

Delta Winds

A COLLECTION OF STUDENT ESSAYS



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Brainwashed by the Past

By Alyssa Buonocore



Let me preface this story by saying my whole life, I have been raised Jewish. I have always understood that this is associated with certain risks. However, for years, I thought the risks didn't apply to me until one day they did.

People always say that children learn from their parents' biases. I didn't understand the implications of this until I was in 8th grade. As I attended a k-8 school, it was not uncommon to have known my classmates for many years. In the fall, a boy I had known since 2nd grade began to taunt me for being Jewish; this started when members of our class were assigned projects about the Holocaust for our winter final. For weeks, I worked tirelessly on a picture and poem portfolio depicting the life of a girl in the Holocaust. During this time, the boy called me weird and continuously asked, "Were you that fake dead girl in a past life?" as if to suggest that the Holocaust was not real.

Since I went to a smaller school, this boy was in almost all of my classes. The class in which he was the most constant was our science class. We had the freedom to move seats around the room whenever we wished, and somehow, he would always find a way to sit within a few feet of me. By the end of January, this boy's taunting had turned into full-blown antisemitic

hate. He had begun to whisper German phrases like "Heil Hitler" and "Go back to the Ghetto" whenever he was within earshot. Soon, I couldn't walk away from my seat for more than a few seconds without finding swastikas written in pen on my homework or notes.

I had tried to adopt the policy that if I ignored a bully, he would get bored and move on. However, in this specific scenario, he was relentless. Around the middle of February, I confronted this spite-filled boy.

Unfortunately, this only created a scene.

I told him, "Leave me alone and stop acting like a Nazi." His response was to look me dead in the eye, raise his hand in salute, and exclaim, "Heil Hitler! The Fuhrer will rise again."

This was the turning point when I realized this situation could be dangerous. Within a few days of this incident, I found that other students were agreeing with this antisemitic neo-Nazi. After another week passed, I couldn't handle the fear that accompanied attending class anymore.

I reported the boy to the principal, who stated that he believed me only because the story was "so outlandish it couldn't be made up."

The principal decided to put us in peer mediation so that we could work out whatever differences we may have. However, not all problems can be talked through.

For weeks, I worked tirelessly on a picture and poem portfolio depicting the life of a girl in the Holocaust. During this time, the boy called me weird and continuously asked, "Were you that fake dead girl in a past life?" as if to suggest that the Holocaust was not real.

Following less than an hour of this mediation, I learned two valuable insights into the situation. The first was that no amount of talking would change the boy's position on Jews. The second and more important of the two was an explanation of why he believed what he did. When asked who taught him to hate Jews so passionately, the boy answered, "My Opa."

At this moment, I realized that the little white boy with blonde hair sitting across from me probably had a German grandfather. The pieces began to fall into place, so I asked how old his Opa was. His response made sense of everything, "He's gonna be 98 this year. Why are you asking, you little pig?"

I promptly pointed out to the counselor that it was likely that his grandfather was raised with Nazi ideologies. The boy overheard this and proudly announced that his Opa was a Nazi soldier in Germany during World War II. This came as a shock to me, as I was surprised there were Nazis still alive. The counselor was at a loss for words before walking me straight out of the room. Within fifteen minutes, I was taken into the principal's office. He told me the boy would be expelled under the no-

hate policy. I knew I would no longer have to face this hatred at school, but I would be ridiculed for having gotten him expelled from school. I told myself I did the right thing to protect myself, but my classmates saw it differently.

A few weeks after the incident with the counselor, I was called back. The counselor offered her support and informed me that the boy had written me an apology letter. While reading the letter, I could tell every word was dripping with the sarcasm of a child forced to apologize for his wrongdoings. The line that stuck out most at the time was, "I thought my Opa was a good guy, but I guess I was wrong."

To this day, I remember feeling as though this boy was more hurt by his grandfather's antisemitism than I was. This incident served as a reminder to me that bullies only become bullies because they were victims at the hands of someone else. Although I was afraid when facing this hatred, I felt pity for the boy. I knew his grandfather had been poisoning his mind for many years. All I could hope was that someone would show him the right way. I learned a lot about standing up for myself, but I also found that, in this case, the aggressor was also a victim.

The boy overheard this and proudly announced that his Opa was a Nazi soldier in Germany during World War II.



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My Cataclysm Sentence

By Boyd Ward



I was driving down the only street to get into town and everything was as usual. No extra cars around, no extra pedestrians. Behind the wheel of what had been my car for less than 3 years, so many plans, so many things to look forward to with that car. Black shiny car with Gold Niche Wheels, staggered fitment, a giant carbon fiber spoiler on the rear end. Driving towards an intersection on a green light. The warm padded leather of my steering wheel going against the cold plastics of my paddle shifters. All things leading to the sound of “Boom” I am t-boned, wheels screeching as I am pushed into the sidewalk, “Crunch” went the side skirts on car as I went up the curb and into a tree being met with a very loud and intense “smack” against the tree. The car then spun around again as the taste of the powder from the airbags going off in my car began to flood my taste buds. I remember getting out of the car and immediately feeling my heart drop into my stomach and I felt like I was going to throw up. Tears started to flood my eyes as I fell to the ground and watched what I considered my most prized possession being engulfed in a cloud of flames and smoke. Not knowing what else to do, only to sit and watch as a situation that I will never forget began to occur.

Driving straight on a green light one second, getting t-boned, hitting a tree and then getting out of the car moments before the entire inside of the car was consumed by fire, to sitting on the ground and thinking about all of the personal belongings that were still in the car that I would never see again.

I was in shock from what had just taken place; next thing I hear is what would usually be a sound of relief to some, not me. I was raised to understand that society is not as accepting of young black men as they are towards most people. I had seen many news stories and articles about how people of color are treated by police alone. I never feel comfortable when there are police around because of the history with them and young black men or black men alone. What had happened next with these officers had not made the record any better nor had it changed my perspective on the way people of color (Black/African American Race) are treated by police.

The car then spun around again as the taste of the powder from the airbags going off in my car began to flood my taste buds.

Sirens blaring down the street as I am met face to face with a police officer on his motorcycle. My car is in a blaze of fire as I am told to stay back. A fire truck and two more cruisers show up. I watched as the fire department circled my vehicle figuring out where the fire was coming from and assessing what needed to be done.

The firemen began making their way to the trunk of my car where I have a legal firearm stored. I then told the officer about my legal firearm in the vehicle because I had been raised to make sure that I am as transparent as possible and am honest as possible with anyone, especially an “authoritative figure”. Almost immediately, I am told to sit down and he calls for another officer to stand by me as he goes to go check. The situation turns into him walking the firearm back to a vehicle while signaling something to his partner. My heart was pounding. Thinking of what the situation could turn to, I quickly began to realize that I needed to sit still and not move, followed by then being asked to stand up, turn around, and place

my hands behind my back. Almost paralyzed in fear of what has happened to so many young black men for reasons so much less than this. Thinking of the things that could happen if I did anything other than what the officer said, holstering his weapon as he took items from my pockets another officer had his pistol drawn aimed at me. No questions being answered as I am asking why this is happening to me. In complete shock I do what I am asked to do and get into the vehicle. The person who hit me causing the whole situation, after having been asked for information on what had happened, being helped out of their vehicle being told that a tow truck had been called for them and that they were free to go. The person never said sorry, never asked if I was okay, never said one word to me. I had just been T-boned, slammed into a tree and then got out of my car to watch it catch fire and burn, to be met with an officer then reading me my rights and sitting me in the back of his cruiser. Meanwhile, the person who caused the accident in the first place walked away going back to their home with no worries of what had just happened.

Now would this be the same situation if I were not the color that I am? Would I have been given the same treatment as the person who caused the accident in the first place if I were the same race as them and the officer? What if we just look at race? We can really look at it, and admit the wrong that is being done. We can do something about it. Pretending that race is not real...that is where the problem begins. This is when tragic events where mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, friends and families mourn over lost ones. Should I have been a different skin color maybe the situation would have been different; maybe I would have been getting into an ambulance or would have been receiving a ride home to make sure I am okay. But the sad reality is that race is real. Without thinking about race, without thinking

about things that could happen with the choices that we make, we are no longer human, we no longer are using our subconscious, we are as underdeveloped as the neanderthals and as ignorant as "the first people" that are in our history books. What we need to pass on is information that is going to get the future generations to the next step at a quicker pace than we as a society have been working.

Thinking of the things that could happen if I did anything other than what the officer said, holstering his weapon as he took items from my pockets another officer had his pistol drawn aimed at me.

Before this assignment, you could have asked me what a Cataclysm sentence was and I would have responded with something along the lines of "Does it have something to do with astrology?" But sitting and listening to the Radiolab episode covering what a Cataclysm sentence is and having examples I was able to gain a more in depth understanding of what it is. According to new research in The Cataclysm Sentence, TV Writer/ Producer Cord Jefferson states in his Cataclysm sentence "Race isn't real unless you make it real, at which point it will become the biggest problem in the world." Hearing this cataclysm sentence helped me come up with my own because it contradicts my ideas, perspectives on race, how real it is and needs to be treated as real in order to prevent society from becoming a big hateful and negative place even more than it already is today.



"You will not have peace in life without seeing race" is my cataclysmic sentence because I think it is important to know that race is more important than how people treat it. What happened to me could have easily turned into a situation like you see on the news. Too many times did that situation play over in my head where I ask myself why did no one ask if I was okay. Why does society see someone of color and immediately think negatively? But if they are an accepted color the circumstances and results differ.

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A Spectrum of Romance

By Callie Harper Herbold



In the queer community, an outsider will see many different types of relationships, just by looking. However, if one ignores what the couples look like, the mechanisms involved in creating a healthy and loving relationship are incredibly similar to those that appear to be heteronormative. For a healthy relationship within the queer community, one must respect the identity of their partner, have trust, empathy, and flexibility.

Due to the possibility of a non-binary, trans, or asexual partner, one must have the ability to respect the gender identity of their partner. If one's partner does not respect their gender or sexual identity, it leaves for a feeling of unease. For example, if one person in the relationship is asexual, then they should both sit down and have a conversation about what they should do? Is she sex-repulsed—as in, does she not like anything within the intimacy spectrum, no kisses, sex, etc—or does she just feel like sex is not a need but an occasional want? In the early 2000s, David Jay launched AVEN, which would describe an asexual person as a person who does not experience any sexual attraction. Dominique Canning, a graduate of the University of Michigan in Sociolinguistics who focuses on the language of queer people of color and author of the sixth article in the eighth volume of the McNair Scholars Research Journal, “Queering Asexuality: Asexual-Inclusion in Queer Spaces,” which is how the inclusion of asexuals in queer spaces leads to the recognition of asexuality as a sexuality, also speaks about AVEN and its description of an asexual person.

