UFW. Then governor of California, Ronald Reagan, would eat grapes in photo ops as often as he could, stating that he thought the boycott was immoral (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 19:38 - 1944).

With the *peregrinación* or Easter pilgrimage march in 1966, the movement gained mainstream visibility, changing "the course of American labor history" forever (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 248). A 300-mile march to the state capital resulted in Chávez emerging as the leader and the farmworkers' struggles became a symbol of the Chicano civil rights movement. Acuña emphasized that in addition to addressing the farmworkers' demands, Chávez also discussed larger economic justice issues and talked about non-violence (The Struggle in the Fields, 1995, 19:36 - 19:48).

An important aspect of this movement was non-violence, especially in contrast to the violence inflicted by growers and local police. It was important that, "Both César Chávez and Huerta adhered to the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr" (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. p. 247). In an effort to maintain non-violence principles, Chávez made a decision to go on a fast on Valentine's Day, 1968. When Chávez broke his fast after 25 days, he attended mass, along with 4,000 supporters, including Senator Robert Kennedy, showing that the workers believed in Chávez's leadership (The Struggle in the Fields, 1995, 39:32 - 44:15).

Figure 11.5.5: UFW picket line urging a boycott of the Langley Park, MD Safeway Store which was carrying non-UFW grapes, Summer 1973. (Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0; Photo by G. Dunkel/Workers World, retrieved from Washington Area Spark)

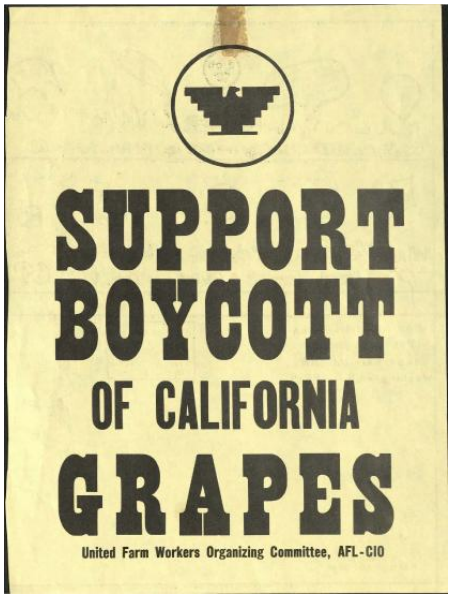

Figure 11.5.6: A UFW leaflet with the phrase "Support Boycott of California Grapes" passed out in the Washington, D.C. are circa 1969 during the years-long boycott of California table grapes in an effort to secure a labor contract for farmworkers. (Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0; Image retrieved from Washington Area Spark)

Huerta successfully conducted an industry-wide grape boycott from 1968 - 1969, which received nationwide public support, with an estimated 17 million consumers supporting the boycott in 1970, shipments falling by 22% (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 248). After five long years of the strike, multiple growers signed contracts with the UFW and their grapes were officially union approved, stamped with the UFW label, “signaling the union’s approval to consumers” (p. 248). Twenty-six growers signed contracts with the UFW, raising wages to $1.80 an hour and $0.20 per box. They also secured hiring provisions around seniority when hiring workers, and placed strict protocols on the use of harmful pesticides (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 248 - 249).

Growers and farmworkers signed the contracts in the union hall in Delano on July 29, 1970, almost five years after the strike began. There was hope for this momentous ending to the most important farm working struggle. Eliseo Medina, a labor organizer noted the movements’ impact: “I think the greatest achievement is in the change that it made on people. Teaching them how they could fight, how they could stand up for their rights and win” (The Struggle in the Fields, 1995, 50:55 - 53:58).

For the Filipinx *manongs*, the signing of the contracts didn’t result in their favor. As the boycott gained national coverage, the media was focused on Mexican workers. Itliong commented: “To hear what’s going on, newspapers and TV and everything, it’s done by Mexicans. Nothing is being done by us. So naturally the Filipinos started drifting away” (Delano Manongs, Arroy and McKay, 2014, 20:16 - 20:28). *Manongs* left Delano in order to work the crop cycle and survive, essentially walking out of one of the longest strikes in labor history. Once contracts were signed in 1970, and the *manongs* returned to Delano for the new grape

harvest season, they found that they were pushed out of work (21:38 - 21:48). New union rules favored local farmworkers over migrant workers, so the *manongs* ended up losing their jobs. Worse still, farmers closed the labor camps so Filipinx workers lost their homes as well. Fabros explained that many of the *manongs* held Chávez in high regard and didn't want to say anything negative. He stated that ultimately the strike had achieved a union, a goal for the *manongs*, but, "I don't think it was in the image that they wanted. They didn't control it. We started it, we lost in the end" (21:49 - 22:51).

Of the frustrations Itliong faced working in the UFW, he said, "To tell you the truth, I've never taken the shit that I've been taking in this organization. But I do it, because I think it's bigger than me for the farmworkers to have an organization. It's the reason I do it" (22:51 - 23:08). Itliong eventually left the union and continued to work for the Filipinx community. He left behind a vision for a retirement home for the *manongs* and the UFW built this home in 1974. Richard Chávez commented that many volunteers came to help build it. At the opening celebration in 1975, a *manong* shared that this home gave him hope "That I'm going to be in a home that I might call my own, our own" (23:33 - 23:46).

