Exploring Xenophobia: Privilege and Oppression

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**Introduction**

 How society sees me doesn’t align with how I see myself. My social identity doesn’t align with my self-identity. Unfortunately, ultimately, it is society that gives us our social identity.

 Social identity gives a person a sense of who they are based on the group they belong to or do not belong to. We are all members in multiple groups. Because of a strong need for a positive self-concept, individuals act in ways meant to enhance the status of their in-groups (groups to which they belong) and discriminate against members of out-groups (Tajfel [1981](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41276-018-00164-w#ref-CR48)). Some aspects of identity give people an unearned advantage in society, through no fault of the individual. We can be described by our race, sexual orientation, gender, class, age, ability, religion, work, marital status, education, etc. These descriptions also describe our differences. People use our difference to place us into a social hierarchy; we are given a status in society. In every society, there are dominant and subordinate groups. The subordinate groups, or targeted groups, are the ones that are seen as different than the norm or standard set by the dominant group in the society. These are the ones seen as the “other”. How people are treated because of their differences that are outside the norm is a matter of the culture in which they live. We live in a society in America that offers unearned privilege to the ones who are not seen as different. The ones who are different experience oppressions attached to that difference such as racism, sexism, heterosexualism, religious oppression, classism, ageism, ableism, and xenophobia (Tatum, 2000).

 Privilege affects society. Therefore, it’s important for people to consider and acknowledge their own privilege. Where there is privilege, there is oppression, and vice versa. Where there is privilege and oppression in a society, there in inequality. In America, we all have been socialized into a system of oppression that goes deep into many spheres of society. That system has taught us to accept oppression as normal so that we may not even recognize privilege and oppression as such. We have been taught to be oblivious to our own privileges. Many of us have social identities that place us in both a dominant group and a targeted group yet due to the oppression we may face we may fail to recognize that we have unearned privileges that those in other groups are not entitled to. All forms of oppression are interconnected, and we all are connected to people who face oppression. If not now, we may someday face oppression ourselves. We must first recognize the privilege/oppressive dynamic to interrupt the cycle to create social change, for if we don’t, we will perpetuate it and keep the cycle continuing. Acknowledging one’s privilege is the first step to changing systemic oppression to change the status quo. We need to work to undermine systemic privilege and oppression because it has a negative impact on all.

 There’s much discourse about oppression and privilege in categories such as race, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, mental or physical ability and religious affiliation, but not much conversation about xenophobic oppression experienced by people who immigrate from foreign countries into the United States. For this reason, I chose to explore xenophobia, the fear or hatred of foreigners (Merriam/Webster, 2022) through the lens of my own privilege as an American citizen. My former neighbor, Anna, a white skinned female with blue eyes and blonde hair, shared with me that she was a target of discrimination in her workplace in a retail establishment. She was talked down to and sometimes shunned by her supervisors and coworkers but not by customers, that is until she spoke. Anna had a Ukrainian accent. She and her husband had migrated to the United States from Russia, in search of a better life, just as most immigrants. Her husband was an entrepreneur and a member of the U.S. armed forces, yet they were both non-citizens who were targeted and oppressed by people from diverse backgrounds, but mostly by white people. Their story surprised me, as I was ignorant to the reality of xenophobia. After all, I only saw her as white, so I mistakenly assumed that because her social identity was white, she was therefore entitled to privileges that I didn’t share. Her story and stories like hers have given me a desire to learn more about xenophobia in America, to shed light on the subject and to help change it. A lot of us recognize that oppression exists in society, yet we don’t recognize that we may play a part in it.

**Encountering my own privilege**

 In his book “Privilege, Power, and Difference”, Allan Johnson uses the “diversity wheel” (p 15), which was developed by Marilyn Loden and Judy Rosener in 1990, to describe parts of our identity which would “locate us in relation to other people and society in ways that have huge consequences”. The wheel shows that our identities can be described by our age, race, sex, ethnicity, gender, sexual/affection orientation, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, religious beliefs, parental status, geographic location, marital status, education, work, income, and military status.

