

Conflict & Critical Theories

This piece is representative of both the

- **Conflict** and **Critical** theories which focus on class relations and the social processes that revolve around who has economic power and who is disadvantaged by the power and how power can be challenged.
- For example, my painting reflects the **experiences of a lower socioeconomic people who live in urban cities, most often in low income public housing and how they are often displaced for new, modern, urban development, such as sport stadiums with little to no compensation or alternative place to go** (Coakley, Using Sociological Theories).
- This is put in place by those who are in power- being the builders and owners of the sport stadiums
- This painting exemplifies just what the Conflict theory suggests: that **sports can create a vehicle for economic power, but also oppression.**

See pictured: lower socioeconomic status community and buildings have been **buried** below the new and upcoming sport arena. Who has the power? Who does not?

See pictured: A man playing baseball in the arena, white male spectators. **Who is sport for?**

Sexism

Inequality which sports can place upon men and women.

- Bryson says that **every sport is built FOR men and BY men** (1994).
- Eitzen also goes more into detail and asks, "Who loses when a community spends millions of dollars in tax revenue to construct a new stadium, and only to get men to play in it?" **The losers are women.**
- My art represents just who is able to play and spectate in professional sport. The answer is typically not women as sports were not made by or for women.

See pictured: White males in the stands

See pictured: Male professional athlete playing.