In the article, Canning speaks about a survey which had an odd result: “I am sexually attracted to men, but have no desire or need to engage in sexual or even nonsexual activity ... with them” (qtd in Canning 57). This version of asexuality is how I personally identify, as someone with no need to have sexual intimacy with anyone, be them male or female. Sometimes, one may have the urge to engage in sexual activity with their partner or even a stranger, but most of the time, a person on the asexual spectrum will have no interest in those activities, and they are not broken. In *The*

Invisible Orientation: An Introduction to

Asexuality by Julie Sondra Decker,

youtuber and activist focusing on

asexual awareness, she writes

about her own experiences

growing up as asexual and how everyone around her called her

‘weird’ and other insults. She

writes, “Some want romance.

Some don’t. Some are willing to have sex. Some aren’t.

Some are virgins. Some aren’t.

Some masturbate, have libido, or want children. Some don’t.

Some feel isolated, afraid,

confused, othered, erased, and

invisible. We wish we didn’t” (Decker

10). Asexuality is a spectrum, and Decker

explains that very well. Some do and some do not

is a perfect way to understand, and if someone walks

into a relationship with an asexual person, then their

partner must be as understanding as possible to not mess up and make their partner uncomfortable.

Canning and Decker both speak on how the spectrum

is large, and later on Decker explains the different

sexualities under the umbrella term of asexuality.

However, the understanding involved can be difficult

and by personal experience I know how

uncomfortable it can be to feel as if you are being

Sometimes, one may have the urge to engage in sexual activity with their partner or even a stranger, but most of the time, a person on the asexual spectrum will have no interest in those activities, and they are not broken.

pressured into things you want. Many people do not believe that asexuality does not exist, or is just an excuse to not have sex. Some even see it as a trauma response. For some, it may be but as a general rule, asexuality is something genetically encoded as a sexuality just like regular attraction is. While it is accepted as a sexuality, it is still seen as something different, even amongst the LGBTQIA+ community. By increasing the information about asexuality online and making it more common, it will eventually be seen as something that should not be changed and to be 'fixed.'

By the rest of our society, queer relationships are seen as weird; sure they can be unconventional, as is the case of non-monogamy, but weird should not be used as an insult. In the queer community, non-sexual yet still romantic relationships exist as well, or even non-monogamous relationships. Within non-monogamous relationships, trust is a must-have. In "Queer(ing) Consensual Non-monogamies, Queering Therapy: Queer Intimacy, Kinship, and Experiences of CNM in LGBTQIA+ Lives," a chapter in *The Handbook of Non-Monogamy: affirming mental health practice—a book about non-monogamy from different points of view, be it power or oppression—the authors Christian Klesse, Leehee Rothschild, and Jaisie Walker, talk about how being non-monogamous is perceived in a monogamy-centric society, as well as the evolution of the word queer. Non-monogamous, or polyamorous, relationships seem to be "reenvisioning relationship possibilities that are more responsible, caring, [and] loving" (Klesse et al. 3-4). While some may think that polyamorous relationships look like a hassle, due to the extra people and feelings involved, it seems that it is the exact opposite: due to the amount of feelings involved, the people in the relationship must be more loving and trusting than monogamous relationships may be. As*

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someone who has seen what a polyamorous relationship looks like from the outsider perspective, it is definitely something that is to be admired, due to the amount of work that has to be put in. Self-awareness is also a big part of polyamory; one must know their own feelings or else an argument will happen and may end up ruining their relationship. In

the "Self-Awareness Strategies" chapter of *Emotional Intelligence 2.0*, Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves, co-founders of

TalentSmart Inc. and world-renown experts in self-management and emotional intelligence, both speak about how self-awareness and understanding what emotions a person are feeling at specific times will improve their relationship, be it romantic or work. Bradberry and Greaves write, "The key to observing the ripple effects of your emotions is to watch closely how they impact other people immediately, and then use that information as a guide for how your

emotions are bound to affect a wider circle long after you unleash the emotion" (Bradberry and Greaves 67). An example used in the book is how if a team manager berates an employee in front of their whole team, the rest of the team under that manager may worry and wonder when it is their turn to be berated. If one exchanges work for a polyamorous relationship, if one person in the relationship is berated for doing something wrong, the

others may wonder when it will be their turn to do something wrong and be berated, even if it is just forgetting one task while someone else is having a difficult day. Self-awareness towards one's emotions would help everyone in the relationship understand what a person is going through, and can help potential blow-ups calm down and change to conversations easily worked through.

Empathy is something many might not think of as important in relationships—unlike communication, which is always seen as a key thing in them—but it could end up saving yours. If a person's partner loses a

friend or family member, he cannot just expect them to act as if everything is fine; he must help them work through the pain. In the eighth chapter of Emotional Intelligence 2.0, "Relationship Management Strategies," Bradburry and Greaves speak about how emotional intelligence can make or break a relationship. Bradburry and Greaves write that "one key to managing relationships is leaning into your own discomfort and taking a moment to acknowledge, not stifle or change, other people's feelings" (Bradburry and Greaves 201). Even if it is an uncomfortable topic for him, such as the death of a parent-in-law he did not necessarily like—and the dislike was returned—he must push those feelings aside and comfort his partner. When he does this, he is not disregarding their feelings as important, he is acknowledging their pain and helping them find the comfort they need. In the queer community, the dislike of parents is common; there are no happy endings with white picket fences where you live near your parents, sometimes the parents hate you for being who you are. Homophobic parents are common, and while their child may hate them, they are still as likely to mourn them when they go as any normal child would.

Empathy flows right into communication, because without both, a "fairy tale ending" does not exist. Due to the amount of happily ever afters in books and movies growing up, many people believe that after a relationship is started, nothing else must be done. In Mindset: The New Psychology to Success chapter six, "Relationships Mindsets in Love (or Not)," Carol Dweck, a psychologist and professor well-known for her work in mindset and motivation, writes about how if something needs work, it was not meant to be. For those with a fixed mindset—a mindset wherein people believe that their traits are fixed and cannot be changed—they believe that solving problems and gaining skills will "magically occur through their love, sort of the way it happened to Sleeping Beauty, whose coma was cured by her prince's kiss, or to Cinderella, whose miserable life was suddenly transformed by her prince" (Dweck 153). Dweck explains later on with examples of relationships that failed due to no communication, and if they had communicated, their relationship would be thriving. Communication matters; without it, no problems get solved and relationships crumble to nothing. However, later on Dweck says the following: In the growth mindset, there may still be that exciting initial combustion, but people in this mindset don't expect magic. They

believe that a good, lasting relationship comes from effort and from working through inevitable differences. But those with a fixed mindset don't buy that. Remember the fixed mindset idea that if you have ability, you shouldn't have to work hard. This is the same belief applied to relationships: If you're compatible, everything should just come naturally. (Dweck 154)

Dweck explains the difference between growth and fixed mindset in a relationship, and she shows how the mindsets branch off. A fixed mindset would stay at the starting point, whereas a growth mindset moves forwards, communicating through issues and arguments that will happen in every relationship. Dweck writes about how a growth mindset matters in improving the strength of the relationship of anyone, no matter if they are in a queer or heteronormative relationship, non-monogamous or not; each relationship needs communication to succeed.

Queer relationships are not that different from those that appear heterosexual. That is not a bad thing, society will always be different and there will always be those who do not conform to the constricting views of our society. Communication and trust are very important; however, other things are needed such as the importance of respecting one's identity, be it binary or not, and empathy. By improving the communication between a person and their partner, as well as empathizing with them, ones' relationship will only grow stronger by the day.

In the queer community, the dislike of parents is common; there are no happy endings with white picket fences where you live near your parents, sometimes the parents hate you for being who you are. Homophobic parents are common, and while their child may hate them, they are still as likely to mourn them when they go as any normal child would

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A fixed mindset would stay at the starting point, whereas a growth mindset moves forwards, communicating through issues and arguments that will happen in every relationship.

Meow

By Denice Espino



Although women have come a long way since the days when they could not vote, they could not serve on a jury, they could not get a credit card in their own name, and they could not object to sex with their husband—they still have a long road to total equality. Patriarchal ideologies perceive women as weak, dramatic, emotional—even hysterical. They are expected to be the submissive sex. Despite all the difficulties women face throughout their lifespan, there is no harder time in a young woman's life than when she is at the cusp of adulthood. Society sends them messages of what careers are meant for women and which are reserved for men. Society also tells them that they should want to get married and that they should want to become mothers. Young women are told how they should and should not behave to be worthy of being a man's wife and the mother to his children. As if pleasing a man were the ultimate life goal. These rules further complicate an already tangled time in a woman's life when she is trying to find her own identity in the vast world. This is a time of self-discovery, sexual discovery, and a time of meeting new people.

A story that gives us an insight into this is Kristen Roupenian's "Cat Person." In "Cat Person," a twenty-year-old college student named Margot meets a thirty-four-year-old man named Robert at her workplace. They soon begin texting back and forth and a sexual encounter ensues. Although Margot makes the first move, she suddenly feels repulsed by Robert, but goes through with sex in fear that she will disappoint him and come off as spoiled and

capricious. After the encounter, Margot feels disgust at the thought of Robert. She avoids his messages and wants to tell him that she does not want to pursue a relationship with him but has trouble telling him in a way that will not hurt his feelings. Margot's roommate, posing as Margot, sends Robert a message telling him that she is not interested and that he should stop texting her. Robert takes it well—or so it seems. That is until he shows up to the bar where Margot is a regular and he sees her with her friend, Albert. Robert texts Margot, at first being nice, but his texts quickly

become hostile. He demands to know if she is sleeping with Albert and calls her a whore. Kristen Roupenian's "Cat Person" depicts some of the everyday difficulties women face while dating men such as the expectations to adhere to traditional gender roles, sexual objectification, and the pressures of living up to the expectations of "true womanhood."

Throughout "Cat Person," Margot is faced with having to adhere to traditional gender roles while dating Robert. In her chapter, "Using Concepts from Feminist Theory to Understand Literature," Lois Tyson, a distinguished literary scholar, examines the diverse ways female characters are oppressed in literature. Tyson explains, "According to traditional gender roles, men are naturally rational, strong, protective, and decisive. In contrast, traditional gender roles define women as naturally emotional (which, in a patriarchy, usually means irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive" (Tyson 142). In other words, society portrays women as needing a man to protect them and make rational decisions for them. Women are

As if pleasing a man were the ultimate life goal. These rules further complicate an already tangled time in a woman's life when she is trying to find her own identity in the vast world.

rarely seen as strong in the physical and emotional sense. Men are depicted as the opposite of women. This is important because these patriarchal ideologies send both men and women certain messages. Men are always expected to be strong. Men are expected to run toward fear instead of away from it. Men are expected to show little to no emotion. In contrast, women are told they do not have the capacity to be the strong one, whether that be emotionally or physically. This is damaging to both genders because they cannot freely express how they feel. In “Cat Person,” One night, Margot finds herself hungry and without access to food in her dorm. She sends Robert a message complaining about her dilemma. Robert tells her to meet him at 7-Eleven so he can treat her to some snacks. Margot thanks Robert for her presents. The narrator states, “She thought he was going to go in for a kiss and prepared to duck and offer him her cheek, but instead of kissing her on the mouth he took her by the arm and kissed her gently on the forehead, as though she were something precious” (Roupenian). Margot was expecting Robert to kiss her on the lips, but instead he surprises her by sweetly kissing her forehead. Robert is portrayed as a type of hero. Margot is illustrated as a famished girl with no access to food. Robert saves the day by purchasing a Slurpee and a bag of Doritos for her. He makes Margot feel good. He makes her feel cared for. Although Margot was preparing herself to reject a kiss on the lips, she was pleasantly surprised to see that Robert did not do what she expected him to do. Robert and Margot both adhere to traditional gender roles. Robert being the protector while Margot is the submissive one.