 Describing my identity using portions of “the wheel”, I am a retired, sixty-one-year-old, Christian, non-disabled Black woman. I am a student, wife, mother, and grandmother, and I currently live in Florida, USA. My race, gender, and age put me in the “other” category that has denied me access to privileges that white people, men, and younger people have. But, I was “born in the USA”, and that fact gives me an advantage, another “key on my key ring” that allows me to open doors that are locked to others. That makes me part of a privileged group and gives me advantages over those who were not born here, as well as those who are denied an opportunity for legal status in America.

 In reading “White privilege: unpacking the invisible knapsack” (Peggy Mcintosh, 1989), the author states “I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege… White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks.” (McIntosh, paragraph 3). In pondering that statement, I reflected upon my own privileges and wondered if I’ve been taught to not recognize any of the privileges that I have. What I have come to recognize is, in relation to my citizenship status, I am wearing an invisible knapsack that I have, until now, been unaware of. As I write this paper, I will unpack some of the privileges in my invisible citizenship knapsack.

**History**

America has always been a land of immigrants. The only true Americans were the Native Americans. All of us have invaded this country. For decades immigrants from different areas of the globe have emigrated to the U.S. and settled in different parts of the country**.** According to the U.S Census bureau, in 1850, 9% of the national population was foreign born. In 2013, nearly 14.4 % were foreign born (Pew Research, 2015). Nonetheless, xenophobia is as Americana as Apple pie. Benjamin Franklin, a founding father who helped write the Declaration of Independence, was quoted in 1750 as saying “those who come hither are generally of the most ignorant stupid sort of their own nation” (Lee, 2020).

A brief history of how my ancestors came to be in America will give an understanding of how I came to be an American citizen. According to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, 12.5 million Africans were shipped to the new World, 10.7 million of whom survived the dreaded Middle Passage, disembarking in North America, the Caribbean and South America. Only about 388,000 were shipped directly to North America (Gates, 2013).The largest forced migration in human history relocated my paternal African ancestors to the southern part of the United States. In the 1400s, the Portuguese colonized an island a few hundred miles off the coast of West Africa. West African slaves were forced to labor on cotton and sugar plantations, as well as in domestic servitude.  The Portuguese population intermingled with the slaves to produce the Cape Verdean people known as Crioulo. My maternal Cape Verdean Crioulo ancestors emigrated to the United States of America from the Cape Verde Islands of Fogo and Praia in the 1930s.

 The 14th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified on July 28, 1868, established the principle of birthright citizenship, meaning a person born or naturalized in the U.S. is automatically a citizen (except for Native Americans). Under the 14th Amendment, African Americans could legally claim the same constitutional rights afforded to all American citizens. That is how my ancestors arrived at citizenship in America (Americaslibrary.gov). However, our rights of citizenship were not exercised until the Civil Rights Act of 1965. The Civil Rights Act of 1965 removed barriers to black enfranchisement in the South, banning poll taxes, literacy tests, and other measures that effectively prevented African Americans from voting and opened doors to immigrants from Africa.

 In modern history, two events that have helped me to realize and appreciate my privilege as an American citizen are the DACA policy and the Trump administration’s anti-immigrant policies. The DACA policy, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, was signed by President Obama in 2012. It temporarily shields some “Dreamers”, those who entered the country illegally as children, from deportation, but doesn’t provide a path to citizenship. The many anti-immigrant policies enacted by the Trump administration, and still not reversed by the Biden administration, severely impacted immigrants, regardless of their immigration status. Such orders include refugee travel bans, rescinding of DACA, building of “the wall”, and expansion of the Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) Program.

