



Terrible Things Are Happening Outside: Building Resiliency and Empowering People in Broken Immigration Systems

Associate Director Dr. Jacob Campbell

Social Work Chair Ruby Aguilar

Practicum Director Jessica Vega

Assistant Professor Alicia Gomez

Heritage University
Social Work Department



Rooted *in* Resilience

HONORING THE PAST, GROUNDING THE PRESENT

CSWE ANNUAL CONFERENCE | ATLANTA, GA | OCTOBER 22-25, 2026



Land Acknowledgements

Heritage University respectfully acknowledges that our campus in Toppenish, Washington, is situated on the ancestral homelands of the Yakama Nation and the Indigenous peoples of this region. We honor their enduring connection to this land and recognize the resilience of Indigenous communities past and present. We commit to fostering an academic environment that respects and uplifts Indigenous knowledge, culture, and sovereignty.

“We respectfully acknowledge that the City of Atlanta is located on the ancestral homelands of the Muscogee (Creek) people. We recognize the sustained oppression, land dispossession, and involuntary removals of the Muscogee and Cherokee peoples from Georgia and the Southeast. We commit to creating a city that is inclusive of this history and our Indigenous communities.”

-Elise Blasingame

Heritage University
Social Work Department

⚠ TRIGGER WARNING: Content discusses immigration enforcement

Opening Skit The Impact of ICE

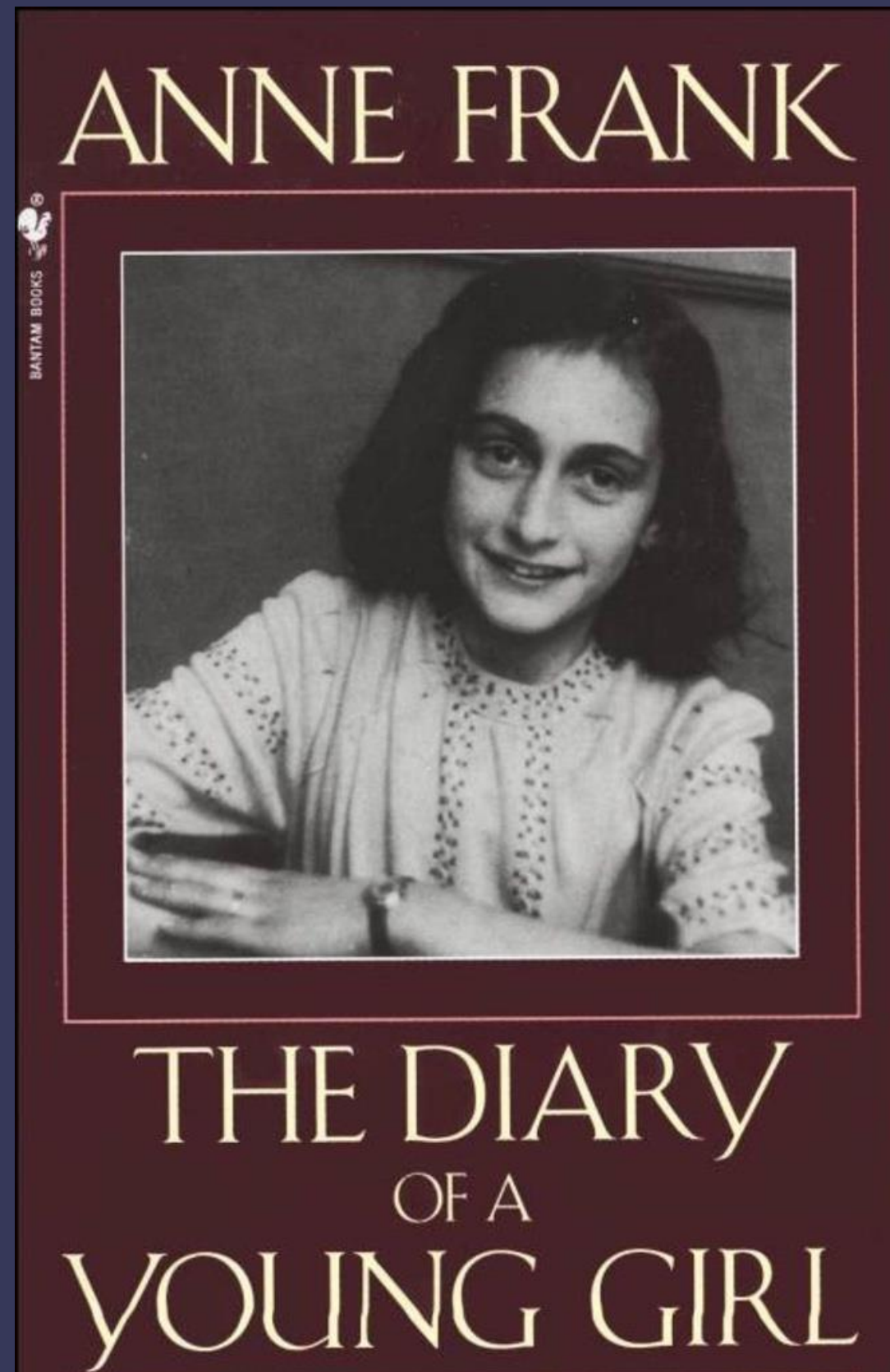


Terrible Things Are Happening Outside: Building Resiliency and Empowering People in Broken Immigration Systems

This presentation contains content related to immigration enforcement, family separation, and systemic injustice. Please practice self-care as needed.