Furthermore, Margot feels abashed when she is denied access to a bar due to her age. She is one year shy of meeting the legal drinking age. Sensing Robert’s disappointment, she begins to cry. At this

sight, Robert quickly wraps his arms around her in a consoling embrace. The narrator writes, “She let herself be folded against him, and she was flooded with the same feeling she’d had outside the 7-Eleven—that she was a delicate, precious thing he was afraid he might break. He kissed the top of her head, and she laughed and wiped her tears away” (Roupenian). As before, Robert is depicted as a protector to Margot. Margot becomes emotional thinking she has ruined their date. When Robert becomes aware of Margot’s tears, he affectionately kisses her forehead as a sign of comfort. Margot continues to be depicted as a woman who needs to be saved—a woman who gets emotional over trivial things. Margot herself feels embarrassed when the tears begin to flood her eyes. Robert fulfills his manly gender role once again by coming to her rescue.

In addition to having to adhere to gender roles while dating, women must deal with being sexually objectified. Tyson explains, “[...] women who violate traditional gender roles are thought of as “bad girls,” [...] Feminist theory points out, however, that both “good girls” and “bad girls” are objectified by patriarchy. That is, they are not viewed as independent human beings with their own goals, needs, and desires” (142). To put it simply, women are often categorized as good or bad depending on how society classifies their behaviors. Feminist Theory affirms that labeling women as “good” or “bad” is equally damaging. Both labels reduce women to mere objects with no other purpose in life than to please the patriarchal man. In “Cat Person,” Robert assumes that Margot is sexually inexperienced because of her age. During their sexual encounter, Robert asks Margot if it is her first time. The question prompts Margot to break into laughter. She assures Robert that this is not her first time. Robert becomes upset when Margot laughs, but she assures him she is nervous. Despite Margot’s feelings of repulsion toward

Robert texts Margot, at first being nice, but his texts quickly become hostile. He demands to know if she is sleeping with Albert and calls her a whore.



Robert, she proceeds to have sex with him. The narrator describes, “During sex, he moved her through a series of positions with brusque efficiency, flipping her over, pushing her around, and she felt like a doll again, as she had outside the 7-Eleven, though not a precious one now—a doll made of rubber, flexible and resilient, a prop for the movie that was playing in his head” (Roupenian). Simply put, Margot quickly realizes that Robert is no longer treating her in the sweet way she was accustomed to. Robert has treated Margot like a dainty flower throughout the short amount of time they have known each other. Robert views Margot as a “good girl” -kissing her forehead gently and acting as her protector. After Margot discloses the fact that she is not the virgin Robert thought she could be, he is no longer soft and sweet. Robert quickly begins to treat Margot like a “bad girl.” As Robert becomes rough during sex, Margot cannot help but feel like a simple sex doll; a prop—an object.

Moreover, Robert continues to objectify Margot especially after she decides to cut off communication with him. Although Margot feels bad, she knows she is not interested in pursuing a relationship with him. Initially, he respects her decision up until the moment he spots her with another male. He begins texting Margot. At first, it seems innocent, but it quickly goes sour. Robert texts, “Is that guy you were with tonight your boyfriend” ‘???’ ‘Or is he just some guy you are fucking’ ‘Sorry’ ‘When u laquehd when I asked if you were a virgin was it because youd fucked so many guys’ ‘Are you fucking that guy right now’ ‘Are you’ ‘Are you’ ‘Are you’ ‘Answer me’ ‘Whore” (Roupenian). In a fit of rage, Robert accuses Margot of sleeping around and ultimately insults her. Robert has clearly concluded that Margot is a “bad girl.” Margot had sex with him and disappeared. To patriarchal men, this is not normal behavior for women. According to patriarchal ideology, men are the ones that use women for sex, and they decide when to toss them. Not the other way around. Robert could not get over the fact that Margot had

a sexual history. He expected her to be a virgin because she was twenty.

Aside from sexual objectification, women also face the pressures of living up to the expectations of “true womanhood.” In her chapter, Tyson explains how the ‘cult of true womanhood’ was promoted in the nineteenth century by the Victorian patriarchy. To be considered a true woman, a woman had to fulfill the role imposed on her by the patriarchy. A “true woman” spent her time at home, was fragile, and submissive. The women who fulfilled their roles to the full extent, were the ones worthy of male admiration and protection. Tyson shares, “Today, this feminine ideal survives in, for example, various versions of the

‘helpless female,’ whose abilities are limited to such ‘womanly’ domains as the cultivation of personal beauty, cooking, and home fashions and who makes men feel, in contrast, capable, powerful, and in control” (Tyson 144). In “Cat Person,” Margot cannot help but feel that Robert is not impressed with the way she is dressed for their date to the movies. Margot expected to hold hands with Robert, but he would not even put his arm around her. The narrator writes, “She was wearing leggings and a sweatshirt, and that might have been the problem. When she got into the car,

he’d said, ‘Glad to see you dressed up for me,’ which she’d assumed was a joke, but maybe she actually had offended him by not seeming to take the date seriously enough, or something” (Roupenian). Robert was turned off by what he assumed was Margot’s lack of effort to look womanly. Since he is dressed in khakis and a button-down, he was expecting Margot to show up in a dress—even heels. If Robert is genuinely interested in Margot, he should be able to look past the leggings. Robert has an image in his head of how a woman should not only behave, but also dress. Women are not always in the mood to dress up. Somedays they just want to be comfortable. The patriarchal man will be put off by a woman that is not putting in all the effort to impress him.

Furthermore, it is evident that Margot herself is aware of how a “true woman” is expected to behave. When

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she spots Robert at the bar, she quickly grabs her friend Albert's arm and tells him of Robert's presence. Albert instinctively tries to protect her. The narrator shares, "By then, Albert had heard a version of the story, though not quite the true one; nearly all her friends had.

Albert stepped in front of her, shielding her from Robert's view, as they rushed back to the table where their friends were" (Roupenian). In other words, Although Margot has told Albert about Roberts, she has not been truthful about the whole story. She is feeling disgusted with herself for sleeping with a man fourteen years her senior. Margot fears being judged by her friends. She does not want to be seen as a "bad girl." She must change the story of how things played out so that her friends will not view her in a negative light. She must paint him as a stalker so that her friends do not suspect that at one point, she was even considering marrying Robert.

Margot and Robert's complex relationship gives an insight into just a few of the difficulties women face while dating. Women are expected to be weak, helpless, emotional, delicate, and submissive. Women are expected to not be sexual beings. When women express the slightest form of sexuality, they become objectified. They are labeled as "bad girls." The patriarchy applies a lot of pressure on women to carry themselves a certain way. Women are expected to always look their best. They must dress to impress men. Women are not allowed unruly hair days and heels are absolutely required—even if they are painful and impossible to walk in. All these patriarchal ideologies imposed on women are damaging. Every woman should be able to feel like a "true woman" regardless of how others view them.

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Modernizing America's Pastime

By Victor Fernandez



Baseball has long been considered America's pastime; however, as the years have passed and sports adapt to the modern fan, it seemed that baseball stuck its cleats in the dirt and refused to move. In recent years though, under the rule of the current commissioner of Major League Baseball it seems that steps have finally been taken to modernize the game. The implementation of new rules by Major League Baseball which have a focus on an increased pace of play and injury prevention are major positives for the growth of the sport.

One of the first rule changes was adding a runner on second base during extra innings, which was started during the covid-shortened 2020 season. The original reason behind the extra base runner was to provide relief to players that faced less training time with the pandemic cutting spring training short. For example, the addition of the extra base runner was to shorten the amount of extra-inning baseball played, limiting the number of pitches players would be forced to throw (Axisa). At first, the reason behind adding a base runner to second base during extra-inning baseball was to shorten the amount of overtime baseball played. While this was originally meant as a solution for lessened spring training games due to the pandemic, the results it showed could not be overlooked. One of the added benefits which came through the courtesy runner, originally intended to relieve pitchers' arms by limiting the number of extra-inning pitches thrown, was the lessened amount of extra-inning baseball played. In 2019, 37 games went thirteen innings or

longer, with eight of those games going over fifteen innings. However, after the implementation of the extra-inning runner, only eleven games have gone thirteen innings or longer in the 2022 season (Drellich, Sarris). As shown here, having an extra base runner greatly shortened the amount of extra baseball played. This is great news for the pitching staff, which must no longer worry about dueling out for six or more extra-innings, as games seem to now end earlier than years past with the added urgency of a runner on second base. While the base runner on second does increase

the pace of play, there were initial concerns for

pitchers about their statistics, but Major

League Baseball thought about that

before adding the rule. In fact, the

runner on second base will not

count as an earned run against

the pitcher if they score, and

the runner will not receive

time on base to not boost

their on-base percentage

(Axisa). With these two

stipulations added on to the

courtesy runner rule, neither

the runner nor the pitcher will

gain any unfair statistical damage

or boosts from this extra base

runner rule. The extra runner will not

damage the pitcher's earned runs allowed,

and the runner will not gain any padding to their

on-base percentage. The added courtesy runner has

not only helped keep regular season games from

running too long, but it has also helped save pitchers

arms by allowing them more rest time. This is not the

only rule which sought to help pitchers, as the Pitch

Com is another rule which sought out these same

benefits.

The Pitch Com device was added during the 2022 season to speed up communication between the

This is great news for the pitching staff, which must no longer worry about dueling out for six or more extra-innings, as games seem to now end earlier than years past with the added urgency of a runner on second base.

catcher and pitcher, therefore increasing the pace of play. The way in which communication would be sped up was by using words to inform the pitcher of what type of ball to throw next instead of the typical finger signals which catchers would use in the past. For instance, the catcher would wear the pitch com device which resembles a controller on their sleeve, and this device would connect to a speaker within the hat of the pitcher. With this controller, the catcher can request certain pitches with just the press of a button, no longer needing to memorize and deploy complex signals using their fingers. An added benefit of moving these communications to this remote device is that it would reduce the need for coaches to pause the game to speak with players over concerns of their finger signals being stolen by the other team, as all these messages would be shared through a speaker directly to the pitcher (Castrovince). By shifting the communication between these two players from hand signals to a controller and speaker, time will no longer be eaten away as teams memorize complex signals and pause the game to speak about new codes. Instead, pitchers will just be told the pitch they must throw through a speaker with no room for confusion about misreading a finger signal. During the initial testing of the Pitch Com device, many players seemed hopeful for this new tool, as they began to voice their approval. Namely, Tampa Bay Rays catcher Mike Zunino said when speaking of Pitch Com that he is, "hoping some guys pick up on it more", noting the added benefits which come with this device such as limiting sign stealing between teams (Berry). During Zunino's first games with this device, he found it useful and important for the future of the game, hoping that other players would soon realize its significance and adopt it as well. As mentioned by catcher Mike Zunino, the implementation of the Pitch Com device could help teams limit the amount of sign stealing which occurs

With this controller, the catcher can request certain pitches with just the press of a button, no longer needing to memorize and deploy complex signals using their fingers.



throughout the game. Specifically, amid the fallout which surrounded the Houston Astros' sign stealing scandal throughout the 2017 season, Pitch Com creates a safe alternative for pitches to be shared. Pitchers and catchers which use this device will be protected by its encrypted channels, meaning the opposing team will not be able to listen in and steal any signs, a luxury which is not allowed through the traditional finger signals that catchers would use in the past (Kelly). By removing the concern of stolen signs, pace of play will increase as communication is fast tracked through the protected and encrypted channels the Pitch Com device provides to players. This would not be the only rule added to increase the pace of the pitchers, as the MLB would also look to implement the pitch clock.

