

Oumou Diallo

3/11/2023

Respective Spaces

The group session on March 4, 2023 was very informative. As the group leader, I was able to allow the group members to express their thoughts. I was able to encourage the members by stating that it is alright to agree to disagree. The group members were torn between whether or not there should be monuments of the confederate legacy in public spaces. There were group members that felt that by allowing confederate statues in public space, it would symbolize white supremacy and continually immortalize the oppression of black people. On the other hand, there were group members that felt that the statues should be placed in a museum to preserve history. As a Group Leader, I feel that it is important to preserve history because if we don't learn from it, it is bound to repeat itself.

I recall traveling to Ghana as a young woman in college several years ago. I visited Elmina Castle in Ghana. As we stood in the lower courts of the Castle, we were informed that the slave masters would stand on the balcony and choose an enslaved woman to rape every night. This part of history was sad to learn about but it was eye opening. We visited the point of no return. The point of no return was the last point of departure before the slaves were taken overseas. This topic is sensitive to me. I studied history as an Undergraduate. Learning the dark parts of history makes me value my freedom. If I had been born in a different place and time, my life would be different. There was a plaque that stood outside of the castle that said history is bound to repeat itself if it isn't changed.

Today, there are still laws being passed to reinstate the Jim Crow laws, such as Lynching as corporal punishment. Slavery still exist in America. Black men are jailed at alarming rates. It is a new form of slavery. Sometimes, I wonder if African Americans are awakened. There is reason why African Americans are oppressed. African American people are strong, mighty and powerful. People of the African Diaspora have used the spirit of innovation to constantly reinvent themselves. This topic was

appealing to me as a Group Leader because I have a deep love for my culture and its rich history. History has taught me in the face of adversity, there is incredible room for innovation. Sometimes, I reflect on my own journey as an employee. I reflect upon exploitation and mistreatment in the workforce. It makes me feel like a slave. I can relate to the slaves that Moses set free from the chains of bondage. I desire to work diligently in school so that I can own a private practice one day and help others. I want to work for myself one day. I have an entrepreneurial spirit. I desire to be as innovative as my Ancestors. I have a vision to open a building that house my private practice, spa and dance school. I would like to utilize all of my talents to heal people as I am healing.