Sidebar: Dolores Huerta

Figure 11.5.7: Dolores Huerta at the Montclair Film Festival in 2017. (Licensed under CC BY 2.0; Photo by Tony Turner/Montclair Film)

Dolores Huerta has been described by Alicia Chávez, professor of American Studies and Ethnicity, as "Unflappable as a union organizer…unapologetic as she lived against the grain…she leaves an indelible legacy of labor-organizing in U.S. history" (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 240). Huerta played an instrumental role in the success of the farmworkers movement of the 1960s, yet as noted by author Stacey K. Sowards, César Chávez is the established public figure representing the movement, and Dolores Huerta, on the other hand, had "received relatively little attention" (2019, p. 1).

Born April 10, 1930, in Dawson, New Mexico, Huerta was named Dolores Fernández. Her father was a coal miner, but also worked as a farm laborer and was involved in labor issues. When her parents divorced, Dolores moved to Stockton, California, where she was raised among the diverse farm working community of the Central San Joaquin Valley. Although Dolores was not a farmworker herself, her upbringing was influential in her decision later in life to be a labor organizer.

Dolores earned an Associate's degree and provisional teaching credentials at the College of the Pacific in Stockton and she taught English to the children of migrant farmworkers, giving her insight into their lives (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 243). But she eventually left teaching to go into community organizing. Dolores helped mobilize Chicanx communities for voter registration campaigns, addressed police harassment, and advocated for access to healthcare. After meeting César Chávez, they founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) in 1962, in Delano, CA, which eventually became the United Farm Workers, or UFW. Huerta ended up dedicating 40 years of her life to this organization, playing "...an integral role in the UFW, as cofounder; vice president; key negotiator with growers; advisor to Chávez; lobbyist in Washington, DC, and Sacramento; and boycott organizer" (Sowards, 2019, p. 2).

The NFWA joined the Delano Grape Strike in 1966 and Dolores was known as an intrepid organizer, helping to formulate the UFW's base by talking to people one by one. She conducted door-to-door canvassing, traveled to speaking engagements, and became the first woman and Chicana to organize a union contract with California growers in 1970. And all while a mother to eleven children. Dolores continued lobbying for laws that would protect farmworkers, which eventually led to the passage of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act of 1975. She also spoke up for women's rights (Ruiz and Sánchez Korrol, 2005, p. 241).

Despite such major accomplishments, her leadership was largely ignored and she faced various challenges due to racial and gender discrimination. In one interview Dolores shared that she faced backlash for being an organizer from her family, farmworkers, as well as religious leaders. She had to work undercover through her husband and brother because organizing wasn't considered appropriate for women (Sowards, 2019, p. 31). Furthermore, much of Dolores's contribution to the movement "may have been misattributed to Chávez" including the slogan, "Si se puede" (p. 8).

Of Dolores's legacy, Alicia Chávez wrote: "She championed the often unrecognized skills that women brought to the union from their own life experiences, such as management of limited resources, organization, and vision for the long-term well-being of their families" (Ruiz and Korrol, 2005, p. 252). It's certainly not an overstatement to acknowledge Dolores Huerta's role and the unique skills she brought to the table in one of the most important labor movements of U.S. history.

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11.6: Transnational Organizing in the Diaspora

Justice for Comfort Women

Figure 11.6.1: "Comfort Women" - San Francisco Comfort Women Memorial, Column of Strength Statue. Statue designed by Steven Whyte. (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0; Photo by Stephanie Contreras)

"Comfort Women" is a euphemistic phrase used to describe around 200,000 women and girls (actual numbers vary according to each source, although some claim the numbers might have been as high as 400,000) who were coerced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army in occupied territories before and during WWII (1931-1945). This was the largest institutionalized system of sexual slavery in the twentieth century. Girls as young as 10 years old and women from at least 13 countries were taken, including: Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Okinawa, East Timor, Guam, and Australia.

The Japanese Imperial Army first started with early recruitment during the Russo and Sino Japanese Wars (1894 - 1895 and 1904 - 1905), but it wasn't until the Nanjing Massacre in 1937, where the "comfort woman system" became fully operational, as testimonies and reports told how women and girls were raped and systemically prostituted in Japanese "comfort stations." The justification for this system was apparently to prevent soldiers from gang-raping women in occupied Manchuria (Fukushima, 2010, p. 761). Soon, the military enacted forced "recruitment" and kidnappings across Japanese colonies. Girls and women were either directly taken by the Japanese, or by local governments and police departments who were ordered to provide women for them. They were also tricked with false promises of jobs (working in factories or hospitals) and instead, "found themselves trapped in a system of normalized sexual violence, or, rather, institutionalized rape" (p. 759).

