



CALLING OUT ANTISEMITISM

Anti-Semitism and the Criminal Justice System

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What comes to your mind as you hear “anti-Semitism” during the 21st century? Perhaps you can think back to the Holocaust and think that it ended after Hitler liberation. However, that is not the case. Anti-Semitic views and hate acts are rising in the world in modern day. Although not much research exists on this issue, there is quite enough evidence to demonstrate the ongoing rise in anti-Semitic views against Jews.

Anti-Semitism can be traced back to biblical times, before Christ. During this era, Hebrews, which were early Jews, were prosecuted for not adopting Christian religious beliefs. However, this was just the beginning of the emergence of anti-Semitism, since it was able to carryon to middle ages and even modern day. It was not until the Middle Ages

in which discrimination and prejudice against Jewish communities emerged. Jews were prohibited from being involved in social and political activities such as marrying a Christian women or even holding a governmental position in office. In modern day, communities have reported the rise of hate crimes against Jews that have affected them not only psychologically but socially. In an article by Targeted News Service, it is reported how Jews are avoiding wearing skull caps and other religious attire in order to not be a target for victimization. It is also reported that Jewish property is being demonized and destroyed as a result of hate crimes. But why is this occurring? The answer is quite simple. As a society, we are not fully aware of our surroundings and partially this can be a result of social media. We are ignoring the news. As mentioned, research in this issue lacks and therefore it cannot be addressed in the best way possible. Currently, there are policies being

However, most of the Anti-Semitic acts are being ignored since research lacks and reports also lack. The governments can only do so little, that when it comes to cases like these, society needs to intervene.

I myself, a 21 year old student from California State Long Beach, admit to not being aware that anti-Semitism was still around in modern day. I met up with Sy Wellliksom, a senior resident from Heritage Pointe, located in Mission Viejo. On my drive there, I was anxious to find out the wonderful stories these elderly had to share with me about their experiences in life.

Especially since Heritage Pointe is a Jewish based assisted living facility, I knew this was the perfect match to my research. As I arrived, I admired the beautiful facility and met with Sy, my senior interviewee. Simore, known as

Sy, was born on August 17, 1926 in Wilmington, Delaware.

At age 6, Sy mentioned he moved to Atlantic City in where he lived for 6 years then moved back to his hometown.

Sy's hometown was a small country town with little over a thousand people, and his high school class had only 26 graduates. In Sy's words, he lived a "country life."

Sy's dad was retail store owner, and his mother a housekeeper and when the Great Depression hit, Sy's family was devastated and this is the reason why they had to move to Atlantic City. Sy shared to me that his first day of high school he experienced an anti-Semitic act from one of his classmates but that after that day he figured it out and set things straight with him. Never after that did Sy experience negative views against him for being Jewish. In college, Sy was the only male in his class with 12 females. He joined an all Jewish fraternity where he enjoyed the social life more than the academic, Sy says. However, Sy graduated Temple University in Philadelphia with a bachelor's in Journalism. Sy is a first generation American from European parents who just like any other came to America to chase the "American Dream". During his college years, Sy met his wife and married at 21 years old. Today, Sy and his wife, also a resident at Heritage Pointe, have been married for about 74 years. Sy did not pursue a job in his major since his wife's family had a manufacture business in where he decided to work in.

Sy worked in the manufacturer for about 30 years. Looking back in life, Sy says he has enjoyed every decade of it. He is now 95 years old and says each decade has had his full enjoyment. Life has given him the opportunity to grow old and even meet his future generation. Sy says he now has something he did not

have before, "11 great-grandchildren, and 3 children of his own who have pursued a degree in the law and medical field. In terms of religion, Sy

says he remembers not attending Hebrew school which is a usual experience a Jewish child goes through in order to become a man at 13 years old but since he had a child disease he was out in a hospital and never became a

writer passage.

However, Jewish traditions are very important for Sy. In 2009, he became president of his Synagogue at 83 years old and he mentions his family is very religious and are often leaders

in their religious communities. To wrap up, Sy gives a very meaningful message to the future generations to come. Sy says, "Map things out, everybody has a different way of living and you cannot live anybody else's life for them."

Today, Sy is a resident along his wife at Heritage Pointe. Sy's story has impacted me in a positive way and see things at a different perspective. Despite any challenges faced, Sy never gave up and lived a successful life and chased his parents American Dream.

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