The pitch clock is a timer which has been added to the game, yet it does not change the amount of baseball which is being played. The game remains at nine innings in length; however, the clock looks to decrease the amount of downtime in between plays. For example, the pitcher will be given fifteen seconds to throw a pitch when the bases are empty, and twenty seconds if a runner reaches a base. Any failure to throw a pitch within the allotted time will result in the pitcher being charged with a ball. During each at bat, the pitcher will also be limited to two disengagements, meaning that they can only delay pitching to the batter by stepping off the mound twice before the umpire will step in (Castrovince). These rules and limitations on actions the pitcher can do while facing batters will greatly limit the amount of time the pitcher can use up, therefore increasing the pace of play. This rule is not only directed at pitchers, but also extends to the batter. For instance, each batter must be inside the box and in position to swing before the clock's countdown reaches eight seconds, any later and they will be charged with a strike (Castrovince). By applying the rules of the pitch clock to both the batter and the

pitcher, both parties will respect these rules and work within the time given to them, limiting the amount of wasted time. Through the implementation of the pitch clock, the average length of an MLB game has decreased greatly. Namely, through the first eleven days of the 2023 season the average length of a game was two hours and thirty-eight minutes. Through the first eleven days of the 2022 season the average length of a game reached three hours and nine minutes; meaning that games which have been played using the pitch clock have been on average thirty-one minutes shorter than the season prior ("Game times down 31 minutes after rule changes"). While the season is still beginning, the impact of the pitch clock cannot be understated as it has brought the average length of a game down thirty minutes by simply removing the downtime in between pitches. Not all of MLB's new rules were directed solely at the pitcher though, as the next rule which will be introduced placed new limits on the defensive players.

For the 2023 season, the MLB implemented defensive shift bans for infielders. What this rule seeks to do is stop teams from lining up as many fielders as possible to one side of the infield, making it near impossible for batters to put the ball into play. The hope of this ban is to increase the batting average of players while putting more balls into play, which could also lead to more athletic plays being made by the infielders. Specifically, what this rule would aim to do is limit the number of players in the infield to four, with two players having to stand to each side of second base, no longer allowing for unfair defensive walls to be formed to one side of the field (Castrovince). By no longer allowing unfair shifts to occur within the infield, batters should hopefully be able to put more balls into play, which is a positive for the sport and offense. So far, this ban has been successful throughout the league as player's batting averages have increased compared to seasons before the shift ban. For example, last season saw right-handed

players hold a batting average of 0.236, with left-handed players holding an average of 0.228. However, with this shift ban in effect batting averages have jumped, as right-handed batters now hold an average of 0.253; with left-handed batters holding an average of 0.245 (Blum). As shown through these batting averages increasing for both right- and left-handed batters, banning the shift has succeeded in its hope of increasing the number of balls which are put into play. With these averages rising, both players and managers alike have voiced their approval for this new rule. Namely, when Atlanta Braves manager Brian Snitker was asked for opinions on the shift ban, he said, "what I think you're seeing is a resurrection of the singles. There's more hits because we're not flooding the sides of the diamond where a lot of these base hits were outs the last few years" (Blum). As shown through Brian Snitker's comments, the shift ban has been successful in allowing more balls to fall into play especially compared to years prior, as World Series winning manager Brian Snitker shares. As shown through the increase of player batting averages and comments by managers, the ban of the shift has helped create more offense in games, which is great for the sport of baseball.

Defensive shift bans were not the only rule added in hopes of increasing action, as rules surrounding base sizes have also been introduced.

The final major rule change for the 2023 season was an increase in the size of the bases on the field. This increase in size was done primarily in hopes of increasing player safety by limiting the risk of collisions during plays. For example, instead of fifteen inches the bases have now been

increased to eighteen inches which gives the players more room to slide into a base safely, reducing the risk of collisions (Castrovince). By increasing the size of the base, players will now have more room to maneuver during their slides which should reduce the risk of collisions during plays, improving player safety. Another benefit which comes from having larger bases is further encouragement for base runners to steal bases. For instance, with eighteen-inch bases being employed the distance between first, second, and third base has now decreased by four and a half inches

By removing the concern of stolen signs, pace of play will increase as communication is fast tracked through the protected and encrypted channels the Pitch Com device provides to players.

(Castrovince). With this shortened distance, more players will be willing to risk stealing bases as the distance to cover is less than seasons prior, which is an improvement in the amount of action occurring throughout a game. With this shorter distance between bases because of the larger base sizes, there has also been an increase in stolen bases throughout the 2023 season. In fact, last year saw an average of 1.0 stolen bases per game with a success rate of 74%. However, the 2023 campaign has already seen the number of stolen bases per game jump to 1.3, with the success rate jumping as well to 79.6%, a 5.6% difference between this season and last year (Blum). Although the initial reasoning for increasing base size was to improve player safety, it cannot be denied the positive impact it has had on stolen bases as numbers increase throughout the league. The positive jumps are great for the sport of baseball, as they increase action throughout the game while also providing further player safety for the base runners. While these new rules have been great for the sport of baseball, there are still some which are not fully sold on the benefits of these rule changes.

While these new rule changes have greatly helped the sport of baseball, there are still some parties which disagree with the new rules and the effects they can have not only on the game, but on the experience surrounding each game. One of the rules which was discussed was the pitch clock and the effect it has had within the game, shortening games by nearly thirty minutes on average. Some parties argue that this decrease in time at the ballpark is

harmful for concession sales, as many teams will not be able to sell as many goods such as alcohol due to games ending much earlier than seasons prior. This is a reasonable concern, as historically many



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teams have halted the sale of alcohol after the seventh inning, meaning that there is less time to make these purchases ("Major League Baseball teams extend beer sales after pitch clock shortens games").

However, the pitch clock was used last year throughout Minor League Baseball and when the general manager of the Class A Brooklyn Cyclones Kevin Mahoney was asked of this issue he said, "There was no drop off in concession sales even with shorter games" ("Major League Baseball teams extend beer sales after pitch clock shortens game"). As expressed through Kevin Mahoney's comments, despite the length of time at the ballpark decreasing with the pitch clock, they have not seen their sales lower as a result.

Another concern which has been raised is the rapid rate of change which is happening within baseball, and the difficulty that players will have adapting to these new rules. This is a valid concern as shared by Terry Francona who is the manager of the Cleveland Guardians who said during spring training, "These are bigger changes than we've ever had before and you're asking people to do something they've never done" (Kepner). However, it seems that these growing pains are not as much of a problem as some may have thought, as within the first thirty-five games of the season the average rate of a rule violation has been at 0.94, meaning that there is less than one violation per game on average (Kepner). While concerns have been raised over the implementation of the pitch clock, whether it be a worry over less time to sell concessions or placing too much pressure on players to play within a certain time limit; it seems that these issues are not as large as they were once thought to be. Teams in the Minor Leagues such as the Brooklyn Cyclones have not seen any decrease in concession sales with these new rules in place, which should hopefully translate over to Major League teams as well as the season progresses. Rule violations also seem to be a non-issue as players adapt to rules such as the pitch clock, with players averaging less than one violation per game.

Although baseball is a sport with a rich and deep history, the modernization of the sport is incredibly important in the game continuing to grow for generations to come. Whether it be the implementation of the pitch clock, courtesy runner, shift ban, and larger bases which have allowed for an increased pace of play; or added tools such as the pitch com device, one thing is clear. Bringing baseball into the modern age with these rules is great for the health and growth of the sport, as more interesting and action-packed games will help grow fan interest.

Although baseball is a sport with a rich and deep history, the modernization of the sport is incredibly important in the game continuing to grow for generations to come.

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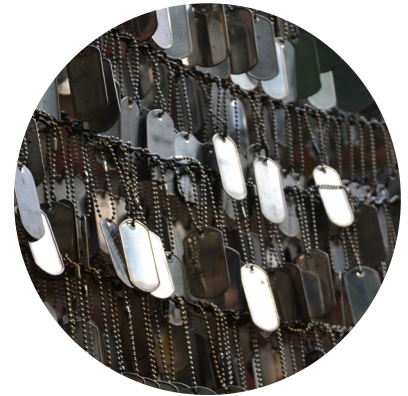
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A Change From Apathy

By Kyle Goldsmith



Is it possible to empathize with everyone? I have been asked the question: as someone who has never been in the military, is it possible for me to empathize with a veteran, and if so, is it important to? There may be some experiences that are not relatable unless you experience them yourself. I have never been through a training service that is aimed at grounding me down into a pliable clay, ready to fit the mold of someone who is willing to charge into battle. I have seen death, but I have never grappled with it hand to hand. The mass loss of human life is something I see as a statistic in a textbook, not a reality. It does not help that I am staunchly anti-war. War to me is a movie genre that preys on people's need for hero worship. War is the misuse of nationalistic pride to devour the youth for iniquitous purposes. To me, soldiers do not die for their country; they just die, and their deaths are a pointless one. The Temptations say it best in their song "War" when Edwin Starr sings, "War is an enemy to all mankind" (01:10-15). If what The Temptations say is true, and war is antithetical to the hopes and desires of mankind, then why would it be important to empathize with veterans at all? Empathizing with veterans, as a non-veteran, is challenging. Empathy is challenging. There is a reason many people consider it to be a muscle. It needs to be worked and developed over time to be kept resilient against one's own callousness, cynicism, and narcissism. It is a muscle that I need to work out.

I believe a good start with empathizing with veterans is to find common ground. We are all people. We feel

love and happiness, sadness, and fear. We have faults and strengths, and we are motivated by a willingness to connect with one another and to do what we think is right. That right there is my first obstacle: what we think is right. I do not believe that soldiers are doing what is right. To truly empathize, I need to view veterans, not as warmongers, but as what they really are. I need to separate the soldier from the war. My problem with this comes from the fact that a war without soldiers is not a war at all. The solution is to understand that the idea of a soldier is a construct of militaristic aggression and jingoism. It is a

made-up concept used to tempt an individual with a promise of machoism and honor. The idea of a soldier is a means in which the old lie can be fulfilled: "It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country" (Horace, Odes 3.2.13). Veterans are people, not the governments and institutions that prop up the industry of war. The depth of our emotions may be felt differently, but we all feel the same emotions. It is important to empathize, not just with people at large but specifically with veterans because they are people. Veterans are people who undergo soul-crushing stress only to

fall between the gaps of public awareness. They are those whose innocence has been stripped away only to be left alone without the support they need. To empathize with them is to know that there is a need for change.