These so-called "Comfort Women" were mostly teenagers, between the ages of 13-16. They were trafficked to comfort stations located all over occupied Japanese territory, oftentimes far from their homes, and trafficked from location to location. They were raped by some accounts up to 50 times daily, and when they resisted, the girls and women were starved, beaten, tortured, killed, and many ended up committing suicide. If they became pregnant, abortions were forced and some became infertile because of the daily systematic abuse and torture or due to STDs. It's estimated that only 10 - 35% survived, particularly after Japan's defeat in 1945 when many of the girls and women were killed by soldiers in an attempt to destroy evidence of the "comfort women" system (Fukushima, 2010, p. 761; Qiu, et al, 2013, p. 71 and p.74). The few who escaped or survived were abandoned in foreign countries, far from their homes. Many did not return home due to shame or for fear of being rejected by their families. They lived for decades in secrecy and suffered alone in silence, until 1991 when survivors began to share their testimonies publicly and confronted the Japanese government, demanding reparations and a formal apology. Three decades later, those demands have not been met.

Breaking the Silence and Justice for "Comfort Women" Movement

Figure 11.6.2: Dozens protested and marched in Berlin, to demand justice for the Korean "Comfort Women." (CC BY 2.0; Photo by Hossam el-Hamalawy)

Decades of silence and denial followed the war, but during the 1980s and 1990s, Japanese, South Korean, and Chinese activists, journalists, and feminists started to bring attention to this history. In 1991, former "comfort woman" Kim Hak-soon broke the silence and was the first to publicly testify to her experience, then others followed suit. The Japanese government denied any military and state involvement in creating a sex slavery system. Kim testified,

> For fifty years, I have had a heavy, painful feeling, but kept thinking in my heart about telling my experience some day. . . As I try to speak now, my heart pounds against my chest, because what happened in the past was something extremely unconscionable . . . Why does [the Japanese government] tell such a lie [to deny its knowledge of comfort women system]? Actually, I was made into a comfort woman, and I'm here alive (Nozaki 2005).

In 1992, Japanese historian Yoshiaki Yoshimi discovered direct evidence of the Japanese military's role in overseeing "comfort stations" despite the government's absolute silence about wartime atrocities committed during Japanese occupation in various parts of Asia. The continued denial is a struggle this movement faces, but the justice for "Comfort Women" movement remains "one of the most visible global initiatives to break the silence surrounding wartime atrocities and sexual violence" (Fukushima, 2010, p. 760). The movement to reveal the "dirty" secret of war and the use of rape as a weapon is an international human rights issue. The call for redress and reconciliation exposed the systemic role of the military in organized rape and torture, and Asian Americans in this movement have made important connections to the hypersexualization of Asian women and men, impacts of colonialism, western expansion being linked to violence, racism, and sexism, redress for war crimes, and the effects of sexual violence against women (pp. 759-760).

The movement uplifted testimonies of the brave "grandmothers," highlighting the important role of testimonies by everyday persons in the field of Ethnic Studies and understanding the history of marginalized racial groups. Professor of Ethnic Studies, University of Utah, Annie Fukushima, wrote that,

> Testimonials by surviving comfort women have shifted the paradigm of what counts as truth in Asian American history because the movement is defined by the voices of the comfort women, who suggest that there is a need to tell stories from the "ground up" and to hear the words of those who directly experience struggle. Testimonies convey that there are no words that can easily describe what the women went through. Such testimonies have proved valuable to the work of historians. Testimonies also proved critical for conveying to the Asian American movement what the comfort women experienced (2010, p. 760).

Surviving "Comfort Women" and activists have demanded a formal apology from the Japanese government, and sued for compensation. Some statements and apologies have been given by individual members of the Japanese government, such as when Prime Minister Miyazawa Kiichi officially apologized to South Korea (Nozaki 2005). But, there's yet to be an official apology directed toward all the women of various nationalities, nor major policy changing statements. There's been minimal education about "comfort women" in school textbooks in Japan. Private funds were set in 1994 to compensate survivors, but many "comfort women" activists rejected it, citing it wasn't official since money came from private donations. More recently, there have been efforts by the conservative Japanese government and revisionist organizations to interrupt memorialization efforts in the U.S., largely denying the government's involvement or claiming that "Comfort Women" were highly paid prostitutes. As of 2022, the Japanese government continues to publicly deny any involvement, including one of their most boisterous deniers, former Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe (who was assassinated on July 8, 2022).

The 2015 “Agreement” between Japan and South Korea

The so-called 2015 “Agreement” between Japan and South Korea was only an oral “agreement,” never written, and has been rejected by “Comfort Women” survivors and their supporters. The discussed fund to support “Comfort Women” was conditional, Japan demanding that South Korea stop criticizing them and remove the "comfort women" memorial in front of the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, and consider the matter a "final and irreversible resolution." This “agreement” has also faced criticism for excluding surviving “Comfort Women,” including those from 12 other nations, for negating coercion and legal responsibility by the Japanese government, and because this so-called compensation would not be paid directly to survivors.

Surviving “comfort women” filed a lawsuit against the Japanese government and in January 2021, they won the case, but the Japanese government ignored the ruling. In another verdict in April of that same year, the court granted sovereign immunity to Japan and the “comfort women” victim’s lawsuit was ended. Regardless, both trials acknowledged the survivors’ claims about the Japanese military’s role in coerced sex slavery (Hosaka, 2021).