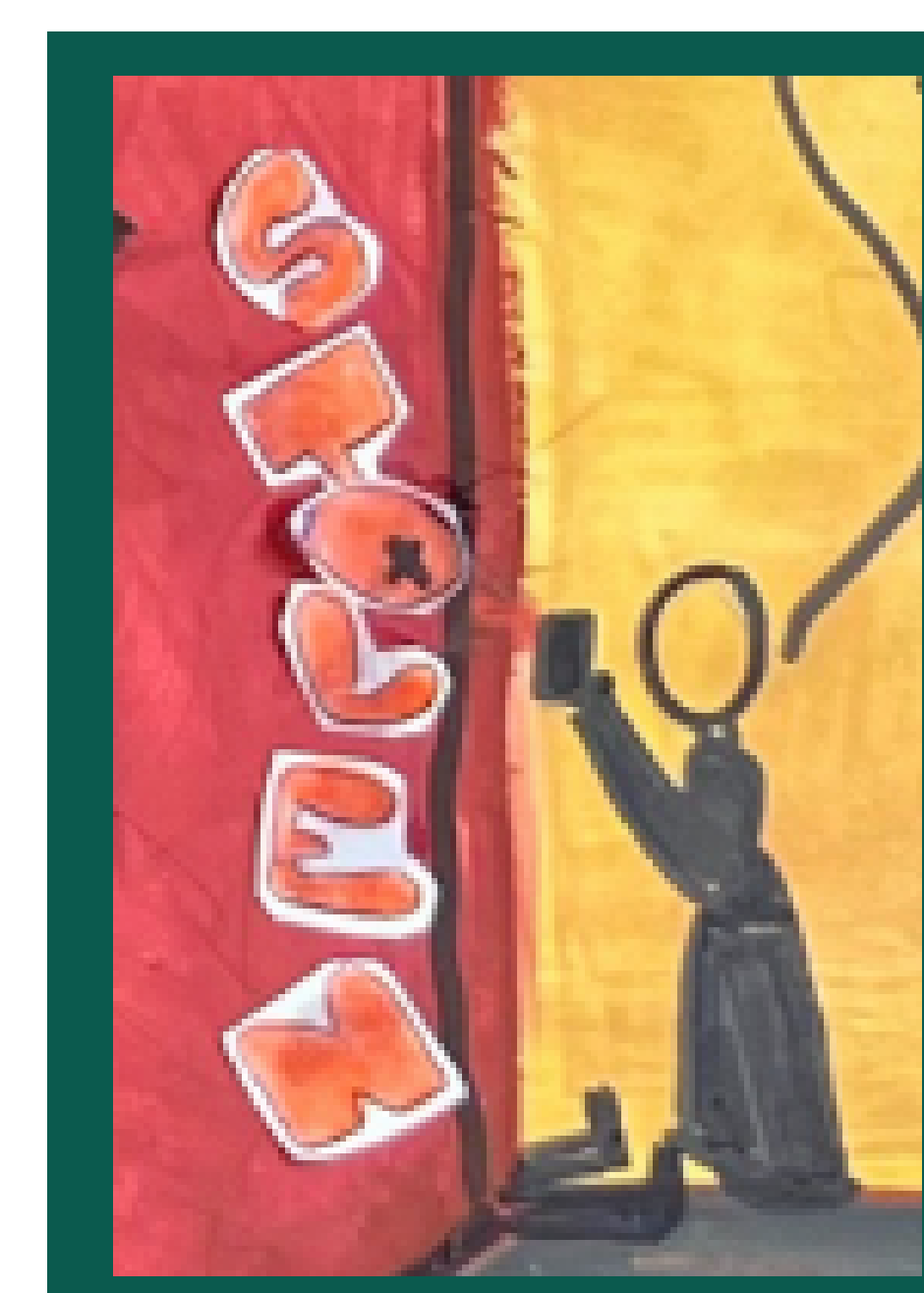
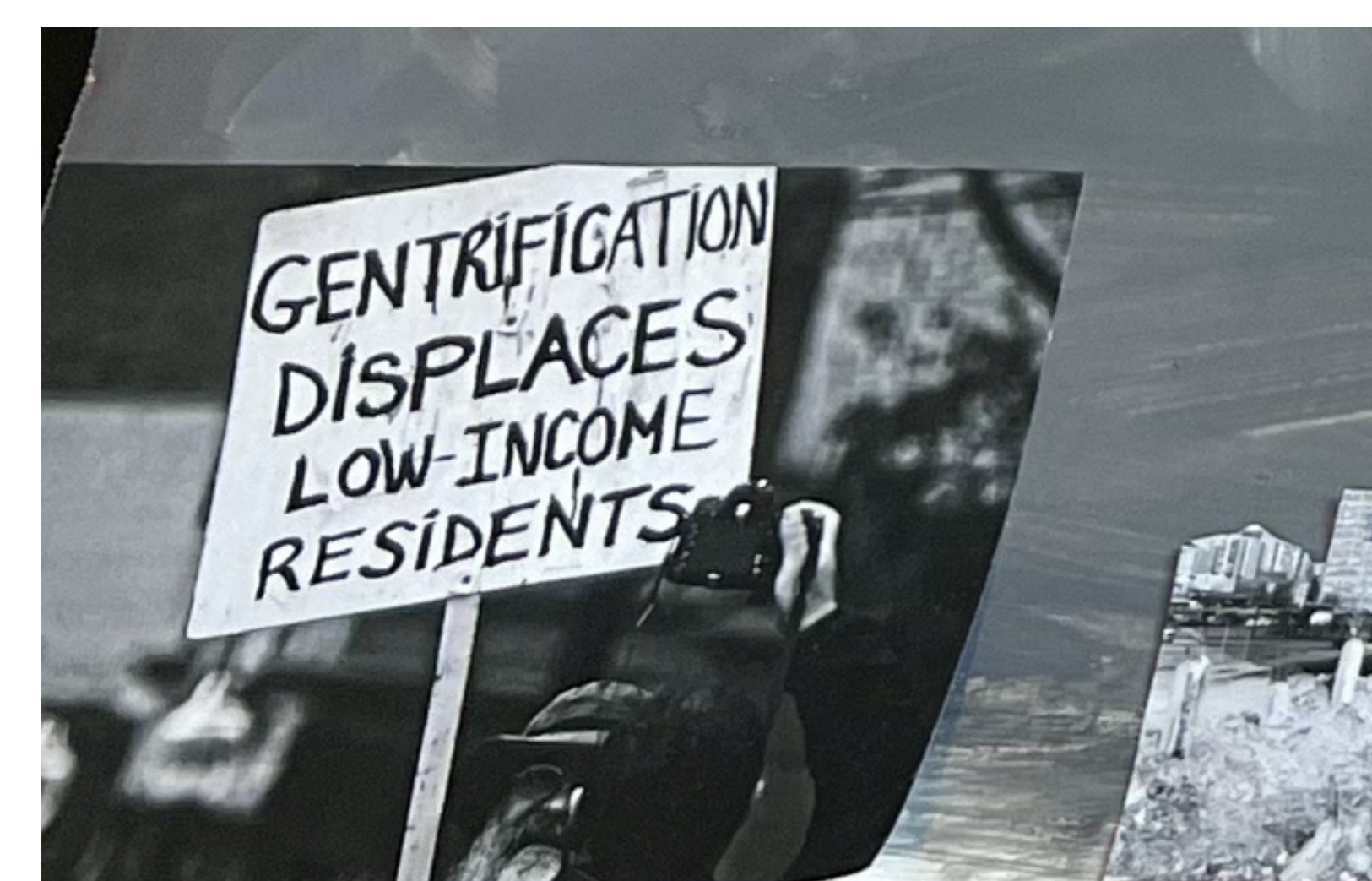
