Sinead Scott

4/30/20

Writing Assignment 5

I am choosing option two for this week’s writing assignment and I would like to cover the article “How the Trump Administration treats meat processing says a lot about our priorities” by Brandon Tensley of CNN (published 4.29.20). Tensley discusses how although in the past meat-processing plants have been viewed negatively, Trump’s executive order to keep them open will put employees at a great risk during the coronavirus pandemic. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/29/politics/executive-order-meat-processing-plants-latinos/index.html>

What’s particularly problematic is that these high-production plants are not equipped to protect against the spread of a virus like COVID-19 and its reported that nearly 30% of meat packing workers are foreign born; two-thirds are Latino (35%), black (20%) or Asian (8%). Even though in the past these plants had been a target for federal agents, namely because of undocumented immigrant workers, they have since “become a part of America’s critical infrastructure-a change that’s forcing the already vulnerable Latinos who make up sizeable shared of the meat processing workforce to weigh their livelihoods against their safety.”

This story is a “justice” issue because those affected are primarily minorities and although they are seeing deaths from the virus spreading quickly at these plants, the measures that the major meat-processers say they have taken don’t seem to be enough. “’These are essential frontline worker. They are just as important as doctors and nurses, but they are not being treated that way’” Says Domingo Garcia, president of the civil rights group League of United Latin American Citizens.

I think this is something we have seen repeatedly throughout this course: the most vulnerable in the society being ignored or mistreated. In this instance, and according to the article there is a tendency for the “decision-makers” at these processing-plants to prioritize profit over people. This reminds me of when we watched the movie about desegregating schools in Boston because in both cases the government officials make an order that they expect the schools, or meat-processing plants, to abide by, and yet they do not consider the consequences because the only people harmed are people who are already a minority, already vulnerable, and thus their getting hurt does not affect the government.

This article was rather short and I would like to see more about how the conditions have changed, whether or not the processing plants have seen influxes in profit and how these correlate with the workers and new regulations. I think this article is more of a brief summary of a justice issue that could be further researched and written about.