**Encountering the Oppressed Group**

 “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!” This famous poem by Emma Lazarus was written and inscribed on the Statue of Liberty, America’s symbol of freedom. Her inspiration for the poem came from her involvement in aiding Jewish refugees from eastern Europe. After seeing the conditions in which many of these people lived, she expressed her empathy and compassion through the lines of the poem (Statue of liberty tour blog, 2021). Are the words in this poem, in effect, the truth? “Some say that the American immigration system is broken. It’s not broken. It’s working exactly how it was designed to work and that is to work against poor immigrants of color.” (Hernandez, 2017). The 2016 Republican campaign for President of the United States of America was run on the promise of building a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border to keep the Mexicans out. The candidate, Donald Trump, was elected. Xenophobia is alive and well in America. President Donald Trump proposed a bill to slash in half the 1.1 million legal permanent residents admitted to the U.S. last year, and to end a diversity program that grants 50,000 long-term visas a year to foreigners from countries that are underrepresented in the U.S., from Africa, Asia, and eastern Europe (USA Today, 2017). Trump referred to African countries, Haiti, and El Salvador and as “shithole” nations and asked why the U.S. can’t have more immigrants from Norway. He labeled Mexicans as rapists and criminals and placed a complete and total shutdown of Muslims entering the United States. U.N. human rights office spokesman Robert Colville told reporters that the remarks could "potentially damage and disrupt the lives of many people." (NBC news, 2018). Xenophobia is alive and well in America. Donald Trump gave permission for people to express xenophobic views, which were always present but seen by most as not acceptable to publicly express. This was seen in direct ways across the nation, from the classroom to the boardroom. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the U.S. borders were closed, and immigration was restricted. Asian’s, particularly Chinese, were blamed for the coronavirus, and thousands of Asian Americans reported being harassed and physically attacked, some were killed. “The country became gripped by a second epidemic: one of fear, xenophobia and racism” (Lee, 2021). As a presidential candidate, Joe Biden [pledged](https://joebiden.com/immigration/) to end the “unrelenting assault on our values and our history as a nation of immigrants” and instead implement a “fair and humane immigration system.” But the backlash has been fierce, and immigration reform efforts have stalled. (Los Angeles Times, 2021). Xenophobia is alive and well in America.

 Today, anti-immigrant policies deprive noncitizens of basic rights and privileges that you and I have. According to the institute on Taxation and Economic policy, undocumented immigrants pay over $20 billion in withheld payroll taxes annually yet are exempt from public benefits such as Social Security retirement benefits, Medicare, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP), or Pell Grants and student loans (Dispatch, 2021). They cannot obtain health insurance. They cannot get a social security number. They cannot obtain a driver’s license, so cannot legally drive. They cannot travel in an airplane. If they get arrested, they will not be allowed legal representation. They do not have the right to vote. Neither the undocumented nor green card holders, who are legal permanent citizens, are protected from deportation. They live each day in fear of the possibility of being separated from their families. The path to citizenship is a long and arduous journey, taking many years. For those who are citizens, they fear being stripped of their citizenship, and they must constantly submit documents to keep their citizenship status. Regardless of citizenship status, on a personal level, individuals who are immigrants are impacted by many systems in this country, it’s intersectional. They constantly endure discrimination, from lack of decent housing to assumptions made by the police and the public that they are here in the U.S. illegally. They routinely face housing discrimination resulting in inadequate housing which has far‐reaching potential implications for other aspects of individuals' and their families' lives (educational opportunities given the neighborhood of residence, access to various services, job opportunities) (Hernandez, PBS, 2017). They have lost the freedom to live. Despite being a heterogeneous group with differences in class, generation, citizenship status, and national origin, the white non-Hispanic population has often discriminated against Hispanic immigrants and citizens alike based on citizenship status assumptions (Castaneda, 2019).

 How can a nation of immigrants have such anti-immigrant sentiments and policies? As I reflect upon my own privilege of United States citizenship, I realize that my knapsack is very full, overflowing.

**Working for Change**

 My efforts to advocate for the immigrant population for thirty days consisted mainly of information gathering, the purpose of which was to determine the extent of my privilege, to then work for change. Due to high COVID-19 transmission rates in Florida, I chose to remain home most days, due to my unvaccinated, age, and comorbidity status. To learn about this oppressed group, immigrants in America, I watched many documentaries and interviews, and held interviews with those who have lived in both an undocumented and documented immigration status. I intend to take what I’ve learned and advocate on behalf those who have emigrated to my country.