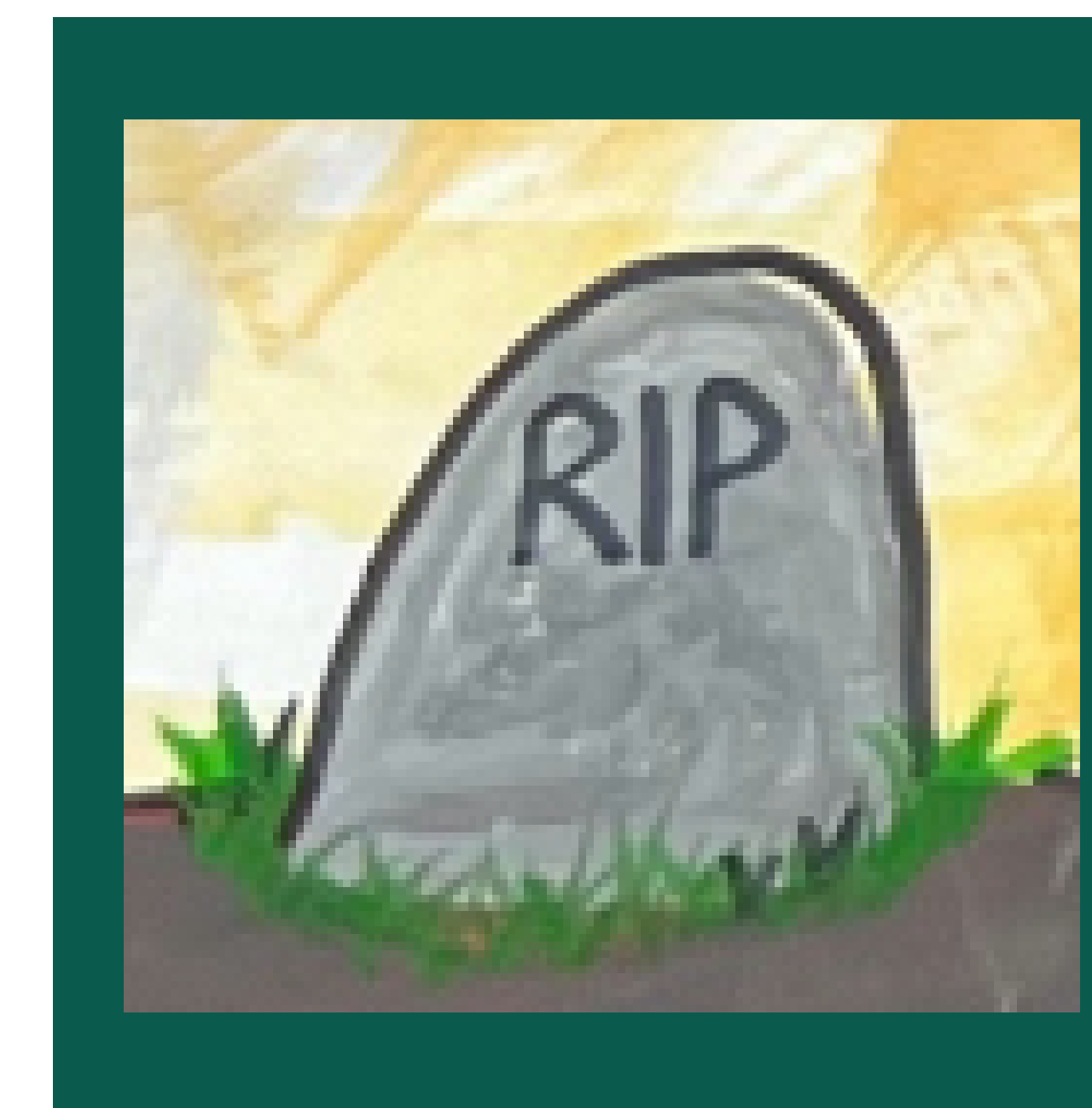
References