A change in public awareness of veterans starts with the individual. The counterculture movements of the 1960's and 70's were made of individuals who were anti-war and angry with the United States for using its

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citizens to police the world with oppressive authority. This anger, often coupled with an inability to separate the soldier from the war, manifested in the mistreatment of Vietnam War veterans returning home. Joseph Maes, an Ute Native American, who fought in Vietnam, describes in his memoir *My Spiritual Walk as a Wolfhound* his experience returning to civilian life: "When I became a civilian, and they found out I was a Vietnam Vet, it was hard for me to find a job. They would tell me that I was a fool for going to Vietnam, and they didn't want anything to do with me" (200). His stresses and trauma are cast aside. To his potential employers, Maes is just another spent cog of the war machine.

The public at large, even those who do not consider themselves beatniks, hippies, or revolutionaries, find ways to exclude veterans as well. In his poem "My Heart Is Blackened," Maes stands before the Vietnam War Memorial and speaks to the Native Americans whose names are writ in stone: We are still not recognized by the people of this monument as true Warriors of our land. I don't understand why Native Americans are not recognized by these people. They recognize others from other lands. All I know is my Ancestors are true founders of this land. (Maes 233)

Maes illustrates how the experiences of Native Americans who fought in the Vietnam War go unheard. Their suffering and sacrifice are disregarded while the narrative of the Vietnam War grows more distorted and incomplete without the proper recognition of the 42,000 Native Americans who served for a country that continues to forget them. Robert Sanderson, Project Developer of the American Native Press Archive and Sequoyah Research Center, sums up this point in his article "Vietnam Powwow": [Without the recognition of Native Americans] We would be settling for a history with similar distortions to the previous histories that failed to account for the voices of other Native Americans who were instrumental in the cultural, political, and social

development of the land we call America. (par. 14)

If public awareness is going to change for the better, it needs to empathize with veterans, humanize them, and not exclude the effort and sacrifice made by minorities. The way in which we, as a society, view veterans has a real-world impact on the way they are treated.

War is profound in its influence. War scars the collective psyche of the people as deeply as it scars the land and the bodies of those who fought in it. The United States has specific departments like Veterans Affairs which are responsible for treating the healthcare needs of veterans. Despite this, hundreds of thousands of veterans who apply for V.A.

services go untreated. According to Scott Davis, Former Program Specialist for the V.A. National Health Eligibility Center, in the documentary *VA: The Human Cost of War*,

On September second, 2015, the inspector general, Linda Halliday, released a scathing, powerful, OIG [The Office of Inspector General] report admitting that over 800,000 applications for V.A. healthcare lingered unprocessed, that over 10,000 people's applications were lost, purged, or destroyed under the supervision of management and V.A. and that 307,000 of the people in this backlog were already deceased. They died before V.A. processed their requests for care. (00:06:50-00:07:28)

The lack of treatment for veterans who have developed mental health issues, injuries, and disabilities from working in the military has created, and normalized, an ever-growing portion of preventable deaths and walking wounded in society. An ever-growing portion of American society whose lack of care not only affects themselves, but also their spouses, children, parents, and siblings. We have collectively failed to empathize with veterans at the cost of their lives and well-being. To do otherwise would see an increase in resources devoted to helping people get the care they need and a decrease in the

The United States has specific departments like Veterans Affairs which are responsible for treating the healthcare needs of veterans. Despite this, hundreds of thousands of veterans who apply for V.A. services go untreated.

resources devoted to putting them in harm's way in the first place.

At times, I like to think that I understand what life has to offer. I understand what everyone goes through: the good, the bad, the twists and the turns. Life is a series of choices we make in between being born and when we die. The lives of people cannot be too different if we begin and end them the same way. Then reality smacks me in the face and shows me that my understanding is predicated upon naiveté and faulty reductionist reasoning. I realize that the possibilities of experience are innumerable in measure and my response to them can be infinitely multi-faceted and nuanced. I am left with an understanding that I am in a world where anything can happen. How can I navigate myself in this sea of complexity and of the unknown? If someone has done something or experienced something I have not, how can I know if what is done is in good nature and is something I find of value? How do I know if what I have done is just or right? This is where empathy comes into play. Empathy is a tool and a skill to put yourself into another's shoes and experience life in a way that you have not. It is important in the way we derive meaning from experience. It is a way in which we learn and garner respect from one another. It signifies to the world that we are not alone. We are not boats cast adrift in the sea to wander aimlessly but a fleet of individuals heading in the direction of a future where we can learn from one another and be better for it.

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We have collectively failed to empathize with veterans at the cost of their lives and well-being. To do otherwise would see an increase in resources devoted to helping people get the care they need and a decrease in the resources devoted to putting them in harm's way in the first place.



Encapsulating Isolation

By Marissa Gulliford



The impact of trauma sticks with a person for the rest of their life and changes their outlook on life. It continues to affect their day-to-day habits long after first occurring, such as when they go out, who they go out with, and possibly even the articles of clothing that they decide to wear. It can also massively impact their social life. At the beginning of healing from a traumatic event, there is a solemn silence, a period of isolation that follows where it's almost as if you're looking out the window at the world in a state of mind worlds away different from the people that are around you. Emily Dickinson's "Before I got my eye put out" encapsulates that shift of perspective after a traumatic event with her symbolism, escapism, and separation of the self from others.

This poem takes place in the mid-1800s, a time period when mental hardships were not openly discussed among people. Those who might have been experiencing distress and mental turmoil were expected to keep it to themselves and go through the healing process on their own. This resulted in many people shutting down and cutting themselves off from other people. These kinds of struggles likely affected Emily Dickinson herself with her sudden shift in behavior as noted by this article, "In the late 1850s, Dickinson began secluding herself from most social contact, refusing to come downstairs even to meet close friends, no longer attending church, fleeing from the room or from the garden at the approach of outsiders..." (Mackowiak and Batten 1160). Many

speculators argue over what the cause of her isolation is, one thought is that she was experiencing backlash from her religious peers, "because Dickinson never formally entered the church, she "stood apart" from her village and condemned herself to inner conflict" (Grunes). That would explain why she no longer attended church.

We are not given a setting until the end of the poem, with our speaker only describing nature for symbolism, not literally. She speaks of it as if it were something that she's dreamed of possessing for her own for the longest time, "But were it told to me, to-day, that I might have the sky for mine, I tell you that my heart would split, for size of me." Her visions of nature are a way for her to cope, they are symbols of escapism and liberation. She wants it to be her safe haven. The sky is her main focus since the sky is so endless, far away from the Earth's troubles, and has strong associations with the afterlife. The sky has been connected to Heaven due to its endless borders and artistic dispositions, so beautiful that it seems 'heavenly'. This ties in with Emily Dickinson's religious turmoil. The speaker is wanting to die and permanently be set apart from her suffering.

The speaker mentions multiple elements of the sky, birds being one of them. Birds have long been seen as symbols of freedom and in her case, she could see them as a figure of liberation for herself. When talking about the sky belonging to her, she is talking about reclaiming her life for her own. She continues on, "The

Those who might have been experiencing distress and mental turmoil were expected to keep it to themselves and go through the healing process on their own. This resulted in many people shutting down and cutting themselves off from other people.

motions of the dipping birds, the lightning's jointed road, for mine to look at when I liked,-- the news would strike me dead!", the birds are free to move in any way they please without judgement from others and mental baggage holding them back, they can leave where they are with nothing holding them back. She wishes that she could do the same as they do and no longer endure her trauma.

The way that the speaker makes a distinction between herself, and others is by referring to them as "creatures". The word "creatures" is typically used in reference to animals, something non-human, something from the wild. She first tells us, "Before I got my eye put out, I liked as well to see as other creatures that have eyes...", she is no longer a creature but something past that. An event has occurred and taken that freedom to be wild from her.

There is isolation in the speaker's tone, she now lives with a wariness that the others do not, "Where other creatures put their eyes, incautious of the sun." She has looked at the sun too long and cannot see the world in the same way that she used to, nor as the others do now. Metaphorically, it has burned her cornea and her view of life is now distorted. That sun is the event that has brought her trauma and left her with these scars. The speaker has learned lessons that those around her have yet to learn, and notes this to herself; this is one more way that she separates herself from the general public.

The freedom that comes along with being wild can be seen as a characteristic of youthfulness, possibly the naivety of a young person experiencing romantic love with someone for the first time or finding opportunities to do things that they were not allowed to do previously when they were even younger. Youth involves many decisions that are not thought out, with no true concern for the

consequences that could follow due to minimal experiences. That lack of knowledge and experience can lead to engaging with people who do not have your best interests at heart, and who may want to bring you pain. In the first stanza, "...I liked as well to see as other creatures that have eyes and know no other way.", they know only what they see in front of

them, and do not think about what could come after. They see something that they want, and they go for it. This is an indicator that the speaker is a young adult, and possibly has been harmed by one of her peers.

The sky is her main focus since the sky is so endless, far away from the Earth's troubles, and has strong associations with the afterlife. The sky has been connected to Heaven due to its endless borders and artistic dispositions, so beautiful that it seems 'heavenly'.

The speaker elaborates on her theme of isolation, "The meadows mine, the mountains mine,-- all forests, stintless stars...", all of which tend to be a considerate amount away from other people. These landscapes are where a lot of people go to escape the stress in their lives and come back with clear minds. Focusing on the portion about the stars is indicative

of suicidal thoughts and takes her need to escape to a dark and final level. Emily Dickinson is not a stranger to death in her poetry, "This relation between deathwriting and blind seeing emerges repeatedly in Dickinson's verse--so much so that it becomes the motor and the medium of her thinking." (Boxall). The stars were untouchable during this time-period, the only thing the speaker could have hope for is that they would be within reach

after death. She feels that if she were deceased, she would finally be free of all judgement from surrounding people. She would rather be dead than to continue tolerating the harsh treatment of her surroundings any longer.

Continuing on with her theme of liberation, our speaker says, "...the lightning's jointed road...", which is now a sudden clash with the other elements of the sky that were previously mentioned. Lightning is aggressive, shocking, and as she stated, jointed. It is not straight nor in a predictable pattern, much like the path that she is



currently on in her life, as her newfound trauma has thrown a wrench in it. She connects this bolt with her own death, “The news would strike me dead!”, of course not in a literal sense. In the context of her discussing the sky as a symbol of freedom and liberation, this shock is a representation of finding her own empowerment within this catastrophic time. This ‘lightning bolt’ would kill the version of her that is frozen in time, unable to get out of this rut, once again bringing us back to the unrestricted movement of the birds. To move on from this trauma and be in control of her life again is a scary concept for her, it seems it is an impossible feat for her to accomplish on her own.