Fighting for Justice from the U.S.

Figure 11.6.3: Author Kay Fischer and Chabot College students pose with Grandma Lee Yong-soo at the *Columns of Strength* memorial unveiling in San Francisco, September 22, 2017. (Licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0; Photo by Kay Fischer)

Activists in the United States also fought for justice for our "grandmothers," pressuring political representatives to take action. In 2007, Representative Mike Honda sponsored House Resolution 121 which expressed that the government of Japan "should formally acknowledge, apologize, and accept historical responsibility in a clear and unequivocal manner for its Imperial Armed Forces' coercion of young women into sexual slavery."

In 2015, San Francisco Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to approve a “Comfort Women” memorial to be built, becoming the first major city in the United States to have such a memorial. In addition, four more “Comfort Women” memorials exist in the U.S.: Glendale, CA, Virginia, Michigan, and New Jersey. In 2016, the California Board of Education approved the inclusion of "comfort women" in 10th grade world history curriculum. Both efforts have been supported by various human rights, feminist, and Asian American organizations, such as the "Comfort Women" Justice Coalition (CWJC), self-described as “a grassroots, multi-ethnic and multi-national group of individuals and organizations” ("Comfort Women" Justice Coalition). Author, Kay Fischer, is a member of Eclipse Rising, one of the partner organizations that participated in this coalition and in the campaign to bring about the memorial.

Prompted by the Abe administration’s “massive global PR campaign to ‘correct’ the world’s understanding of Japan’s history….‘Comfort Women’ denialism has come stateside, hitting home for Asians and Asian Americans across the diaspora” (Kim Lee, 2016). Revisionists have claimed, without evidence, that memorials prompt hate crimes towards the Japanese community, and often completely deny that such a system ever existed, asserting that “Comfort Women” were “highly paid prostitutes,” accusing these women to be liars, or disputing the number of women and children affected by this sex slavery system. American professor of Japanese Legal Studies, Harvard, Mark Ramseyer repeated such assertions in 2021, stating that Korean “comfort women” “chose prostitution.” Opponents went as far as attempting to sue the city of Glendale, CA to demand the removal of their memorial, but the

lawsuit was dismissed in 2016 (Constante, 2017). Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Kim McLane Wardlaw claimed that Glendale erected a memorial that takes a stand against human rights violations which is well within the rights and responsibilities of local governments.

In 2018, the mayor of Osaka, Japan, Hirofumi Yoshimura, severed sister-city ties with San Francisco, attempting to force the mayor, London Breed, to take down the memorial, *Column of Strength* (Ingber, 2018). The San Francisco-Osaka Sister City Association responded that the sister-city relationship is not between the two city governments, but instead a partnership between the two cities' civic organizations, nonprofits, and businesses. On the one-year anniversary of the memorial's unveiling in San Francisco, September 22, 2018, delegates from two Japanese organizations, the Kansai Network to Resolve the Comfort Women Issue and the Forum from the Improvement of Osaka, visited and participated in the ceremony. Pang Chung Ja of the Kansai Network, stated, "Even if the mayor of Osaka proceeds with the termination, I feel that our relationship with the people of San Francisco has only deepened these past few years and only continues to grow stronger….Let us work together to solve this issue" (Hirai, 2018). Hisaye Ogawa with the Osaka delegation mentioned that they came to seek an apology from their own Japanese government.

Miho Kim Lee of Eclipse Rising and the CWJC, who was instrumental in coordinating visits by the two delegations from Japan, wrote that teaching "Comfort Women" history and erecting memorials serve the long-term purpose of remembrance, but is also in and of itself a "subversive act of resistance." She continued, "...let us fight for the right to remember our beautiful and enduring legacy of suffering, courage, survival and joy, which serves as a reservoir of strength to inform our cultural identities and visions for the world" (Kim Lee, 2016).

Figure 11.6.4: "Unifying Hands" - San Francisco Comfort Women Memorial, Column of Strength Statue. (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0; Photo by Stephanie Contreras)

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11.7: Contemporary Environmental, Racial and Gender Justice Movements

21st Century Movements

Many of the core issues faced by earlier generations of activists still dominate our social world today: police brutality, war, environmental destruction, racism, gender inequities, healthcare, sovereignty, and education. Movements in the 21st century are different because we also face different challenges like Climate Change, and utilize distinct tools and technologies that are specific to our time period, like social media, Internet technology, and digital art. Ultimately, the successes and victories of these movements are still being decided today, by activists, social movement organizations, advocacy coalitions, governments, corporations, counter-movements, and countless other stakeholders. It will be up to individuals to participate and become leaders for these movements to determine if they continue to grow, and succeed in achieving justice and liberation.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is a common issue for movements led by communities of color and Indigenous peoples. Centuries of settler-colonialism have assaulted the land and separated Indigenous peoples from their traditional homes, cultural sites, and ecological niches. Related, environmental racism describes the pattern of environmental hazards having a disproportionate impact on communities of color. For example, the concentration of industrial waste from factories and refineries tend to pollute the air and water of low-income communities of color. In 2017, CAUSE (Central Coast Alliance for a United Sustainable Economy) led organizing efforts in Oxnard, California to prevent the building of a power plant and after years of fighting along with other community organizations managed to defeat the initiative and help enable cleaner air. The community, according to CAUSE, is home to over 85% people of color of a total of 200,000 population. Structural violence maintains its systemic force by both producing health disparities in the environment and disconnecting communities from systems of care and support that offer protection from these harmful effects. Environmental justice movements work to address the overlapping systems of environmental exploitation and racism.

