Bay Area Environmental Injustice Case-Study: Community Mobilization and State Agency Negligence
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This paper explores the relationship between both race and income-level in community mobilization efforts and the enforcement of environmental regulatory policies. I hypothesize that mobilization efforts carried out by lower-income communities of color will result in a lower rate of enforcement than those carried out by their white affluent counterparts. Prior research has taken a qualitative approach to track numerous community mobilization efforts and focused almost exclusively on environmental injustice communities. My research defines and quantifies four separate forms of mobilization and measure if their presence, both before and after exposure, impacts the rate of enforcement of regulatory policies. I focus on the Bay Area of California and the enforcement of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the Clean Air Act (CAA). I use a multivariate analysis to empirically test the relationship between my independent variables and my dependent variables so as to determine if their relationship is statistically significant. I theorize that deliberate indifference on the part of environmental agencies to address the concerns of lower-income communities of color will result in an unequal rate of enforcement. Ultimately, institutional racism embedded within these institutions, as well as a community’s inability to combat negligence due to lack of monetary resources explains this outcome.

Six Feet Under: A Comparison of Death Traditions From 1861 to the Present
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Death rituals play a powerful role in every culture in the world. The people of the Victorian era, especially after the death of Prince Albert in 1861, were part of an especially ritualistic culture, with strong emphasis placed on the grief process. This research delves into the details of Victorian funerary rituals and determines how modern-day funeral choices and traditions are still affected by them. This included an analysis on why they undertook such rituals, and how the culture of the time still presents itself in small ways today. The most noticeable similarity stems from the class culture of the Victorian era, where funerals were one of the many ways to show off wealth and fame through the elaborate, expensive, rituals popularized by Queen Victoria after the death of Albert. This literature review presents a historical comparison from 1861 to the present, using thanatological, social, and cultural lenses. Today, the average cost of a funeral continues to be exceptionally high, a remnant of the Victorian culture. Analyzing the similarities between then and now, while examining the reasons our current culture still uses outdated practices will help us make appropriate changes to funeral rituals to fit the times.

The Criminalization of Central American and Mexican Asylum Seekers Through Media Narratives
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Immigrant stereotyping has a long history in the U.S. that parallels patterns of mass immigration and native-born fear. Scholars have demonstrated that the production and reproduction of Hispanic criminal identities, constructed in news coverage of immigration law enforcement instances, poses challenges to their assimilation into US society and their opportunity for upward social mobility. The expansive scope of federal government power post-9/11 and the consequent convergence of immigration and criminal law created an apparatus of control that targets Central American and Mexican immigrants. Scholars have dedicated time to examining the effects of media narratives on immigrants in the US; however, efforts have not been made to discern or understand the effect of media narratives on immigrants at the border. To
address this omission, this study empirically analyzes the impact of media narratives on the rate of petition denials for various asylum seekers. I hypothesize that refugees from Central America and Mexico will have higher rates of U.S. asylum petition denials as a result of negative presentation in U.S. media narratives, which frame the group as “undeserving” of refuge. To test this claim, I ran a multivariate analysis to quantitatively measure the effects of media narratives on petition denial rates for three regional nationality groups. I expect to find that negative media narratives, which portray immigrant criminality, have a significant negative impact on the outcome of asylum petitions, resulting in higher rates of petition denial for Central American immigrants who are criminalized in media narratives.

Asian in a Black and White World: Chinese and Vietnamese Interpretations of Cultural Appropriation

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In recent years, student activists have made headlines by accusing peers, institutions and celebrities of engaging in cultural appropriation - the selective taking of a culture other than one’s own. But under what conditions does an action become interpreted as cultural appropriation, and does it always carry a negative connotation? Scholars have debated the social significance of appropriation, with some arguing it is exploitative and others arguing it signals a minority group’s acceptance into a larger society. While much research has examined how white individuals define and determine cultural appropriation, little research has examined the reactions of the members whose culture has been potentially appropriated. This is especially true for Asian Americans whose understanding of cultural appropriation is almost never examined by researchers. This study corrects for this omission by examining Chinese and Vietnamese student interpretations and reactions to cultural appropriation using a factorial vignette study. While prior research has suggested the race of the appropriator and the culture appropriated affect interpretations, preliminary results reveal that the medium appropriated and the context of the members whose culture has been potentially appropriated. As what constitutes cultural appropriation - the selective taking of a culture other than one’s own. But under what conditions does an action become interpreted as cultural appropriation, and does it always carry a negative connotation? Scholars have debated the social significance of appropriation, with some arguing it is exploitative and others arguing it signals a minority group’s acceptance into a larger society. While much research has examined how white individuals define and determine cultural appropriation, little research has examined the reactions of the members whose culture has been potentially appropriated. This is especially true for Asian Americans whose understanding of cultural appropriation is almost never examined by researchers. This study corrects for this omission by examining Chinese and Vietnamese student interpretations and reactions to cultural appropriation using a factorial vignette study. While prior research has suggested the race of the appropriator and the culture appropriated affect interpretations, preliminary results reveal that the medium appropriated and the context of the members whose culture has been potentially appropriated. As what constitutes cultural appropriation becomes increasingly contested among students in colleges across America, my study will shed light on how members of underrepresented ethno-racial groups decide whether a potential act of cultural appropriation is harmful or helpful.