The speaker decides that it is better for her to stay where she is, watching the world go by from the security of, presumably, her own home. The beginning of the last stanza goes, “So, safer, guess, with just my soul upon the window-pane”, showing us her decision to stay inside, away from the rest of society. This finally provides the official setting for the reader, as we now get confirmation that her description of the outdoors is just in her mind, once again only being used as symbolism. She has been indoors this entire time, sitting by her window and daydreaming of having her life back again. This seclusion aligns with Emily Dickinson’s own anti-social behavior during her adult life and possibly even when she wrote this poem, “... she underwent a striking metamorphosis, retreating into the world of a recluse.” (Mackowiak and Batten 1159). The speaker has come to peace with her circumstances and accepted this as her life.

Focusing on the portion about the stars is indicative of suicidal thoughts and takes her need to escape to a dark and final level.



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Roman Fire

By Linsey Gamalski



Arrogance is a trait that we see often in the world, whether it is a family member whose attitude bothers us, or a stranger who we notice in passing. Some of us can ignore this and move on with our lives, but many cannot.

Unfortunately, arrogant people have the power to ruin a good day. In the stories, "Roman Fever," by Edith Wharton, and "To Build a Fire," by Jack London, we see an overwhelming amount of arrogant behavior such as lacking self-awareness, needing to be right in every situation, and the belief that someone is better than those around them. The characters in these works are overly confident and self-absorbed and it shows. In these two stories we see the demise of Mrs. Slade, as well as the red-haired man. Even though the two stories have very different plots, they are highly similar due to the recurring theme of arrogance, as well as the incredibly unintelligent behaviors the characters present to the audience.

In the story, "Roman Fever" by Edith Wharton, Mrs. Slade shows she is lacking self-awareness when she proves to be missing the lavish lifestyle her husband could provide when he was still alive, rather than missing him. Wharton says, "It was a big drop from being the wife of Delphin Slade to being his widow. She had always regarded herself (with a certain conjugal pride) as his equal in social gifts, as contributing her full share to the making of the exceptional couple they were, but the difference after his death was irremediable" (Wharton 542). Mrs. Slade has lost her husband, but her thoughts are about her social skills and patting herself on the back for being

an amazing part of their relationship. This proves her lack of self-awareness, as she is thinking about parties and special events even though she is now a widow. Wharton follows up with this quotation: "Yes; being the Slade's widow was a dullish business after that" (Wharton 542). This sentence reinforces the previous claim that Mrs. Slade is not self-aware, because she is again thinking about all the wrong things. In the story, "To Build a Fire," by Jack London, we see the protagonist acting similarly to Mrs. Slade when he fools himself into thinking he will make it to his

destination on time. He shows arrogance

because he is thinking about proving people wrong, rather than focusing

on being safe. Jack London says,

"He was pleased at the speed he had made. If he kept it up, he would certainly be with the boys by six" (London 644). This quotation points to the protagonist not understanding what it means to be self-aware, as all he cares about is what people will think if he makes it through when he was advised not to. This journey

for the protagonist is to stroke his

own ego. The red-haired man forgot to

build a fire but considered himself to be so

smart. It is unclear how one could forget to build

a fire in weather as severe as that. Because of his mistake, he feels his hands and feet begin to go numb (London 644).

In Jack London's story, "To Build a Fire," we again see the common theme of arrogance when we read this quotation: "That man from Sulphur Creek had spoken the truth when telling how cold it sometimes got in the country. And he had laughed at him at the time! That showed one must not be too sure of things. There

Arrogance is a trait that we see often in the world, whether it is a family member whose attitude bothers us, or a stranger who we notice in passing.

was no mistake about it, it was cold" (645). The red-haired man is showing here that he needs to be right in all situations, even when he is in grave danger. The quotation in London's story reminds me of this one written by Edith Wharton: "Alida Slade's awfully brilliant; but not as brilliant as she thinks" (Wharton 543). Mrs. Slade's close friend mentions that Slade thinks she is brilliant. If someone considers themselves to be brilliant, one could imagine that person to feel have a conceited attitude. They may be competitive and feel the need to be correct about everything. Mrs. Slade seems to have no concern whether she is liked or not. It is not surprising that Mrs. Ansley thinks this of her lifelong friend, because they have always just pretended to like each other. Both of the women seem as if they would be exhausting to be around. When it comes to the topic of Mrs. Ansley's affair with Mrs. Slade's husband, we can put together that Mrs. Slade is the one who set up the encounter without actually realizing it. When Mrs. Slade feels the need to tell Mrs. Ansley that she knew Mrs. Ansley had written the letter, she does so with arrogance: "Yes. You think I'm bluffing, don't you? Well, you went to meet the man I was engaged to—and I can repeat every word of the letter that took you there" (Wharton 546). Mrs. Ansley panics after hearing this come out of her friend's mouth; she feels shocked. Mrs. Slade says this to show how much she knows. It is as if Mrs. Slade takes pride in keeping this secret for so many years. Wharton goes on to write, "The flame of her wrath had already sunk, and she wondered why she had ever thought there would be any satisfaction in inflicting so purposeless a wound on her friend. But she had to justify herself" (Wharton 547). Mrs. Slade feels as if she has outsmarted her friend and husband, when in fact, they have outsmarted her. She does not share the knowledge about their affair because she is hurt, she shares it because it makes her feel powerful. Mrs.

Mrs. Slade feels as if she has outsmarted her friend and husband, when in fact, they have outsmarted her. She does not share the knowledge about their affair because she is hurt, she shares it because it makes her feel powerful.



Slade can be compared to the red-haired man in the story, "To Build a Fire," because they both exhibit qualities of narcissism, and they both feel the need to hold onto the power stick by using what they think they know, to feel good about themselves. Both characters are dealing with different situations, as one is dealing with the possibility of death, and the other is faced with revealing a secret that has been kept for decades. The characters are overly confident and feel as if they are in the right.

In the story, "To Build a Fire," by Jack London, we see the protagonist repeatedly think about the old-timer that he mocked earlier in his head. The red-haired man considered himself to be better than the old-timer, because he was younger and stronger. He shows that in this quotation: "Those old-timers were rather womanish, some of them, he thought. All a man had to do was to keep his head, and he was all right. Any man who was a man could travel alone. But it was surprising, the rapidity with which his cheeks and nose were freezing. And he had not thought his fingers could go lifeless in so short a time" (London 646). Here, the protagonist is on his way to freezing to death, and he still thinks of himself as intelligent and superior to the older men who came before him. It is fascinating when young people think themselves to be smarter than humans with more experience. It is something many of us go through unfortunately. It would be wonderful to skip the parts of our lives where we act foolishly, but then we would not learn as much. London goes on to say: "The old-timer on Sulphur Creek was right, he thought in the moment of controlled despair that ensued: after fifty feet below, a man should travel with a partner" (London 648). The way in which these events are written and described, can cause feelings of sympathy and devastation for the man and the dog. Again, this quotation shows the man's arrogance because he has ignored the intelligent advice that

was gifted to him. The dog proves to be smarter than the protagonist in the end because he knew what should have been done all along. If the man had made a fire and waited out the weather, he would have survived. The protagonist in this story also thinks he is better than his dog. London says, "He would kill the dog and bury his hands in the warm body until the numbness went out of them. Then he could build another fire. He spoke to the dog, calling it to him; but in his voice was a strange note of fear that frightened the animal, who had never known the man to speak in such way before" (London 649). The red-haired man treats the dog terribly throughout the story, and neither has an attachment to the other. The man has always felt as if he is above the dog because the dog is a dog. The man regrets this when he cannot get the dog to come to him so that he can kill him to keep warm. If he had shown him any type of affection, the dog would have trusted him enough to come closer to him. We can see an instance similar in Wharton's, "Roman Fever," when Mrs. Slade thinks herself to be better than her lifelong "friend," Mrs. Ansley. Mrs. Slade says, "Well, girls are ferocious sometimes, you know. Girls in love especially. And I remember laughing to myself all that evening at the idea that you were waiting around there in the dark, dodging out of sight, listening for every sound, trying to get in" (Wharton 548). Slade has no idea that she is about to be put in her place as she mocks her friend for showing up to be with her husband. Mrs. Ansley is a terrible friend and person, but for Mrs. Slade to keep a secret like that for decades simply to feel powerful, is a level of



insanity that one may not be able to fully grasp. It shows just how deranged Mrs. Slade is and reinforces the idea that she likely did not love her husband as much as she pretended to.

At the beginning of both pieces, the main characters make us feel as if they are powerful, and possibly invincible. The red-haired man is so sure of himself throughout the story, that it is hard to accept when he finally dies. It feels as if he is going to pull through, up until the very end. This is an instance where arrogance cost the character his life. The red-haired man behaves exactly like Mrs. Slade when it comes to the theme of arrogance and superiority. Mrs. Slade is also very sure of herself throughout the story, "Roman Fever," but Edith Wharton leaves us with a cliffhanger when Mrs. Ansley ends the story with one short sentence that shatters the delusions of Mrs. Slade (549). In both stories we see characters lacking self-awareness, needing to be right in every situation, and believing that they are superior to those around them. The red-haired man has nothing but his dog and some bacon biscuits, while Mrs. Slade has everything she could ever want, but they still behave the same. At the end of both pieces, the audience is made to realize that the characters were not strong at all, and that we were made to briefly believe a lie. The behavior of the red-haired man and Mrs. Slade caused the ones nearest to discard them. In the end, the dog and Mrs. Ansley walk away, quite literally, from the characters who treated them so poorly.

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Contemporary Immigration Reform

By Mangala Gowri Hangodimath

Immigration has been a hot topic in America for centuries. American xenophobia dates back to as far as the Alien and Sedition Acts in 1798. The anti-immigrant policy has resulted in the suffering of asylum seekers as well as those who are forced to enter the U.S. illegally. Immigrants are also the backbone of this country and the working class, making them invaluable to the economy. The U.S. should liberalize its immigration policy by eradicating Immigrant Detention Centers, legalizing illegal immigrants currently in the U.S., and reducing wait times for visas.

Immigration detention centers are one of the biggest human rights violations within America's immigration system. Particularly following President Trump's restrictive immigration policies, much attention was drawn toward said detention centers. This is seen in Human Rights Watch's testimony from refugee children: " 'On the third day they took me out of my cage and said I would be separated from my sister, but they didn't tell me where I was going. I don't understand why they separated us. They didn't give me a chance to say goodbye,' " (Bryant). This kind of treatment blatantly opposes America's values of liberty and freedom. While America was founded as a place for marginalized people to live peacefully, this is no longer the case. Moreover, Americans have a long history of breaking up families of minority groups-specifically Native American boarding schools. By ripping away children from their families, America displays a similar

disregard for human life, not to mention the devastating effects on children's mental and physical well-being. Research shows that "... detained immigrant children present with a high prevalence of depression/anxiety (10%) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD, 20%) Research findings also indicate that children held in immigration detention settings may experience social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties ..." (McLeane). While no human should be subject to such conditions, it is exacerbated by the fact that many of the children in these detention

centers are already coming from a traumatic or unsafe environment. Building off this

idea it would seem that regardless of whether the U.S. allows these children into the U.S. or sends

them back, they will be worse off than they started. If they return to their home country, they are further traumatized and demoralized by their time in detention centers. On the other hand, if they are granted asylum they will still grow up with feelings of animosity and disgust towards both America

and Americans. Also, these centers put a strain on the U.S.'s international

relations as a whole. As stated by the

International Detention Coalition, "The Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (art. 31) prohibits governments from penalizing refugees and asylum seekers for their illegal entry into a country. ... Many persons fleeing persecution have no choice other than to cross borders without authorization in order to flee human rights abuses and save their lives" (IDC). Rather than pouring money into the military, America would be better off defending itself by maintaining alliances. The United States allows the

This kind of treatment blatantly opposes America's values of liberty and freedom. While America was founded as a place for marginalized people to live peacefully, this is no longer the case.

rich and powerful to do as they please and this is the result of that. The Geneva Convention unites over one hundred countries and is unlikely they will keep overlooking America's abuse of power.