Heritage University
Social Work Department

Jessica Vega



ANN FRANK (1995), WRITING WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1943:

Terrible things are happening outside. At any time of night and day, poor helpless people are being dragged out of their homes. They're allowed to take only a knapsack and a little cash with them, and even then, they're robbed of these possessions on the way. Families are torn apart; men, women and children are separated. Children come home from school to find that their parents have disappeared. Women return from shopping to find their houses sealed, their families gone. (p. 67)

THE WHY

SCALE OF ENFORCEMENT

Communities live in constant fear as enforcement actions escalate. Mixed-status families, schools, workplaces, and healthcare systems are all disrupted.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Psychological and social disruption extends far beyond undocumented individuals. Two million Washingtonians are affected by Medicaid changes for refugee, asylum-seeking, and mixed-status adults.

FROM MACRO TO MICRO

Connecting systemic impact to the direct service context — understanding how policy decisions translate into the lived experiences of the people we serve.

Jessica Vega

IMPACT OF ICE ON COMMUNITIES

THROUGH DETENTION

- Detaining immigrants has become big business (Burkhardt, 2024)
- The federal government is attempting to drastically increase capacity for detaining immigrants (Brennan Center, 2025)
- There are high rates of possibly preventable deaths (Human Rights Watch & Physicians for Human Rights, 2026)

OUTSIDE OF DETENTION

- There is a real "chilling effect" on the employment of immigrants and no economic improvement for U.S.-born workers. (Cox & East, 2026)
- Millions of U.S.-citizen children have undocumented parents and family members, and Immigration enforcement (and the threat of enforcement) can negatively impact a child's long-term health and development (American Immigration Council, 2021)
- Reckless use of force and brutality, disregard for the vulnerable, and resulting deaths. (American Civil Liberties Union, 2026)

Heritage University



HU main campus spans about 48 acres and is situated near the town of Toppenish, which is known for its agricultural heritage and over 70 historical murals.

HOW IS HERITAGE UNIVERSITY RESPONDING?

Faculty/Staff Guidance

Restricted Access to Private Areas

Do not attempt to physically impede any officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding their authorization.

Do Not Divulge Unnecessary Information

In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Contact the Appropriate Authorities

Warrant Requirements

The university will only respond to a judicial warrant (signed by a judge), not an administrative warrant.

Heritage University officials will not require anyone to hand over identification cards or documents that identify themselves to ICE agents. Only the President or their designee is authorized to release information and will only do so to comply with a judicial warrant.

Support for Detained Individuals

Support Services for Students

Support Services for Employees

Let's talk about it...

HOW IS HERITAGE UNIVERSITY RESPONDING?

Clinicals / Practicum Placement Response

Guidance for Students Participating in Off-Campus Internships, Practica, Clinicals & Other Experiences



Heritage University

1. Alert Your Supervisor

If you encounter immigration enforcement activity near your placement site, immediately notify your faculty supervisor and site supervisor.

2. Do Not Divulge Unnecessary Information

In accordance with FERPA, do not share student records or personal information with unauthorized parties.

3. Know Your Rights

You have the right to remain silent. You do not have to consent to a search of yourself or your belongings.

4. Private Areas vs. Judicial Warrants

Officers may not enter private areas without a judicial warrant signed by a judge. An administrative warrant (ICE warrant) does not grant this authority.

5. Administrative Warrants

The university will only respond to a judicial warrant (signed by a judge), not an administrative warrant. Heritage University officials will not require anyone to hand over identification cards or documents to ICE agents.

6. Stay Calm and Composed

Do not attempt to physically impede any officer, even if the officer appears to be exceeding their authorization. Remain calm and document what you observe.

7. Contact Student Affairs

If you have questions or concerns, contact Student Affairs immediately for guidance and support services.

COMMUNITY IMPACT – FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY

- FEAR SPREAD RAPIDLY THROUGHOUT IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES FOLLOWING INCREASED IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITY.
- MANY FAMILIES REPORTED FEELING UNSAFE LEAVING THEIR HOMES.
- RUMORS, SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS, AND REPORTS OF ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS INTENSIFIED COMMUNITY ANXIETY.
- FEAR EXTENDED BEYOND UNDOCUMENTED INDIVIDUALS AND AFFECTED MIXED-STATUS FAMILIES, U.S. CITIZENS, AND LAWFUL RESIDENTS.



COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO FEAR

- DECREASED ATTENDANCE AT WORK, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD PROCESSING.
- FAMILIES LIMITED TRIPS TO GROCERY STORES AND OTHER ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES.
- PARENTS KEPT CHILDREN HOME FROM SCHOOL AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.
- FEWER PEOPLE ATTENDED MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS AND ACCESSED SOCIAL SERVICES.
- REDUCED PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY EVENTS, CHURCHES, AND PUBLIC SPACES.
- INCREASED SOCIAL ISOLATION AND STRESS WITHIN FAMILIES.