 Some of my research about immigration came from an organization called Brookings. Brookings is a research organization of 300 leading experts in government and academia from all over the world who provide research, policy recommendations, and analysis on public policy issues. What I learned is that xenophobia is a form or racism in America, they intersect. From the early 1900s through the 1960s, millions of predominantly white immigrants entered the country unlawfully, but faced virtually no threat of apprehension or deportation. Businesses lawfully employed these immigrants, who were eligible for public benefits when they fell on hard times. The toughening of immigration laws coincided with a shift of immigration from Europe to newcomers from Latin America, Asia, and Africa. For example, researchers have documented how through the 1960s, racialized views of Mexicans shaped law and bureaucratic practice. Reducing lawful means of immigrating led to a rise in unauthorized entries, which was met with calls for tougher enforcement. The law bars mainly Latino border crossers from adjusting to legal status. But the law permits predominantly non-Hispanic visa overstayers to receive permanent residence, even though over the past decade, visa-overstayers outnumbered illegal border crossers by a 2-1 margin (Migration Policy, 2015).

 I spent much time in tears as I researched and encountered story after story of the disparities and shocking treatment that immigrants face in America. A question remains in my mind; how can it be that a nation of immigrants can have egregious personal and institutionalized discrimination against immigrants who come to this country, with dreams of having the same opportunities of a better life that we have? My heart goes out to them.

 There are many organizations throughout this country who have the same heart as I. One such local organization is The Florida Immigrant Coalition (FLIC.org). They are made up of about 65 member organizations throughout the state of Florida. Their work includes advocating for undocumented students, for fair wages for workers, register voters, and help permanent residents become naturalized citizens. Each year they hold a Congress, where their members and state and national ally organizations such as the AFL-CIO, Farmworker Association of Florida, Miami School of Law, Black alliance for Just Immigration and Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM), come together to strategize on how to advance the rights of immigrants in Florida. Another organization that advocates for Immigrants Rights is The Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota. They’ve developed a free to use digital immigration database where immigrants can tell their story. The goal is for people to see immigrants, not based on their stereotypes, but as real people, in the hopes of changing the narrative on immigration.

**Conclusion**

 As a Black woman, our class assignments and content in class has had me somewhat hyper-focused on my “under” privileges. My research on xenophobia in America has led me to be more cognizant of the unearned privileges that I have and therefore, of the oppression that those who are foreigners endure. Oppression comes from the unequal roles that we are born into; we don't choose them. These roles were given to us according to our social identity and we are socialized to play them, dominant, targeted, or both.  We continually receive messages throughout our lives that tell us who we are, or are not, our worth and value, from many different influences such as family, church, educational systems, medical establishments, government, etc. and there are several enforcements of rewards and penalties in place to maintain them.  In looking at how the cycle of socialization process happens, where it comes from, how it affects us, and how it continues, we can then learn how to interrupt it and change it. The problem lies in the obliviousness that keeps us from doing so, and in the emotions, real or imagined, that keep us from doing so. They cause us to not challenge the status quo and continue to perpetuate the oppression.  The cycle will go on if we don't choose to interrupt it somehow.

  If people can look for opportunities to expose anti-immigrant sentiment for what it is, and work together, perhaps we can end this injustice. **In the words of the Reverend, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”** We all are involved in the dominant/oppression system of America.  I pray that all people of all dominant groups will come to a place of seeing the "isms" as morally wrong and not about themselves as individuals but about the systems to which we were born.  I pray that privileged people will not remain in a place of denial and will acknowledge their privilege in American society and then resolve to act for equality and change instead of remaining silent and inactive.  I refuse to be one in a dominant group to not notice, do nothing, or remain silent about injustice. I intend to get involved in the immigrants’ rights movement by working with an already established group, such as the Florida Immigrant Coalition, to somehow help to dismantle oppressive systems and attitudes against American immigrants. My career intentions after graduating in the Healthy Lifestyle Management Program at Creighton have been leaning towards becoming a health coach. After researching the issue of privilege/oppression as it pertains to immigrants, I will research how to intertwine that with working in the public health policy arena to advocate for immigrants’ healthcare/insurance rights.

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**Appendix A: Historical Timeline of Immigration and Xenophobia in America**

**Ice age**- Native Americans come from Asia

**1500-1860**- Forced migration of Africans

**Naturalization Act of 1790** – Congress passes first law about who should be granted U.S. citizenship. Any free white person of good character is eligible to apply.

