

Karla Lopez

Professor Pugh

Midterm: Social Action Report

1. Write a paragraph of the mission of the organization. Some questions to consider are: what are the organization's goals? What do they do? (1 paragraph) (8 points)
 - a. Make sure in this answer that you hyperlink to the agency/organization. ([Hidden Water](#) is a local organization that.....)

The main mission of the [No Kids in Prison](#) organization is to bring awareness to youth incarceration. Their goal to bring awareness to youth incarceration is for people to learn, act, speak up, and be a part of the movement to end and to close youth prisons. Closing youth prisons would allow kids to have more opportunities to grow and learn rather than be punished and be pushed away from their homes and community. This organization's mission starts with their history background, statistics, real life stories, and various pages and resources that supports their mission. Additionally, it facilitates the path for people to join a campaign, start their own movement or just connect with other people who have the same mission and goals.

2. Pick a 1) review an archived webinar, 2) a live virtual event, 3) listen to a podcast episode (if they have one) or 4) read a resource document or report (any type of written document regarding the organization's research/advocacy, etc) and write a short paragraph summary (1 paragraph) on what it was about (8 points)
 - a. Make sure you hyperlink to the resource/webinar/podcast you listened to/reviewed/watched (E.g., I read the report entitled [Love with Accountability](#))
 - b. If you choose a report/written document:
 - i. If what you choose is 5 pages or longer, read 3-4 pages of it, and indicate which pages you read.
 - ii. Do NOT include one page factsheets (or several factsheets).

I read and interacted with a virtual experience titled [No Kids In Prison](#). This experience showed and taught the history of youth incarceration. This experience taught it through statistics, but also through the eyes of youth who experienced it. It showed the hardship of the youth, but also the effects that it has on their families. It concluded with their vision for the future and what actions need to be taken to stop kids from going through such hardships and get help to learn and grow in their homes, schools, and communities.

3. Relate what you learned from the webinar, event, podcast, or resource document or report from #2 back to course material. Make 4 separate connections. Make these connections explicit, do not expect me to know what connection you're making. Write answers in four bullet points. (16 points total, 4 points per connection)

- a. DO NOT MAKE CONNECTIONS TO THE WEBSITE IN GENERAL. The connections you make should be based on the resource you read/watched/reviewed/listened to from #2.

From what I reviewed for #2, I made several connections to class:

- Connection 1: The first connection I made to course material is history matters. History tends to be forgotten or dismissed, but it is important to point out that it is imperative to know where things started. Knowing the history allows us to see how and why things begun. In this case, the virtual experience spoke about Jim Crow Laws and the systematic racism that has existed in the United States since day one. It spoke about schools and reformatories that punished children and even spoke about a 14-year-old boy who was sentenced to death. This matters because it speaks about the history of the people who lived it. The virtual experience had real life stories and it told it from their point of view rather than an outside person.
- Connection 2: The second connection I made to course material is the iceberg metaphor. The virtual experience gave the testimony of a mother. She stated that she worked 2 and even 3 jobs to bring food to the table. She brought her child to his events, did homework, and went back to work. She said she thought she was a good mother but was not aware of anything else because she had no time. I related that to the iceberg metaphor because there are two sides which is what we see and what is hidden. In this case, I thought of it in a way that what is seen is only crime or error that was committed by her child. The system points their finger at these children and calls them criminals, but what is hidden is all the overwork that is experienced by their parents. Systematic racism, Jim Crow Laws all the history behind the disadvantages of Black and Latino families, and all their effort to push forward are hidden in the metaphor.
- Connection 3: The third connection I made to course material is harm/violence and institutions/state creating harm, allowing, and furthering harm/violence. In the virtual experience, they discussed the schools and reformatories that punished children with all the hard unpaid labor. This harm and violence was allowed and continued by the state and institutions when they sentenced a 14-year-old boy to death. Furthermore, punishing youth by putting them in four walls, away from their parents, friends, siblings, etc. allows and furthers harm against these children. Not allowing them to learn and grow from their mistakes and just pushing them out of their communities only hurts them even more.
- Connection 4: The fourth connection I made to course material is power over. At the conclusion of the virtual experience, they spoke about what they dream for their futures. They said they want to feel safe, a place without violence, a place where they are cared for and where there are people that care for them and aren't looking to hurt them. I thought of power over because the state and institutions that keep allowing racism, violence, harm, poverty, and those that feel superior from others keep ignoring those who are harmed. Power over is dehumanization and exploitation and that is exactly what I saw through that virtual experience which is why those prisons must be closed. Children should not be dehumanized and exploited by people and institutions that feel more powerful and feel superior.