Native American and Indigenous communities approach environmental justice in tandem with struggles over sovereignty and self-determination. Land Back movements have been influential in amplifying calls for Native people to be reunited with their traditional homelands. This includes both the surrender of private lands owned by individuals and corporations, as well as the restoration of land rights based on generations of treaties between the U.S. government and Native American tribes.

The NDN Collective has been a champion for Land Back movements and staged high-profile demonstrations in support of these goals. While Land Back emphasizes the harm of unrightful land ownership, Indigenous movements for the environment also focus on stewardship and the interrelations between the land, water, air, and environment as a whole. Water Protectors have become active leaders in the movements against multiple large pipeline projects in the United States, including the Dakota Access Pipeline and Line 3. See also "Standing Rock - Protests of the Dakota Access Pipeline" under Chapter 4.

These movements provide opportunities to stop the ongoing project of settler-colonialism, restore and support Indigenous sovereignty, and begin a process of healing between the people and the land. For example, the Sogorea Te' Land Trust is a project started by Corrina Gould and Johnella LaRose, along with other Native activists. The project is led by urban Indigenous women and advocates for the traditional Ohlone lands in northern California that are threatened by development and encroachment. You can learn more about their project and current initiatives on the Sogorea Te' Land Trust website online. In Figure 11.7.1, you can see an example of this type of activism in a poster of support for #NoDAPL, which reads: “We Are Not Protestors. We Are Protectors” - Iyuskin American Horse. Stop the Dakota Access Pipeline.

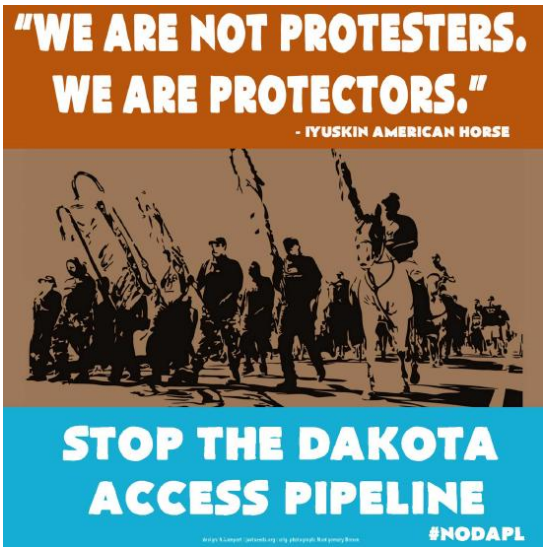

Figure 11.7.1: We Are Not Protestors. We Are Water Protectors. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Nicolas Lampert via JustSeeds)

Racial Justice and Gender Justice

Racial justice struggles in the 21st century have taken a prominent role in political and cultural life, ranging from representation in politics and media to everyday people taking to the streets, sharing their opinions on social media, and engaging with new content and new perspectives. The Black Lives Matter network formed in 2013 by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi to coordinate protest movements in response to the killing of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, and Rekia Boyd, among others. While the group responds specifically to the issue of police officers killing unarmed Black people, it also has become a platform for a range of cultural conversations about race, racism, and politics internationally. In 2014, the African American Policy Forum launched the campaign #SayHerName to bring attention to the Black women, girls, and femmes who are targeted by police violence. The growing Black Lives Matter and Say Her Name movements also elevated calls to defund the police, abolish prisons, and address systemic racism in all its forms. For more context on these issues, you can revisit Chapter 10.

The 21st Century has also seen increased anti-Asian violence and discrimination, including following the September 11 terrorist attacks (9/11) and the COVID-19 pandemic. After 9/11, the "War on Terror" amplified racist sentiments toward Arab, Arab American, Muslim, South Asian, and Southwest Asian people in the United States, as well as a generalized increase in xenophobic sentiment and anti-immigrant discrimination. See more on post-9/11 racial profiling of these communities in Chapter 10. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, individual people and political leaders have actively sponsored anti-Asian lies that scapegoat Asians and/or Asian Americans for a global public health crisis. While hatred and bigotry spread, at the same time, people have come together to stand up in support of their own communities and in alliances against xenophobia.

From an intersectional perspective, gender justice has also taken an important role in 21st century movements and politics. Gender and patriarchy deeply impact racial justice, and addressing racism is central to enacting gender equity and feminism. The Women's March, which was formed in 2016, sought to bring this vision of intersectional feminism to the center of the mainstream women's movement, which has often been critiqued for not challenging white supremacy and capitalist exploitation. These dynamics were seen in the #MeToo movement, which centrally focused on high-profile sexual predators like Jeffrey Epstein, who targeted celebrities and other affluent or middle-class women. Despite this media focus, farmworker activists and other groups utilized this same tag and movement momentum to seek justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence outside of the entertainment industry. Similarly, the #MMIWG2S movement brings attention to the transnational issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit people. In the United States, in particular, activists have also brought attention to the disproportionate murders of Black and Latina/x trans women. Trans rights remain an important part of larger struggles for gender justice and intersectional liberation. In Figure 11.7.2 there is an activist poster showing the faces of Black trans women, along with the text, "Black Trans Lives Matter" #saytheirnames.