- Bryson, L. 1994. Sport and the Maintenance of Masculine Hegemony. In: S. Birrell & C. Cole (Eds.) Women, sport, and culture (pp 47-64). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Eitzen, D. S. (1996). Classism in sport: The powerless bear the burden. Journal of Sport and Social Issues, 20(1), 95-105.
- Eitzen, S. Upward Mobility in Sport: Myths and Realities Using Sociological Theories from Coakley, J. Sports and Society: Issues and Controversies. 10th edition, Boston, MA: McGraw Hill. (pgs 34-57)

Sociology of Sport: Art Analysis

"The Shadows Below"

By: Marissa McGraw



Racism

- African American professional male athlete playing baseball in the arena. This represents the **myth of sport careers being probable and sport being a way out of poverty.** Eitzen discusses this myth, stating that 2/3 of African American boys believe they will be pro athletes when "Statistically, you have a better chance of getting hit by a meteorite," at about .14% likely to become a pro player.
- Many of these boys spend most of their time training athletically when studying would have greater likelihood of paying off in upward mobility.
- Many African American boys, then, are not pursuing careers that would benefit them politically.
- The belief in sports as the way up leads to jobs dependent on whites which leads to under representation in other professions.
- It reinforces the racist ideology that African Americans, while physically superior to whites, are inferior to them intellectually. Success of African Americans in the highly visible sports also gives white americans a false sense of black progress and interracial harmony.

See pictured in middle window: African American professional baseball player

Classism

- Eitzen entitled Classism in Sport: The Powerless Bear the Burden. Problems associated with public arenas in regards to lower class individuals. The two most important topics he discusses are **subsidized public arenas and the unequal cost of spectatorship.**
- When cities build stadiums for sports teams, several decisions have negative consequences for the economically disadvantaged.
 1. **Regressive tax** is imposed to pay for new stadiums. When communities subsidize teams, they have less money for schools or parks and city services that help the poor may be reduced.
 2. Decisions by city leaders involve the location of the new arena. Urban areas are usually chosen because they are inexpensive. Thich decision displaces poor people.
- Cost of attending sports is often too costly for the poor, who helped pay for the arena. These costs will likely keep the poorest away from the sports arenas, except for workers (Eitzen, 1996).
- I chose to represent the shadows of the communities, people, and buildings which used to be where the arena is now standing. These people are holding up the arena (the arena is thriving through their tax money) and they are also trying to get in and watch the game but they are unable to (cost of spectatorship).

See pictured: Economically disadvantaged ("Shadows of the people who used to live there") holding up the building as well as being crushed by the building.

See pictured: the buried city of urban residents.

See pictured: ridiculous costly prices for concessions on the right wall of the arena.