

SEPTEMBER

AFSC OFFICE OF THE CAROLINAS



**American Friends
Service Committee**

Area Office of the Carolinas

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A TWISTED TAINTED TRADITION



This is a special reflection by guest writer Joyce Sandy, member of Chapel Hill Friends Meeting. She originally shared this story one Sunday during Meeting for Worship, then she wrote it up to share with AFSC. It was later published by the Greensboro News & Record.

Four times in the history of the United States, black and brown people have been controlled and intimidated by forced separations of their family units. In each case the events are characterized by a twisted logic in which the US government lies, justifies, and defends the policies. In some cases, the actions which are tainted by extreme cruelty to the victims, actually benefit other members of the population.

My personal encounter with this issue was as a child in the 1940's, when a Japanese American friend related her experiences to me. At age four, she and her brother and mother were taken from their home in San Francisco. Her father, an American citizen, had already left for work. They were all citizens, but the soldiers imprisoned them in a camp in Arizona. The soldiers boarded up their home. The family had no idea where the father could be, and he was unable to find them. The internment lasted four years. The Yasamuras suffered in a one room shack with a sand floor, until the soldiers returned them to their boarded up home. They were fortunate to be reunited with my friend's father who had returned to their boarded up home, looking for them every day for four years. A year after she told me the story, my friend Ailyn died, at age thirteen, after two weeks of hospitalization. It was never clear what she died of, and I was always convinced it was related to the extreme trauma and sadness of her experiences.

Over 120,000 Japanese Americans were put in internment camps in the early 1940's. The US Government used national security as the explanation and justification for its actions. Ironically, during the same time period, nearly half

a million German POW's (Nazis) were brought into Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. The rationale was to re-educate them to think in more democratic ways. They were given jobs on farms and factories and paid the going wage. There was no mention of national security in the case of these white, wartime enemies. The benefits they received were all approved by Congress, along with breaks on the cost for their living accommodations. The stark contrast between the treatment of these two groups is obvious and disgraceful.

Forcibly separating families was a policy in the United States, during the enslavement of black Africans in the 17th 18th and 19th centuries. The reason for the practice was the economic benefit to the slave traders and owners. By selling children they could enhance their monetary gains. The result of this practice was the domination of the US textile industry on the world stage, as well as the building of American cities including Washington DC on the backs of the black free labor. The inhumanity of separating children and babies from parents, and parents from each other was not considered.

Next, the US conducted forced removal of Native American children from their homes and parents in the 1800s and 1900s

The children were put into boarding schools. They were stripped of their names, language, cultural beliefs and customs, and severely punished for any infractions. They were then trained to create crafts to be sold for profit for the schools. Ironically, conversion to Christianity was a principal goal. Not until 1978 did the ICWA (Indian Child Welfare Act) give the Native American

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From AFSC Archives: Children are taught democratic games in the nursery school at the Manzanar Relocation Center in California. Photo credit: Francis Stewart, 1944

TWISTED TAINTED TRADITION CONTINUED

parent the legal right to deny the placement of their children in off reservation schools. However, in spite of the ICWA, a class action suit in 2013 in Pennington County, South Dakota, reveals that the child separation practice is still going strong. More than 1,000 children have been removed since 2010. According to the ACLU, removal hearings last from 60 seconds to 5 minutes and the State wins 100% of time.

A new law was written in 2016 to correct these abuses. It remains to be seen whether this new law will work. Now in 2018 US Government is again imposing a policy of forced separation of families that are people of color. This time the victims are Latino refugees from Central America, seeking asylum in the United States. This time, as was true during her era of slavery, some of the victims are infants. As of this writing There are more than 2,000 unreturned children.

There is also a money making component to this outrageous government action, as some private persons and groups are profiting from building and running some of the compounds. National security is touted as the rationale to protect the

country from murderous gangs, and thereby justify the government's actions. All across the country severe measures are used to rid the US of ethnic minorities, In North Carolina , the

Alamance County 287G Program has been flagged with using local law enforcement combined with Federal authorities like ICE in racial profiling. This strategy has resulted in family separations, detentions, and deportations of Latinos.

