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Reflection Journal 4

This unit of class was very insightful as we discussed Reproductive Justice, Intersectionality, Social Justice, Social Institutions, Health Institutions, Criminal Justice System, and the Educational System. The first guest speaker we had during this unit was Dr. Dudley-Shotwell she discussed Intersectionality and how that relates to Reproductive Justice.

Intersectionality explains how race, class, and gender that are interconnected and overlapping when addressing social phenomena in terms of discrimination or disadvantage. In terms of Reproductive Justice and Intersectionality race, class, and gender can affect women's access to health care, abortion services, and contraceptives. This notion also addresses the differences between the terms Reproductive Justice and Reproductive Rights. Reproductive rights is the legal right that all women have equal rights to health care and abortion services. Whereas, Reproductive Justice is the right to have a child, the right to not have a child, and the right to parent that child in a safe, healthy, and loving environment.

Another very insightful social phenomena we discussed during that unit was Health Institutions. Dr. Foster discussed health disparities, the lack of health insurance in minority communities, and racial bias. In the United States many individuals do not have insurance or the ability to afford health insurance, especially people of color. Due to the lack of insurance and healthcare coverage in communities of color there is an increased risk of a decline in an

individual's health. In communities of color there are high percentages of high blood pressure, obesity, cancer, heart disease, etc. The lack of insurance and healthcare coverage is so disheartening in these situations because people of color are often dying from diseases and illness that if caught early enough could be treated or cured, however due to individuals not having adequate healthcare coverage and access there is increased health disparities that often result in death. This is why there has been a progressive push to ensure as many American Citizens have insurance and access to healthcare, however there is still a lot of change and progress that needs to be made to the Healthcare System to fully ensure people of color are receiving the best medical treatment possible and being treated by a doctor that is fully cultural sensitive to the needs of people of color.

Lastly, during this unit we discussed the Criminal Justice System and Mass Incarceration. The rise of mass incarceration is often credited to rhetoric enforced by Richard Nixon, Ronald Regan, and Bill Clinton through the introduction of terms such as “Law and Order,” “War on Drugs,” “Superpredators,” and “Mandatory sentencing.” This is a continued social phenomena because the prison industrial complex further emphasizes racial ideologies because of the statistics of violent crimes with poor racial minorities. The prison industrial complex is a multi-billion dollar industry that continues to oppress and profit off imprisoned minorities. Due, to the issues of harsh sentences, generational oppression, discrimination, racism , etc. in the Criminal Justice System it is often referred to as the The New Jim Crow. The was enlightening because the title of The New Jim Crow fits the Criminal Justice System because the United States has the largest prison population in the world. Additionally, minorities that are imprisoned face lifelong consequences, decline in access to social services, discrimination due to convicted felon stigma, and lasting effects to their family life.