**1820-1860**- Irish account for 1/3 of all immigrants, 5 million Germans come to U.S.

**1855-Bloody Monday**- Protestant mobs attacked Irish and German Catholic neighborhoods. These riots grew out of the bitter rivalry between the Democrats and the Nativist Know-Nothing Party. The best known of these nativist groups came to be called the American Party, and its adherents as Know-Nothings. The aim of the Know-Nothing movement was to combat foreign influences and to uphold and promote traditional American ways.

**1868**- 14th Amendment extended American citizenship to people born in the US, including recently emancipated slaves.

**Naturalization Act of 1870**- explicitly stated that naturalization was only extended to “aliens of African nativity and to persons of African descent.” Naturalization remained off-limits to all other groups of non-whites who wished to become citizens.

**1880-1920**- industrialization and urbanization brings 20 million immigrants from southern, eastern, and central Europe, including 4 million Italians and 2 million Jews.

**1882-1943-The Chinese Exclusion Act**- After Chinese built the transcontinental railroad, they were no longer needed. They became successful in America so Chinese anti-sentiment grew. Whites blamed them for their low wages. They were expelled from the U.S. and restricted from emigrating for 61 years.

**1891**- **Immigration act of 1891** created a federal office of immigration

**1894-Immigrant Restriction League**- The aim of the organization was “exclusion of elements undesirable” from the country.

**1907** -U.S. immigration peaks with 1.3 million entering through Ellis Island, NY

**1920**- Ku Klux Klan, racist, anti-immigrant, anti-Semitic group published a pamphlet calling for a vigilant protection of “America for Americans” against foreigners coming to the U.S.

[**Immigration Act of 1924 (Johnson-Reed Act)**](https://immigrationhistory.org/item/1924-immigration-act-johnson-reed-act/)

To further limit immigration, this law established extended "national origins" quotas, a highly restrictive and quantitatively discriminatory system. The quota system would remain the primary means of determining immigrants' admissibility to the United States until 1965.

The law favors immigration from Northern and Western European countries.

[**Mexican Repatriation (1929-1936)**](https://immigrationhistory.org/item/%E2%80%8Bmexican-repatriation/)

During the economic and political crises of the 1920s and 1930s, the Border Patrol launched several campaigns to detain Mexicans, including some U.S.-born citizens, and expel them across the border.

**Civil Rights Act of 1965**- Removed barriers to black enfranchisement in the South, banning poll taxes, literacy tests, and other measures that effectively prevented African Americans from voting. Opened doors to immigrants from Africa, Latin America, Asia (Vietnam)

[**Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (Hart-Celler Act)**](https://immigrationhistory.org/item/hart-celler-act/)

It replaced national origin quotas that favored some racial and ethnic groups over others and allocated more visas to people from other countries around the world and gave priority to relatives of U.S. residents.

**1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act -** Offered temporary protection from deportation and legal permanent resident status to millions of people who had lived in the country since the 1980s. Roughly 2.7 million people were given legal status under the law’s general legalization or its special program for farmworkers.

**9/1/2001**- Islamophobia comes with the 911 attacks. FBI reports anti-muslim hate crimes rise by 1600%

[**Homeland Security Act (2002)**](https://immigrationhistory.org/item/homeland-security-act/)

The Homeland Security Act created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) by consolidating 22 diverse agencies and bureaus. The creation of DHS reflected mounting anxieties about immigration in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11th.

[**Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) (2012)**](https://immigrationhistory.org/item/deferred-action-for-childhood-arrivals-daca/)

Trying to cope with the long-term residence of millions of unauthorized immigrants, this executive order provided protection from [deportation](https://immigrationhistory.org/lesson-plan/citizenship/) and work authorization to persons who arrived as minor children and had lived in the United States since June 15, 2007.

**January 2017-** Trump administration enacted a series of immigration reform executive orders that severely impacted immigrants, regardless of their immigration status. Such orders include refugee travel bans, rescinding of DACA, building of “the wall”, and expansion of the Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) Program.