We must resolve that this time is the last time for these racist policies. It won't be easy. But it must be done. Legislators who favor them must be voted out. Citizens must be vocal in their opposition to these policies. We must resolve to be unified, persistent, and relentless until government officials acknowledge these abuses, and effect the legal prohibitions, which assure us all that this will never happen again.



TIPS ON HOW TO TALK ABOUT IMMIGRATION IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Rising anti-immigrant policies, hate speech, and violence in our communities affect all of us. But the impact on students in our schools is particularly high. Whether students are immigrants themselves, belong to mixed status families, or are disturbed by the threats against neighbors, many are experiencing fear and anxiety that impede learning and healthy development. Educators know how important it is to make classrooms more inclusive and welcoming. By talking about immigration in positive, productive ways teachers can disrupt the harsh, xenophobic messages coming from U.S. leadership. Here are some tips on how to talk about immigration in a time of heightened tension and you can read the full article with all the tips at www.afsc.org/content/carly-goodman

1. Build empathy:

Supporting and welcoming immigrants requires broadening people's sense of our shared humanity. Research shows that when people think about immigrants as a group distinct from themselves, they tend to support and accept more punitive and dehumanizing policies. If you talk about immigration and immigrants, be sure to frame the conversation in terms of shared values—like diversity, inclusive communities, and keeping families together.

2. Don't repeat negative myths and stereotypes – even to counter them:

With so many false and xenophobic ideas circulating, it is important to counter these messages with the truth. But be careful about reinforcing anti-immigrant ideas in the process. Repeating misinformation makes people more likely to believe it is true, and may reinforce both misinformation and the worldview it occupies, doing more harm than good. Debunking myths doesn't work. Instead, talk about immigration proactively, being careful about the terms you use and the stories you tell. The words and labels we use matter, and they can convey whole worldviews. Don't repeat dehumanizing language. Instead remember that immigrants are people who are members of our families and communities. If your students are repeating hateful anti-immigrant messages, ask them questions to get them to think about why and where these ideas come from. No matter where we are from, we all belong here.

-Carly Goodman, ACLS Public Fellow at AFSC





**American Friends
Service Committee**

American Friends Service Committee Speaking Tour

WORKING TOGETHER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

**JOYCE AJLOUNY, GENERAL SECRETARY
AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE**

SPEAKING TOUR DATES AND LOCATIONS:

**Saturday, Sept 15, 6:30 pm- New Garden Friends Meeting
801 New Garden Rd, Greensboro**

**Sunday, Sept, 16, 11:45 am- Durham Friends Meeting
404 Alexander Ave, Durham**

**Monday, Sept 17, 7:00 pm- Carolina Friends School
4809 Carolina Friends School Rd, Durham**

For more information: LKhamala@afsc.org



Join AFSC's General Secretary Joyce Ajlouny and regional AFSC staff to learn about the American Friends Service Committee and how we can all work for lasting peace and justice here at home and around the world.

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FAMILIES BELONG TOGETHER: A CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT FUNDRAISER

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 22ND, 2018, 12-4PM

**CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST GREENSBORO
400 W. RADIANCE DR. GREENSBORO, NC 27403
ON THE LAWN BEHIND THE CHURCH, PARKING IN LOT ON RADIANCE DR.**

FOOD! | KIDS' ACTIVITIES! | MUSIC! | AND A CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT!

Family separation is not just a threat at the border -- families in Greensboro have faced painful family separation.

Please join AFSC of the Carolinas and Siembra NC for a day of family activities to raise money for the emergency fund for local families impacted by ICE. We believe that families belong together, and we want to make sure the next time another local family is facing ICE action, the fund is ready.



**REGISTRATION FOR CORNHOLE TEAMS
FOR THE TOURNAMENT WILL OPEN ON
MONDAY 9/3!**

**KEEP CHECKING FACEBOOK EVENT FOR
DETAILS: [HTTP://GOO.GL/M8AGT7](http://goo.gl/M8AGT7)**



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