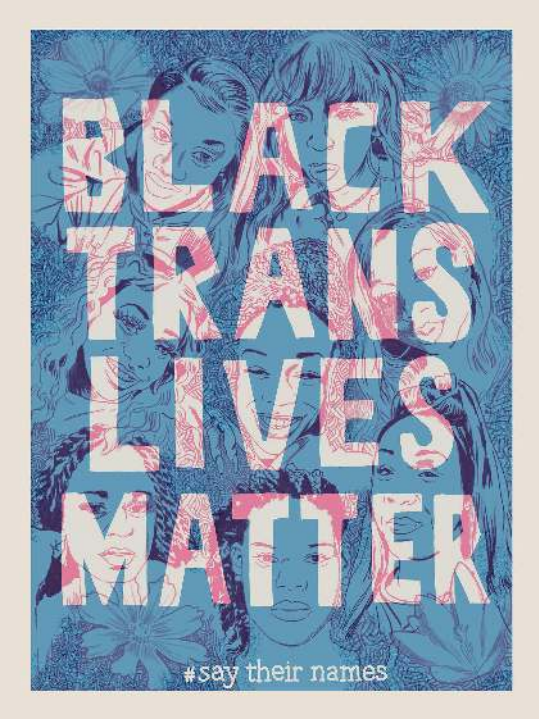

Figure 11.7.2: Black Trans Lives Mater- Say their name. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; José 'Primo' Hernández via JustSeeds)

Sidebar: Linda Sarsour and the Women's March

Figure 11.7.3: Linda Sarsour at the 2016 Festival of Faiths "Sacred Wisdom, Pathways to Nonviolence" panel discussion. (CC BY 2.0; Festival of Faiths via Flickr)

Linda Sarsour is a Palestinian Muslim American activist and organizer from Brooklyn, New York. She served as a national co-chair of the Women's March and a co-founder of MPower Change, a Muslim digital advocacy organization that works toward race, social, and economic justice. The Women's March in 2017 ended up being the largest single-day protest in US history at the time.

Upon Trump's victory the day after the presidential election in 2016, women across the nation were connecting online to plan a Million Women's March for the day after Inauguration Day in January of 2017. According to Sarsour's memoir, *We Are Not Here to Be Bystanders: A Memoir of LOVE and RESISTANCE* (2020), Vanessa Wruble, founder of OkayAfrica, noticed that all the people conversing online were white and reached out to a trio of women of color who "can organize in their sleep": Tamika Mallory, Carmen Perez, and Linda Sarsour (pp. 201-202). These three women ended up being national co-chairs of the Women's March alongside Bob Bland. They first changed the name of the march to simply the Women's March since the Million Women's March "echoed the name of an action" (p. 202) led by Black women in Philadelphia twenty years ago. Sarsour explains that the white women organizers weren't aware of the earlier march but in their ignorance, had offended African American women who saw this as co-opting the name of a march about the "empowerment of Black women" (p. 202). Sarsour continues, "This kind of miscommunication was why the organizers needed women of color in the mix, not just Carmen, Tamika, and me, but a whole roster of brilliant Black and brown women who now joined us at the table" (p. 202).

Sarsour discusses some of the challenges they faced while organizing the march, particularly from "white women in our group [who] were not used to answering to a fierce, bristling ball of fire in the body of a petite Black woman" (p. 204) referring to Tamika's leadership. The co-chairs pushed for a diversity of speakers who would speak to a broad audience and made sure that the march wasn't only about expressing rage, but also about "demanding change" (p. 204). In addition to gender issues, Sarsour and women of color organizers made sure that central to the vision of the march was that they were fighting for "the right for everyone to live freely and practice their religion and have economic, racial and social justice" (p. 205). They applied an intersectional framing to this vision, including the voices of people affected by immigration policies, environmental racism, and structural violence.

Sarsour and other women of color in the organizing group were accused of being divisive when intersecting racial justice with gender issues and some women of color were concerned that white women were feeling alienated. However, Sarsour reminded organizers that the…

> concern itself was problematic, because centering the experiences of marginalized women was not about upsetting white women; it was about helping them to recognize how they were consciously or unconsciously aiding and abetting the very patriarchy that they claimed to be fighting against (pp. 206-207).