**2020- Covid19 pandemic**- Xenophobia results in rise in Asian hate crimes in America

**2021**- President Bidens attempt to reform immigration policies fail in Congress

**Appendix B: 30-Day Pledge Journal**

**January 23, 2022-** Interview with Anna Koval, Ukrainian Immigrant, and friend

**January 24, 2022**- PBS Newshour-A brief but spectacular take on immigrant justice in America

Interview with Gaby Hernandez, Executive Director of the Long Beach Immigrants’ Rights Coalition in California.

**January 29, 2022-**PBS Newshour- Immigrant families in limbo as Biden Immigration Bill fails

-Biden’s plan for path to citizenship failed in Congress

**February 4, 2022**-Netflix Documentary-Immigration Nation

-Episodes 1& 2

**February 5, 2022-** PBS Newshour**-**Courageous conversation: Xenophobia

**February 5, 2022**-Netflix Documentary-Immigration Nation

-Episode 3 & 4

**February 11, 2022**-Netflix Documentary-Immigration Nation

Episode 5 & 6

**February 21, 2022-**Interview with former undocumented Mexican immigrant, Michelle

**February 22, 2022-** Spoke with Annabella, Volunteer Coordinator at FLIC

**Appendix C: Encounter Reflection**

I dove deep into my privilege as a U.S. citizen and the oppression of immigrants in two ways: through a lengthy interview with an undocumented Mexican immigrant, and by encountering the life of an immigrant as captured in a 6-part non-fiction documentary series called “Immigration Nation.” Both led me to further research U.S. immigration laws and policies.

Michelle was born in Mexico, illegally emigrated with her parents as a child, grew up in this country, and wasn’t a legal citizen until marriage. Her story caused me to research Mexico/U.S relations and the legal process of becoming a U.S. citizen. I learned about the United States’ political history with Latin America. American involvement in Central America prompted civil wars in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua and the NAFTA crushed Mexico’s economy (Jstor, 1967) Two million Mexicans engaged in farming lost their livelihoods and lands, tens of thousands of small businesses went bankrupt as American big-box retailers moved in, and poverty remains widespread. And Mexican taxpayers have paid foreign investors more than $204 million in compensation following Investor-State Dispute Settlement attacks (Citizen.org, 2018). This political and economic instability made it impossible for people to live in their native countries, forcing many to illegally migrate.

Many people in America like to say that immigrants should “get in line” and come over legally, but the path to legal citizenship is a narrow one, with complicated and convoluted restrictions. Getting a “green card” or visa allows you to be a lawful permanent resident, yet there are country caps in place only allowing 7% from any one country, regardless of its size. There are only four ways to become a citizen; through close family relations, employment, a visa lottery, or a refugee seeking asylum. The time it takes to process an application for legal immigration has jumped 46% from 2016-2018 (citizen.org, 2018). According to Michelle, who works in the political arena in Washington, D.C., the government is currently processing applications from Mexico from January of 1997, China from 2004, and India from 2006.

“Immigration Nation” is a gut-wrenching expose` of the inner workings of the Federal agency called “U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement” (ICE), created in 2003 and expanded during the Trump Administration. This documentary films a series of stories showing how ICE agents terrorize communities of non-criminal illegal immigrants by arresting, detaining, and deporting them under the guise of protecting the public. Their callous and evil ways while they were aware of being on camera makes me question how much worse it must be when the cameras are not on. They all seemed to rationalize their behavior as “just doing their job” of enforcing the inhumane “Zero Tolerance” policy of the Trump administration which exponentially increased the number of deportations from this country. The documentary captures stories of families who are separated, with children as young as three being ripped from their father’s arms; veterans who have fought for this country and were willing to shed blood for this country but weren’t allowed to obtain legalization to live here and were deported; deportation quotas for judges and ICE agents; and incentives for local law enforcement to detain immigrants for ICE deportation. The documentary also shows how capitalism incentivized their dehumanization through the wage theft of undocumented immigrants who rebuilt Panama City, Florida, after hurricane Michael, and through the private companies who profit from detaining them, as well of those who benefit from the ankle bracelets forcibly attached to the ones who are allowed to live in the community due to no available beds at detention centers around the country. The dehumanization of undocumented immigrants by the U.S Federal Department of ICE is shameful to me as an American citizen. It has led me to join the fight for immigration reform in America.