

Dehumanization: Us vs. Them

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Inflicted Upon Ourselves



Different Views



Inflicted Upon Ourselves

We open our eyes

And we are surprised

To see destruction around us

It's as if it was there all along-

Part of our world, not part of our society, of course-

Being new is a form of purity,

Untouched by destruction around you.

You are indifferent to indifferences,

unable to recognize the difference.

It isn't until you have a sense of belonging

where you see the difference

Between you

and them.

You create a border between you and them. And you are no longer
this figure of purity

you once were

For you now are you and they are them

But it's not your fault, of course,

it's there's.

You just fell into a trap of humanity-

An inevitable trap our society has created and although it is
disapproved,

it's allowed.

And it happens.

-It's inflicted upon ourselves.

Artist Statement

I studied the Armenian Genocide. It took place in modern day Turkey during World War One. Muslim Turks dominated the Ottoman Empire and during the first World War, they systematically killed around 1.5 million Armenians and left hundreds of thousands displaced. The genocide lasted from 1915-1916 but prior to this genocide, Muslim Turks have targeted Christians since the beginning of the 11th century, when Armenians were adopted into the Ottoman Empire. To this day, Turkey denies about the degree of the events and do not recognize these actions as genocide.

To memorialize these war crimes and shed light on the dehumanization and the us vs. them factor, I created a drawing and poem. I also wanted to tie in how we are all human, yet diverse and feel a sense of belonging, and bring it back to human nature and question my class studied earlier in the year: Are humans inherently good/evil? While researching the genocide, I was really curious to see multiple perspectives as well as the history and overall picture to get a true understanding. I created both a drawing and a poem to represent and memorialize these aspects. The poem is supposed to reflect the drawing. The drawing is of this dark figure- our humanity- with light details of differences in our society, for example, religion, sex, wealth, color, etc.. This figure is holding this baby radiating light- the purity of our humanity before it is destroyed by the darkness of society. And behind both these beings, a fire to represent the destruction. When creating this piece, I was really trying to generalize it to represent not only the Armenian Genocide but something bigger- how humanity has allowed us to get to such extremes.

After creating this project, I had a much deeper understanding of a genocide I previously did not know much about. A general realization I had was that in history, Christians/Catholics typically were the aggressors and this is the first instance I've heard of where they have been the minority. I hope more people are able to notice how important this history is and how it can't go unheard of or ignored. I want people to take away that there is no reason to inflict pain on others because we are scared of diversity- which is inevitable- or think we are more powerful than the minority. In addition, from my project I want people to see how we cannot change past actions but we can make a difference by taking responsibility and making amends. The problems in our society are inflicted upon ourselves however we can change the future.

Work Cited

[“World Without Genocide”](#)

[“Armenian Genocide: Turkish-Armenian history”](#)

[“The Armenian Genocide \(1915-16\): In Depth”](#)

[“Q&A: Armenian genocide dispute”](#)

[“Iconic Images of the Armenian Genocide”](#)