Undocumented immigrants in the United States need to be protected from exploitation and abuse. A study from *Frontiers in Psychology* describes the challenges faced by undocumented college students.

TABLE 3 | Deductive and inductive codes, definitions and percentages (N = 486).

Code	Definition	n (%)
Financial	Concerns about finances, including funding tuition and daily living expenses for themselves and family	277 (57)
Deportation/Detainment	Concerns/fear about self or loved ones being deported/detained	31 (6)
Peer Support/Lack of	Mention of the importance of friends and lack of friendships/social support from peers	14 (3)
Institutional Agent Support/Lack of	Mention of the importance of professors or staff on campus and lack of social support from them	11 (2)
Anxiety	Feelings of anxiety and worry	69 (14)
Social Belonging/Exclusion	Mentions the importance of belongingness and their concern the role UndocuStatus has in social exclusion or marginalization	43 (9)
Hopelessness	Refers to feeling hopeless/discouraged	8 (2)
Uncertainty	Concerns about future; lack of control; inability to plan	13 (3)

Percentages are based on how many times a code was present. Participants may have mentioned multiple things within their answer and each section was coded separately and according to the appropriate code.

Source: Carola Suárez-Orozco, and Guadalupe López Hernández. "‘Waking Up Every Day With the Worry’: A Mixed-Methods Study of Anxiety in Undocumented Latinx College Students." *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 11 (2020): n. pag. Web.

As found by this study, these students have a significantly more difficult time in school because of their immigration status. For a 17 or 18-year-old to be faced with this amount of stress daily is cruel and harmful. This fear of deportation can most definitely lead to anxiety disorders or other mental health issues. Safety and belonging are some of the most basic human needs and by denying these things the U.S. government is violating the students' human rights. Legalizing undocumented individuals is simply a matter of basic empathy and understanding. Another example would be:

One night while working, he fell through a glass door and injured his hand, and had to go to the emergency room at the local hospital. His employer made him

understand in very clear language that he'd better not mention his employment situation in the hospital, which Ahmad didn't. When he came back to work the next day, he found out that his job had been given to someone else, and his room was taken by the new employee. (LeVoy)

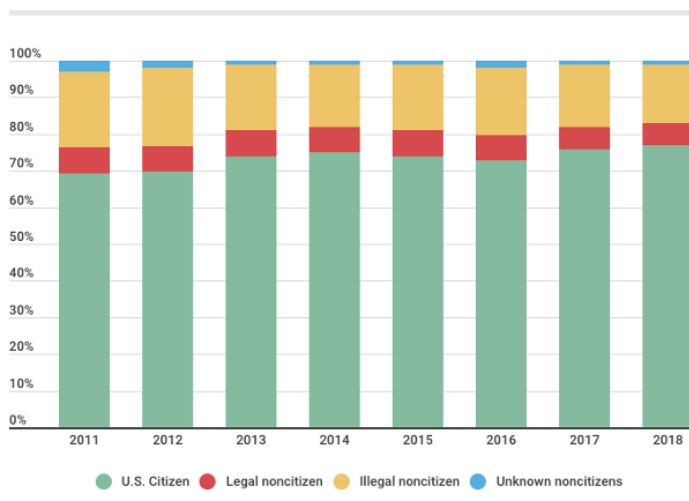
For someone who may be the breadwinner of their entire family losing their job in this manner is devastating. This situation may even result in an individual resorting to dangerous or illegal activities, such as selling drugs, to earn money. This is harmful to the U.S. government because it may encourage criminal activity. This is also harmful to the individual because they may be working in dangerous jobs such as factories where they are unprotected by labor laws. Similarly, " 'Too often, employers threaten deportation or otherwise retaliate against immigrant workers who raise the alarm about illegal workplace conditions, which undermines working conditions and wages for all U.S. workers' " (Montoya-Galvez). Overlooking illegal immigrants, this situation is an excellent opportunity for America to improve its labor market. Even many U.S. citizens face unfair and dangerous working conditions because of their identity or economic status. Legalizing illegal immigrants would provide a voice to not only these individuals but also all underserved populations in the United States.

Wait times for U.S. visas and green cards need to be reduced to reunite families and encourage economic growth. Unreasonable wait times are documented by David Bier: "More than 100,000 legal immigrants — 28 percent of the family-sponsored and employment-based lines with quotas — waited a decade or more to apply for a green card in 2018, up from 3 percent in 1991". This means that those who are waiting to be reunited with their families and those who are contributing to the economy are the most affected by long wait times. No family should be forced to stay apart for so long. In addition, keeping out people who are contributing majorly to the American economy is self-sabotaging. Many who are in employment-based lines are occupying high-skill jobs that are unfilled by American citizens or are investors and entrepreneurs creating new jobs. Reducing wait times would allow the American economy to reap the benefits of high-skill workers as well as valuing family bonds. Moreover, "Now Janvi has lived in America for 12 years, graduated from a U.S. high school and college, and worked several years as a high-skill worker. Even her

parents have now received their green cards, but the law still doesn't recognize her as a permanent resident," (Bier). This story documents the flaws in American immigration policy. If a child's parents do not receive a green card by the time they turn eighteen, they have to start from scratch in obtaining a visa and green card. This means that despite living most of their lives in the U.S. they may be deported back to their country of birth. This is unfair and immoral. The country limits exacerbate these trends by concentrating the wait times among certain nationalities. Moreover, "...they perversely distort the labor market by making people with more experience and skills wait longer than other immigrants" (Bier). This is another self-sabotaging policy. Immigrants who have greater educational qualifications and income have a harder time entering the country which contributes to the myth that all immigrants are uneducated free-loaders.

Incorporating inclusive immigration policies has countless benefits; however, many present counterarguments, some of which are valid and others misguided. A common criticism of immigrants, particularly from Central and South American countries, is that they bring drugs into the U.S. This argument is flawed considering statistical evidence.

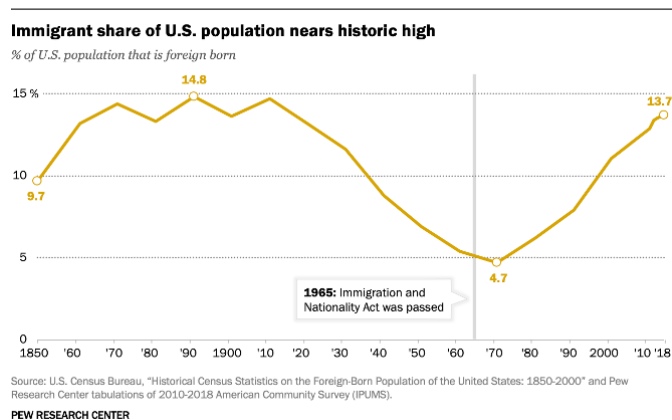
Figure 1: Drug Trafficking Convictions By Immigration Status, 2011-2018



This fear of deportation can most definitely lead to anxiety disorders or other mental health issues. Safety and belonging are some of the most basic human needs and by denying these things the U.S. government is violating the students' human rights.

Source: Bier, David. "77% Of Drug Traffickers Are U.S. Citizens, Not Illegal Immigrants." Cato.org, 3 July 2019, <https://www.cato.org/blog/77-drug-traffickers-are-us-citizens-not-illegal-immigrants>.

First off, as demonstrated by the chart immigrants are not the primary smugglers of drugs. However, even if immigrants were bringing drugs simply limiting immigration would not actually solve the drug crisis. The consumers of drugs are mainly American citizens, thus restricting immigration will not solve the problem as long as there is a demand for drugs. To really solve this issue there should be more education, particularly for children, about the effects of drugs on an individual's mental and physical health. There should also be more resources for addiction treatment and health care. Another common argument is that immigrants take jobs from Americans. This is not quite true because "...the perception that immigrants take jobs away from American workers is 'the most persistent fallacy about immigration in popular thought ...is based on the mistaken assumption that there is only a fixed number of jobs in the economy...' Americans can see the jobs immigrants fill but not the jobs they create through productivity, capital formation, and demand for goods and services" (ACLU). Nothing in the economy is fixed. The prices of goods and services are constantly changing because of inflation. Similarly, wages are also increasing along with inflation. In addition, when immigrants come to the U.S., they create demand for clothing, food, and entertainment which creates new jobs in the American market. Some may say if the U.S. does not heavily restrict immigration everyone in the world will come to the U.S.



As shown by the graph, the immigrant population was the largest in 1890. Opening the borders will not cause everyone to immigrate to the U.S. In reality, immigration is restricted by money and resources. The poorest of the poor will not come pouring into the U.S.

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To summarize, America's immigration policies are currently too restrictive and immoral. Detention centers are a human rights violation and incredibly degrading to refugees. Undocumented immigrants currently in America are taken advantage of because they are not protected by American law. Unreasonable visa and green card wait times cause America to lose valuable immigrant workers and families to be forced apart. Immigration policy can be reformed by removing detention centers, protecting undocumented immigrants, and lessening wait times to obtain a visa or green card.



The Apple Fell Far From The Tree

By Samantha Williams



I am the apple girl. When someone walks into a farmers market and asks where they could find some apples, they'll point to me in the distance and say the apple girl is over there. It's unnecessary to know my name; I merely set up shop to sell apples for a few hours in a city that's not mine. However, I have been the apple girl every week for nearly six years—rain or shine. The workload is physically demanding, but I'd argue the social and emotional demand is much higher. I interact with hundreds of faces at any given market, and I've had various conversations depending on what they want to talk to the apple girl about. Sometimes I'll listen to a well-educated rant on the exploitation of small farmers in favor of corporate-driven agriculture; I constantly listen to the frustrations about the raised cost-of-living expenses and how it's affecting their lives. This is my weekly experience, and I am constantly expanding on my beliefs and observations because of the people at my markets. It is a fascinating and humbling experience because usually, I can't offer solutions or answers, only empathy and apples.

My Concord Tuesday market is a great leveler of the human experience. Unlike my weekend markets in parking lots and main streets, this one is in a downtown park aptly named Todos Santos. The park is a wide grassy field with a playground and an outdoor stage, and we vendors set up along the perimeters. It is constantly busy with market shoppers and regular park traffic, such as dog walkers and kids playing. This is also my market with the most visible homeless population. This population doesn't camp in the park

but are across the street or around the corner, so they always pass through. The homeless aren't the primary buyers at the market in Concord, but some will buy a single apple with a handful of change but only if they refuse to take it for free. People experiencing homelessness are usually peaceful and kind, lugging their worldly possessions on their backs and lying in the grass for a nap. Only the actively high ones are shouting or making a scene. So every Tuesday, we gather at All Saints Park: some of us to sell, some to play, and some to survive.