Tattoos in East Asia: Conforming to Individualism

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Although Japan, South Korea, and China share a similar history of tattoo criminality spanning thousands of years, in modern times they all hold different legal policies concerning the practice of tattooing. South Korea has the strictest laws, requiring a medical doctorate to legally tattoo, while Japan has only recently reaffirmed the legality of the practice outside of health professionals. China, on the other hand, has few restrictions on body art. This paper explores this interesting difference via observational fieldwork in the major cities of Tokyo, Seoul, Shanghai and Beijing as well as interviews with local people within and outside the tattoo scene. In doing so, this paper hopes to explain the connection between a new tattoo culture supported by a younger generation and the level of democracy and development of each country. Although a strong social stigma towards the art remains salient in all three nations due to the historical connection to criminality, a new, younger generation with greater access to the internet and the outside world has been able to adopt a tattoo culture unrelated to previous trends. Tattoos in East Asia are becoming less about rebellious self-expression, which could be threatening to authoritarian governmental systems like China, but are instead symbols of a modern society rising alongside a younger middle class, one unburdened by previous decades of poverty or struggle. The rising prevalence of a tattooed population may be less an indicator of a strong counter-culture then, but instead, a signal of a globalized, developed society.

Mothering During Jim Crow: Using the Reproductive Justice Framework to Understand Black Motherhood During Legalized Racism

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Jim Crow era legalized racism denied Black women the freedom to exercise control over their childbearing and childrearing; specifically, by restricting their access to necessary medical care and sufficient resources to care for their families, and by constraining their autonomy and agency. As a consequence, Black women experienced uniquely poor reproductive health and family outcomes compared to all other racial and ethnic groups (Eichelberger et al. 2016); these racial disparities persist today. This study applies a reproductive justice framework to understanding Black women’s lived experiences of systematic raced and gendered oppression, as well as their forms of resistance when caring for themselves and their children. Reproductive justice is the personal right to
control one’s body, have children under the conditions that we choose, and parent those children in stable communities (Sister Song 1997). Thus, we ask how did gendered racism impact Black women’s experiences of reproductive justice and what strategies of resistance did they devise in response? We used Dedoose, a cloud-based mixed methods software, to conduct a content analysis of oral histories from two oral history repositories. These primary sources were excerpted and coded for common themes including racism’s influence on childbearing and childrearing, socioeconomic experiences, access to medical care, and protective factors. We have three preliminary findings that contribute to existing literature: 1) when women required more medical care than midwives could provide, they experienced numerous barriers to accessing such care, 2) Black women experienced multiple levels of social control that undermined their childrearing, and 3) women devised strategies of resistance to care for their bodies and their children, including collective childrearing, resource sharing, and instilling a sense of self-worth in their children.

**Black Disability: Caught in the Crosshairs of Oppression**

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Disability research in the Black community is limited nationally and absent for Seattle area residents. This study is an effort to center the narratives of Black Seattle area residents who live with a disability and to identify commonalities among these individuals. This study used qualitative interviews (n=5) as the methodology to identify three key themes across the study participants’ lives. The themes identified are: (1) Fear and Shame, (2) Resilience, and (3) Consequences. Based on disability critical race theory, my analysis aimed to understand how participants navigate dominant society with intersecting identities. I found that they often experience adverse outcomes which continue to remain invisible and unacknowledged throughout political, social, and judicial realms of society. This study illuminates the need for state institutions and nonprofits that serve clients with disabilities to expand their reach to include more people of color. Additional research on outcomes experienced by African Americans with disability is needed to combat the institutional invisibility that this population faces.