

Weekly Composition #3

To answer the question, something that was similar between all of the students' experiences, is the deep rooted problem of colonialism in the education system that impacted each of them. To define Colonialism in the context of this writing, it means the eurocentric belief system in the push to conform/assimilate to "fit in" with American society and how these beliefs are a systemic problem. To start off one of the biggest things I saw between the students' experiences was the push to "fit in". One example was shown in the Wild Tongues article where our speaker talks about how her teacher on the first day of school told her to not say hello in Spanish and that in this school setting she needs to assimilate and only speak English (Goita, 2020). This works together with the How we suppress genius video in which, because our speaker didn't fit in with the school's standards, he was sent to the mental ward in which they told him "to speak the way they wanted him to speak...I was thinking the way they thought I should" (Sonnon, 2013, 6:04). This all roots back to colonialism and that because these students didn't fit in with what is the "norm" they are viewed as outcasts or the ones who need help. The solution our system tries to do is "fix" them instead of trying to incorporate their differences in the classroom and that the only thing these solutions are doing is disconnecting these students further from who they are. This idea is also enforced in the How the U.S stole thousands of Native American Children video, where the government system takes away these kids and forces them to assimilate to white culture and further disconnect them from their heritage roots (Vox, 2019). I've mentioned in class that growing up my school never had cultural days or ways to

express our differences as students and that I feel extremely connected with these students struggles because just how they have felt disconnected from who they are, I have felt that same way about myself and it takes a lot of work to gain back the things the school system attempts to oppress.

The other similarity I saw within all of the students' experiences was the correlation of family relations that impacted their educational experiences. One example was the wide variety of experiences that were shown in the T word video in which certain individuals such as Zoe and Ari had good relations with their family and so their experience through school has been viewed in a more positive way because of the fact that they have parents who supported them and didn't care about the ideals that are pushed through colonialism (MTV, 2016). They want to see their kid be happy and be who they truly are and they trust their kids on making these choices and will back them up no matter what. This can be compared to Kye's experience in which his relationship is extremely complicated and that their schooling experience pushed Kye to be more of his own advocate and push for the things he wanted, an experience that many trans youth have to go through (MTV, 2016). This connects with the "How Google classroom erases trans students" reading on how whether or not students in the Oregon school system are ready to come out and be who they are, certain school districts feel it is the right to tell the parents even if it is against the students wishes (Marshall, 2020). This puts kids in a hard situation in which they might want to start the process of coming out, but if the school will tell their parents right away then this may lead to fear and suppress who these students are, again enforcing the colonialist ideas that come from the system. In all these experiences, kids who had supportive parents were able to feel

seen and heard and that our system tries to take away the power and voice of our students, but when adults step in and say something isn't right that power and their voice is given back and empowers them to push for change themselves. If only Camila's family had tried to use compassion instead of disdain when hearing her change of accent or if only Daniella had found the right family to take her in and support her as a person, they might have viewed their experience growing up in a different light. Their experiences were not caused by their family problems alone and that to conclude and connect it all back, Colonialism is deeply rooted in our society and that whether or not we hold those beliefs we still fall under the pressures to fit in and assimilate and that our education system will not begin to start healing until we support diversity and inclusivity.

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