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Most of my customers in Concord are housed, but this city mostly pays with EBT. This is another example of a great leveling in Concord because the people with EBT are vast, diverse, and never who I'd assume. There is a negative stereotype surrounding government-funded assistance programs and who uses them. In reality, most of my customers with EBT are senior citizens who can barely walk without assistance, and this weekly trip to the market is their only fresh air and exercise. They load their little shopping carts with their apples, and they have the EBT program able to help them afford this experience. It is really humbling to watch those who are so wrinkly and frail be able to exercise their independence at the end of their lives. I also receive EBT from mothers trying their best to get something fresh into their child's diet, or a well-dressed office worker on her lunch break will pull out her stack of EBT dollars to pay for her bag of apples. EBT exists to offer support to all walks of life, and it has been an educational experience to witness this firsthand.

I have so many instances of learning from my customers and the unhoused people I've gotten to know. Still, I've learned most from the farmers working alongside me. In honesty, I am not a generational farmer, and this is not my family's farm. I responded to a Craigslist ad while looking for work, but this was a privilege. In reality, most farmers are born into this kind of work, and this work starts at a very young age. Farm labor is backbreaking, and it is a job that will take every daylight hour of every day of the year. From pruning and spraying to harvesting and packaging, there is always work to be done; this is all before the weekend when the farmers finally drive out to the market and try to turn a profit. I have the luxury of having days off and using them to pursue my education instead of standing out in the fields to harvest and prepare for the weekend loads. I am eternally grateful for the physical limits this job pushes me to because it reminds me that the farmers that grow our crops always work much harder than we ever will.

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After all my time in Concord, I am different from when I started at markets. I am still the apple girl, but because of the people I met and what I've learned from all these years, I have matured a lot, and I think I'm a much riper apple girl these days. I can't work at these markets forever, so I'm trying to enjoy it for what it is and continue to learn and evolve as a human. I appreciate every single moment that I work this job, and it is because of the exposure I receive from new people and new perspectives. Our farmers work tirelessly to nurture these crops and rely on communities to show up to their markets and buy. These communities spend the extra effort to skip the grocery store to come out and support us with their business, and many EBT programs can help make that possible. It's a symbiotic relationship that attracts all walks of life. The seasons will continue to change, and new crops will come into harvest, and I will eventually move onto UC Berkeley to pursue a prestigious and lucrative engineering career in a comfortable setting. I hope to never lose sight of these humble perspectives I've gained as the apple girl.



Fear and Criminalization in US Immigration



By Thomas Wheelhouse

Immigration has been the backbone that has provided America with its population and citizens since its inception as a country. I am one of the millions of immigrants to the US that were originally born a citizen or subject of another country. I started my journey here in 2000 and I applied to stay permanently in 2002. At that time, it was quite a stressful and expensive process and one in which you have almost no control of. Trying to even get an appointment meant lining up outside an Immigration and Naturalization Services building, as they were known then, at 3am just to hope you were close enough to the front to be seen that day when they opened at 7am. I still remember the first interview with an immigration officer, as it is a strange, probably unique to the experience feeling. You must narrate your life to a stranger in the hope that they feel disposed enough towards you to grant your petition to stay in the country with the woman you have already married. I was temporarily granted permission to work in 2002 and despite having no guarantees of my future, I was able to secure a position with the local government that I still have to this day. Despite the process, I was fairly certain that I qualified to stay so it was a shock to receive a 'voluntary' deportation order. I went from one second being sure what I held in my hand was my right to stay to instead reading '...you must leave within 10 days of this notice or you will be at risk for forced removal from the United States of America.' Scared is not the word to describe the sort of emotions you feel when you read those words. Your marriage, your friends, your whole life is being

snatched away by a letter size piece of paper. You are gripped in shock, your heart feels in a vice, and you feel the blood draining from your face. Looking back, it was almost comical that we got a knock at the door at that precise moment, but as I swung towards the door, I was absolutely terrified in that moment that they were here to pick me up and be forcibly removed. I can't explain what the next couple of days were like but when I finally got to speak to someone at the INS it turned out that they had not received an envelope I had sent to them. As I had carried my files with me, I was able to produce at that moment a copy and was able to resolve the issue and allow my petition to proceed.

Scared is not the word to describe the sort of emotions you feel when you read those words. Your marriage, your friends, your whole life is being snatched away by a letter size piece of paper. You are gripped in shock, your heart feels in a vice, and you feel the blood draining from your face.

I am far from the first immigrant to go through the immigration process to legally stay in the United States of America. According to the article Frequently Requested Statistics on Immigrants and Immigration in the United States nearly 45.3 million immigrants lived in the United States in 2021, an estimated 13.6 percent of the total population. Historically, this percentage had

wavered between 13 per 15 percent until the US adopted very restrictive laws in the 1920s, which combined with other factors led to this declining to below 5% of the population in 1970. Since then, due to changes in immigration law that dropped the quota system that favored European nations, the number has steadily increased above 10% by 2000, and it has settled back at the 13-15 percent range that the US originally started with. Despite this constant influx of foreign-born individuals, immigration has continued to remain a very contentious issue. Anytime the US has experienced a particular increase from one

area, there has usually followed a period of civil unsettlement, marked by harassment, laws preventing access to services and general abuse towards that particular area. You can look back at the Chinese exclusion act passed in 1882, which initially prevented Chinese laborers from immigrating for 10 years although extended until 1943, the violent reactions to the Irish immigration waves in the 1850s and the south Asia arrivals in the 1970s. More recently it has been the increased immigration from Latin America that has set off the new waves of abuse and harassment.

Accompanying each wave of immigrants, there have been politicians seeking to capitalize on the 'foreign' sentiment, such as former President Fillmore who had sought to blame "Foreign Catholics" for his loss in New York. This continues to this day with various politicians from the establishment demonizing immigrants from Latin American countries. It would seem likely that there would be less harassment and violence if politicians could adopt a more neutral tone towards future prospective constituents.

While there has been a constant both in the number of immigrants arriving and the attitudes of some to their arrival, the one thing that has increased is the criminalization of the immigration process and the resulting increase in fear that has now impacted immigrant communities. Immigrants to the US, particularly if English is not a native language, face an increasingly hostile response just to their presence. Yet while the judicial system has been moving to a more lenient, tolerant system with reduced sentences, as described in the article Criminal Justice in an Era of Mass Deportation: Reforms From California. The author goes on to say that "An unprecedented focus on immigration enforcement targeted at 'felons, not families' has resulted in a separate system of punitive treatment reserved for

noncitizens, which includes crimes of migration, longer periods of pretrial detention, harsher criminal sentences, and the almost certain collateral consequence of lifetime banishment from the United States." As a result of this we are treating people as second-class citizens. We are incarcerating people for the crime of wanting to be here and have a better life. We have decided that the rules that apply to all of us do not apply to those who want to be one of us.

This separate system that Ingrid Eagly describes is at its base, inherently un-American. If all men are equal as our founding fathers believed, then this treatment of people who long to be Americans and have strived their hardest and given their all to be here is an injustice that should be corrected immediately. President

George W Bush spoke to a group of new citizens at Ellis Island on July 10, 2001, key amongst his remarks that day is "America at its best is a welcoming society.... people who seek to make America their home should be met...greeted not with suspicion and resentment but with openness and courtesy" It is quite clear that his

words have been lost over the last 20 years, a period which coincides with my own time in this country. We have gone from welcoming immigrants to criticizing them and in the words of former president Trump "They're sending people that have lots of problems, and they're bringing those problems with us. They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists." An inaccurate portrayal that has been repeated often with no justification.

According to the article Deportability and The Carceral State we incarcerate immigrants at a higher rate than ever before from just under 4% of the federal inmate population in 1980 to the point that immigration related offences made up fully one third of all federal prosecutions in district court in 2011. It is not just the ones we put in jail that suffer, it is their families, their children who suffer disproportionately. While there

Accompanying each wave of immigrants, there have been politicians seeking to capitalize on the 'foreign' sentiment, such as former President Fillmore who had sought to blame "Foreign Catholics" for his loss in New York.



have been previous attempts to at least reduce the impact to children who have no say on how or when they arrived here, the revocation of DACA and DAPA under the administration of Donald Trump has thrown all the progress made out and now again we are back to using fear to justify awful treatment of immigrants. As noted in 'Felons, Not Families': U.S. Immigration Policies and the Construction of an American Underclass, this has had the effect of increasingly the marginalization of these members of our society. They are subject to criminal penalties just for existing here in the US and now must live fearfully of every interaction with an official figure.

Research continues to show that the majority of immigrants are hardworking, law abiding, tax paying community members. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics most recent report 'Labor Force Characteristics of Foreign-born Workers' the labor force participation is higher for foreign born adults than it is for native born, particularly so for men. Yet the constant fear that hangs over immigrants is not an ideal situation or way to live. There are other ways of dealing with immigration that does not involve detention and criminal charges. Although according to the UN booklet International Migration Policies, 99% of countries globally use a combination of fines, detention, and deportation. Yet according to the same report, the majority of countries have official policies to maintain or increase their current immigration ratios. There seems to be a serious disconnect between this objective and criminalizing immigration.

One of the biggest arguments used against immigration is that immigrants are a burden on the welfare state and society in general. It is an oft repeated argument used to try to place limits on migration, especially here in the US, yet repeated studies show that this is simply not the case. The excellent paper The Fiscal Impact of Immigration says it most directly as research "reveal a very small net fiscal impact clustered around zero". It is in fact age that correlates most directly as to whether an immigrant might or might not be a burden according to the report The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration from the National Academy of Science.

I believe a solution to the increasing fear is to set a less restrictive band around people that want to be

here and reduce the penalties that result in incarceration. A lot of the restrictions, which include the inability to work and warnings not to access public services are a serious hinderance to leading a productive life. Immigrants primarily come here to improve their lives, whether that is economically, politically, or socially. Immigrants improve the communities to which they join for many reasons, from increased cultural diversity, being more likely to start a new business and less likely to commit crime. It's when we cause these communities to hide away that we lose the benefits we could be gaining from having inclusive communities.

Immigration has always been a fact of life for America. Millions of its residents are either immigrants or directly descended from them. The current conditions that they must endure, just to try to catch a piece of the American dream, or more honestly, a peaceful life where they can bring up their children in relative safety and security. I love America, I chose to be here and more importantly, I chose to become an American citizen. This is a very common feeling amongst immigrants. Immigrants are grateful to be here, to have a chance at a better life and the belief in that all men are created equal, and that peace and prosperity should be for all. It's time we as American started acting like it and actually follow through on the words we use of equal opportunity.

Yet the constant fear that hangs over immigrants is not an ideal situation or way to live. There are other ways of dealing with immigration that does not involve detention and criminal charges.



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