

Podcast Reflection Essay

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SOCL 333: Race and Racism in United States

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Throughout this podcast, my group worked really well together. We gathered information very cohesively and were able to produce a well-rounded podcast. However, there are bound to be challenges through working in a group project. I would say our biggest challenge was focusing on completing our work. We worked extremely well together, with laughs and jokes along the way, so that it was truly hard to focus on what we needed to complete. Problems of someone not doing their part, not getting along with someone in the group, or communication were never problems that consisted in our group. In fact, everyone responded rather quickly to texts to meet up. I have been extremely grateful that having a hard time focusing because we got off task rather easily has been our biggest challenge. Getting along well with every group member is something to be extremely grateful for, as it does not happen a lot. While doing this project, I have other friends in different groups that were worried about getting their work done because of issues of communication within their group.

To address this issue, when meeting up and doing our work, we would talk for a good 15-20 minutes before needing to get started on what we needed to do just to catch up on life and how everyone's week has gone. This helped us, as we were able to laugh, talk and just hang out before doing what we needed to do to get our work done. Although it wasn't a significant challenge, we worked hard to overcome it. We would also take 5-minute breaks to give ourselves a brain break after 30 minutes of working. This ended up working really well for us.

This experience has taught me that your challenges don't always have to be negative when working on a civil issue. Sometimes it's good to have challenges like procrastination, as it is good to work well with others to the extent of procrastination. In addition, it has taught me to be grateful when you have good groups, as it doesn't always happen. While working in this

group, it has taught me that working well with others, collaboration, and communication are strong aspects to working well in a group on a civic issue.

Throughout my time at Longwood, I have taken a multitude of courses that have prepared me for this assignment. In doing so, I have learned an extensive amount of information regarding wrongful convictions and discriminatory practices like racial profiling. In fact, in my Introduction to Courts course, taught by Professor MacDonald, I wrote an entire paper on wrongful convictions itself. That paper gained my extensive knowledge on the subject, and I was able to relay some of the information that I learned in doing that paper to my group members. In addition, every Criminal Justice and Sociology course that have taken at Longwood University has had some sort of connection to racism brought by the Criminal Justice system and society as a whole.

Wrongful convictions and discriminatory practices like racial profiling are significant issues within the Criminal Justice System in the United States. In fact, like mentioned above, it is so significant that we are taught about different issues brought by the Criminal Justice system in every Criminal Justice and Sociology course that I have taken so far. One of the most significant courses that I have taken at Longwood that have helped me gain knowledge for this project has been my Issues and Policing course, taught by Professor MacDonald. This course went in depth into the problems within the Criminal Justice System in the United States, as well as issues pertaining to policing in general. For example, we had a whole unit based off of the history of policing, showing where the origins of discriminatory practices, wrongful convictions, and racial profiling originated from. In addition, we also read the book End of Policing by Alex S. Vitale, and this went in depth on several issues in policing and some solutions to fix the issues. It highlighted several different key issues, including racial profiling and implicit bias. Other

courses like this have helped me gain knowledge that has been a significant help through this podcast project.

This course, Race and Racism in the United States, was one of the most significant courses in helping with this project as well. Through this course we have learned an extensive amount of information pertaining to biases, practices, and problems that have pertained to issues in the Criminal Justice System. Through this we talked about how implicit bias takes a significant role when dealing with police officers arresting Black individuals at a disproportionate rate than white individuals. In addition, we learned about racial profiling and police brutality. In fact, we had an entire unit on the Criminal Justice System. In that unit, we discussed and learned about specific racial disparities in the Criminal Justice System. In addition, we read and had in class discussions about the book Punished by Victor M. Rios. In that book it talked about stigmatization and criminalization of Latino and African Americans boys. This book and this course have gained me knowledge that has been extremely useful throughout this entire assignment.

I would say one thing that I have learned about race, ethnicity, and racism while working on this project is how much implicit bias is such a significant factor in our society. Implicit bias is a root cause of some of the issues pertaining to the Criminal Justice System in the United States, as well as our society as a whole. I have always known about implicit bias and how it affects our policing and Criminal Justice System; however, never realized the in-depth extent it has on issues pertaining to policing and the Criminal Justice System.

In doing this project, it has made me realize how large of an impact implicit bias has on society as a whole, as well as policing and our Criminal Justice System. Doing this project and looking at the statistics of mass incarceration and exonerations of African Americans, it made me

realize how much it takes part in issues pertaining to policing and our Criminal Justice System. In addition, looking at the extent of research that has been done on our topic, it made me realize that it is such a significant issue, as there is an extensive load of research provided on the topic of wrongful convictions in our Criminal Justice system.

This will impact the way I understand future events in our society relating to race, ethnic or racism, as it has put into perspective how large of an issue wrongful convictions in our Criminal Justice system is. In addition, it has put me in the shoes of African Americans and made me realize how much these individuals are falsely accused and incarcerated for crimes they didn't commit and how it can ruin their lives. I never really realized how much of a role the Criminal Justice System and policing has had on these issues, but it is extremely significant. Now that I have much more knowledge pertaining to implicit bias, I will be able to see a perspective that I have never seen before, realizing that it is much more of a significant issue than I had originally thought.