On January 21, 2017, millions across the nation and the globe joined companion marches. Sarsour described that the excitement was tangible in Washington, D.C., but what moved her the most was that many were carrying posters of an image by artist Shepard Fairey of a Muslim woman in an American-flag hijab. Sarsour wrote, "My skin tingled at the sight of her, because in my country, on this day, a Muslim woman in a hijab had become a potent symbol of American freedom" (p. 211). Seven million people marched that day, and 1.2 million were in Washington. When Sarsour spoke on the stage, she brought her mother and her three children. She stated, "*Assalamu alaikum*, may peace be upon you, brothers and sisters….I stand here before you unapologetically Muslim American, unapologetically Palestinian American, unapologetically from Brooklyn, New York" (Democracy Now!, 2017; Sarsour, 2020, p. 212). When reflecting on her speech and the other women who marched and spoke on that stage on that historic day, Sarsour wrote in her memoir:

> We had put the forces of hate and division on notice that we were marching to center stage, and they'd better get ready because the reckoning was here, and we would bring our sisters, mothers, and daughters along with us, and the men who were our allies, and together we would change the world (p. 213).

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11.8: Summary/Review

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have explored the dynamics and outcomes of social movements, which drive the history of Ethnic Studies both in terms of its content and pedagogy. Movements for racial justice and decolonization have been critical in advancing civil rights, Indigenous sovereignty, improved labor conditions, and transnational solidarity. These movements have inspired change and continue in our contemporary society as agents for change and transformation. Solidarity and resistance bring together communities, and address the root causes of inequity and exclusion.

In learning about various frameworks for action, we can see that intersectionality and decolonization share many principles with other anti-oppressive systems. However, diverse communities must always leverage the resources available in their own local contexts. For instance, we learned about the role of organizing mutual support for marginalized communities within social movements, like the Black Panther Party's free breakfast for neighborhood children. Developing greater knowledge of how activists have worked toward change creates new possibilities for students, advocates, and scholars to envision and bring about more just and equitable societies, centered on the principles of anti-racism, decolonization, and solidarity. The goal of sovereignty and agency is shown visually in Figure 11.8.1, which represents a fist emerging out of the waves of the ocean, along with the words Self-Determination.

Figure 11.8.1: Self-Determination. (CC BY-NC-ND 3.0; Aaron Hughes via JustSeeds)

Key Terms

- **Indigenous sovereignty:** This refers to the self-determination and legal standing of Native and Indigenous peoples. Sovereignty refers to the historical relationship between peoples and governments and is an explicitly political project that concerns land rights, treaties between tribes and other governments, and the political standing of Native Americans and Indigenous peoples.
- **Disability Justice Framework:** A framework for social justice organizing centering people with disabilities focused on representation, advocacy, and social change.
- **Allies:** Allies are members of a dominant group who take an active role in understanding their privilege and working to support members of a marginalized group. This practice builds relationships across differences and encourages listening, learning from mistakes, and continually taking action. Allies take action without centering their own identity or seeking validation of their allyhood. Allyship is one component of acting in solidarity against systems of marginalization.
- **Accomplices:** Accomplices go beyond supporting members of a marginalized group to take sustained and proactive action, such as when white people actively work toward anti-racism, men commit to ending patriarchy, and straight/cisgender people work against the oppression of LGBTQ+ people. Accomplices have already developed substantial knowledge and cultural

humility to align their actions with the leadership and goals of marginalized group members. Another term is co-conspirator. This refers to the necessity of working actively in continual collaboration with people of color and other marginalized groups and taking active risks to unsettle the status quo.