4. Indicate what you thought about the webinar/podcast/resource document. Tell me what you liked, what you think could be improved, and provide some suggestions on how they could have improved it. Your suggestions could be based on the content itself, delivery or presentation. (1 paragraph) (5 points)

I liked the virtual experience. I enjoyed that it was interactive, so I was able to look around in the cell as well as the classroom, etc. I also liked that it wasn't just the voice of a narrator, but also the voices of those youth who have undergone this experience or that aim to change the system. It was more meaningful to hear it from them because you can feel their dreams and their vision for future change. However, I did have to pause it a couple of times to read the statistics or grasp what they were saying because it changed too quickly. My only suggestion would be to slow it down a little, as this is important information that must be heard and understood well.

5. Based on what you read about the organization and the resource you reviewed, how does this institute/organization frame the issue of restorative and/or transformative justice? If it is not explicitly framed, how does this organization and resource you reviewed embody RJ and/or TJ principles? (1 paragraph) (5 points)

This organization and the resource that I reviewed frame the issue of transformative justice by making a clear statement that youth should not be in prison because that furthers harm. Their goal is to close prisons to end incarceration and create more opportunities for youth to learn, be engaged, and learn which offers them a better path and reduces violence for them, their families, and communities. It also frames the issue of restorative justice because it doesn't deny the fact that some youths do break the law and make errors, but with help from mentors, community service, programs, activities, therapy, etc., the harm can be repaired. Putting them in four walls and taking them away from their schools, families and communities will only cause more harm and won't fix the problem from the root.

6. Based on what you read about the organization and the resource you reviewed, did they frame the issues of interpersonal, state violence, harm, etc. in line with the critical criminology approach we've discussed in class (e.g., power over, crimes of the powerful, global elite, etc)? If yes, how? If not, how do you know? (1 paragraph) (5 points)

One of the connections I made to course material was to power over, so it framed the issue of interpersonal, state violence, harm, etc. Youth prisons is a clear example of state violence not only because it excuses the punishment of children, but also because there is a clear overrepresentation of Black and Latino children. I discussed power over because prisons are dehumanizing not only because of their conditions, but also for their unpaid labor or cheaply paid labor, their punishments, and their ability to push out these youths from their own families and communities. Additionally, people with power are the ones who keep prisons open as punishment and they have the ability to profit from the youth in

prisons and get even richer while they put these children in a never-ending cycle of poverty, racism, discrimination, crime, violence, harm, etc.

7. Write a professional email as if you were trying to volunteer, get an internship, or get a referral from that organization/agency/institute (1 paragraph) (5 points)

Dear Ms. Ryan,

First and foremost, I want to express my upmost admiration for the work that you do. I have a great interest in youth incarceration, and I have been doing extensive research to learn as much as possible. I have experience in the legal field, as I have been a paralegal for a year. I want to extend my knowledge in this topic and get involved in the movement. After researching through your non-profit organization, I would like to know if there are any volunteer/internship opportunities to keep learning and to act. Attached hereto is a copy of my resume.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to hearing from you.

Best,

Karla Lopez

8. Reflect on this assignment. Some questions to consider: Did you like learning about what this organization is doing? This assignment is also meant to show you that there are tons of think tanks, institutes, non-profit, activist, and academic organizations that are out there. Does it give you any desire to search for additional organizations for your own career interests? What was the most difficult part of this assignment and why? Do you have any suggestions on how I can improve this assignment in the future? Any other comments? (1 paragraph) (8 points)

I learned some history that I didn't know prior to listening and going to the "experience." It also reinforced my will to work in the juvenile justice system soon. I liked that I was able to investigate and use an organization that is just an interest for me. This organization did make me want to join a movement or a campaign to start or follow my path into this movement. I have been following this organization through Instagram for quite a while, but this assignment allowed me to do more research on it and allowed me to read more of their resources and even follow through their virtual "experience." The most difficult part of this assignment was connecting it to specific terms that we learned in class. I did however instantly think of a few when I was listening and interacting with the experience, but it was much harder to put it into words. I enjoyed this assignment because I got to use an organization that taught me more about a topic that I am very interested in.