- **Boycott:** A nonviolent action of protest, boycotts call on the masses to abstain for commercial services in order to make an economic impact. The hope is that pressure from boycotts will push those in power to negotiate with the protestors, leading to significant social transformation. For example, Black domestic workers led the Montgomery Bus Boycott in order to challenge racial segregation in public transportation. And the United Farm Workers movement urged consumers to boycott grapes in order to pressure agricultural corporations to negotiate fair contracts with farm workers.
- **Civil Rights Movement:** Considered one of the most effective mass movements, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States ushered in a series of changes to laws and practices that led to the dismantling of the Jim Crow South and legal racial segregation of schools, businesses, and public transportation. The movement also led to instituting voting rights for African Americans. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. emerged as a leader for this movement, although there were many others who haven't been as widely recognized for their leadership such as Bayard Rustin, Fannie Lou Hamer, Ella Baker, and Septima Clark. The Civil Rights Movement and Dr. King utilized nonviolent actions including sit-ins, protests, and marches.
- **"Serve-the-people" programs:** A core objective for various liberatory movements of the 1960s and '70s, the Asian American movement, Black Panthers, Brown Berets, American Indian Movement, and the Young Lords organized services for communities of color that the government failed to provide, such as access to affordable housing, healthcare, labor rights, free breakfast programs, women's rights and more.
- **Workers centers:** Workers centers are places and organizations that support and organize with immigrant workers who are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, such as undocumented immigrant laborers, especially women. Abuses include wage theft, no labor rights, sexual harassment, and more. These centers, like Mujeres Unidas y Activas (MUA) were established upon the arrive of immigrants with community organizing backgrounds. They work various issues including preventing deportations, supporting sanctuaries, and establishing workers rights like the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights.
- **Domestic Workers Bill of Rights:** A set of basic workplace rights and protections for domestic workers that are too often not considered. Some of these rights and protections include overtime pay, paid sick leave, legal protection from harassment and discrimination, set safety practices, rest and privacy. New York passed such a bill in 2010 and a Bill of Rights at the federal level has been introduced.
- **The Bracero Program:** The Bracero Program (1942 - 1964) started as a joint agreement between the U.S. and Mexico that led to the "importation" of male agricultural laborers, also referred to as *braceros*, from Mexico to the U.S. to help fill the labor shortage during WWII. The second initiation of recruitment resulted from a U.S. executive order, and was essentially a guest worker program where *braceros* were hired cheaply to work temporarily and returned to Mexico.
- **The Delano Grape Strike:** The Delano Grape Strike of 1965 is arguably the most important and successful farm workers strikes in California labor history. Initiated by Filipinx labor leader, Larry Itliong, he convinced the Mexican union to soon join, led by César Chávez and Dolores Huerta. The strike ended up lasting five long years, and strikers lost their homes and were met with violence and arrests. Organizers orchestrated a grape boycott campaign, encouraging millions of consumers to boycott purchasing grapes at their local supermarket until a deal was made with the United Farm Workers (a union created from Filipinx and Mexican unions). In 1970 multiple growers signed contracts with the UFW, raising wages, securing hiring provisions around seniority when hiring workers, and placing strict protocols on the use of harmful pesticides.
- **"Comfort Women":** "Comfort Women" is a euphemistic phrase used to describe around 200,000 women and girls (actual numbers might be twice as high or more) who were coerced into sexual slavery by the Japanese Imperial Army in occupied territories before and during WWII (1931-1945). This was the largest institutionalized system of sexual slavery in the twentieth century. Girls as young as 10 years old and women from at least 13 countries were taken, including: Korea, China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Burma, Malaysia, Okinawa, East Timor, Guam, and Australia. Today, surviving "Comfort Women," affectionately called "grandmothers" and their supporters have demanded a formal apology and reparations from the Japanese government. Some members of the government, and their supporters, continue to actively deny this history and suppress calls for justice in Japan and across the globe, including in the U.S.
- **Environmental Justice:** These are movements led by communities of color and Indigenous peoples calling out the disastrous effects of centuries of environmental destruction. Environmental racism calls attention to how low-income communities of color are targets of pollution, including the dumping or leaking of hazardous waste, air and water contamination, and more. Environmental justice movements work to address the overlapping systems of environmental exploitation and racism.

Discussion Questions

1. Review the section on allies, accomplices, and co-conspirators. What are some examples of these you have seen? How have others shown up for you as an ally, accomplice, or co-conspirator?
2. When is the first time you remember learning about social movements? What was the context? How has your understanding changed over time?
3. Struggles for racial justice and decolonization have always included mass participation by everyday activists. What are some of the core reasons that people get involved in social movements? What would motivate you to protest a policy or institutional practice?

Journal Prompts

1. You've been introduced to several frameworks for action in this chapter. Summarize 2-3 key points for one of the frameworks that you're most drawn to. Then, explain why you're interested in that framework. If you've already been engaged in activism, how have you applied this framework of action to your own activist work? Or how might you want to?
2. What is significant when learning that the farmworkers movement was multiracial with Mexican and Filipinx farmers and leaders? Why do you think that more mainstream narratives around the farmworkers' movement don't include (or minimize the roles of) Dolores Huerta or Filipinx leaders?
3. Analyze two reasons why we should learn about the history of the domestic workers' movement and the role that women of color played in campaigns for workers' rights and justice.

Class Activities

Allyhood Role Play and Guided Discussion

- In this activity, you will have the opportunity to explore what it means to be an ally and an accomplice. Using what you learned in this chapter, you will be divided into groups to generate different responses to a specific scenario.
  - In your groups, you should roleplay the scenario to generate responses that are meaningful and authentic.
- For a small group, use one scenario and have two groups. The first group will discuss the ally response to the scenario, and the second group will discuss the accomplice response to the scenario.
- With larger groups, you may want to create multiple ally and accomplice groups. Then they can be paired together for a comparison of their perspectives before returning to the large group to debrief.
- Example Scenarios:
  - You are shopping with a friend at a clothing store, and the clerk is continuing to follow them and watch their movements. Consider how the dynamics between your friend and the clerk may be impacted by your actions.
  - While talking with a group of friends, someone mentions that they were surprised that their Black teacher had gone to a prestigious university and was very “articulate.”

Activist Sign-Making

- One of the main goals of political protests can be to raise awareness and influence how people perceive different social issues. Activist signs are typically carried at protests and usually include a slogan or phrase, along with some artistic representation or design. Some are quite simple, with a phrase or word in black Sharpee on a piece of ripped cardboard, or printed signs showing a group’s logo or candidate’s name. Others are quite elaborate, include mixed media, and make use of humor, puns, satire, and critique to evoke an emotional response and ensure retention.
  - For inspiration, you may want to look for examples. Some starting places can be found in the links in the following list.
    - Unforgettable Black Lives Matter Protest Signs
    - Here Are Some Of The Most Powerful Protest Posters From History
  - You can either conduct this activity in person using cardboard paper, markers, glue, and other sign-making materials, or online and have students use a service like Canva or other software.

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