Community Response

Heritage University
Social Work Department

Ruby Aguilar

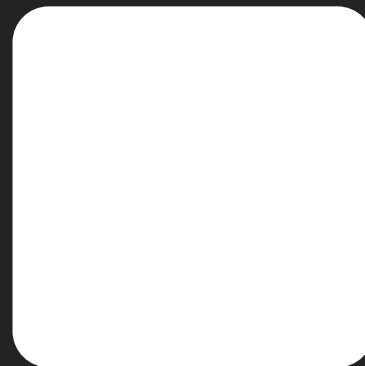
AS SOCIAL WORKERS, WHAT ARE WE REFUSING TO IGNORE?

Ruby Aguilar

Heritage University Social Work Department



Scan the QR code to respond in Mentimeter



**Whistle Building
Kits**

Safety Planning

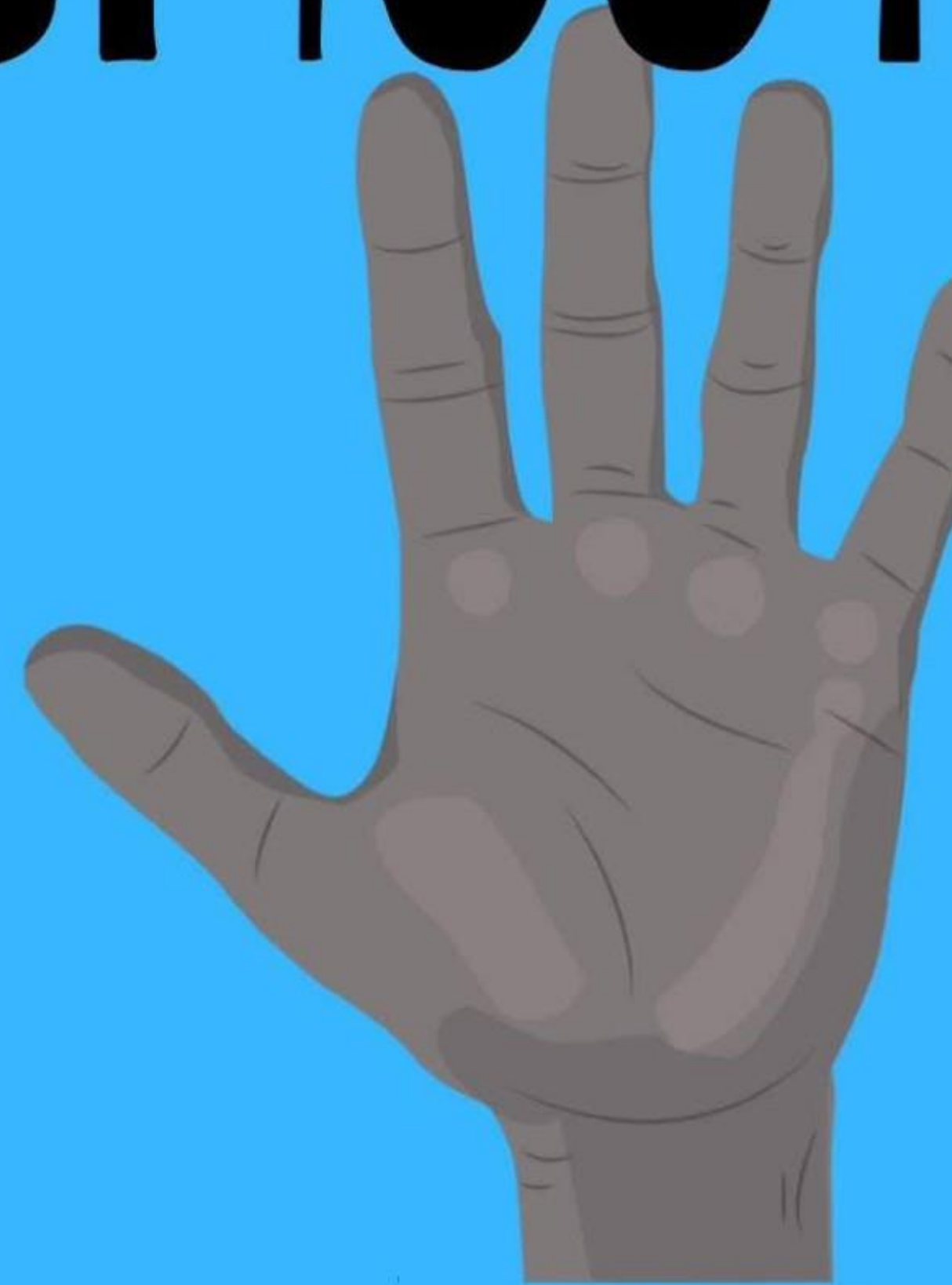
**INTERACTIVE
STATIONS**

Safely Filming ICE

GUIDELINES FOR BYSTANDERS & OBSERVERS

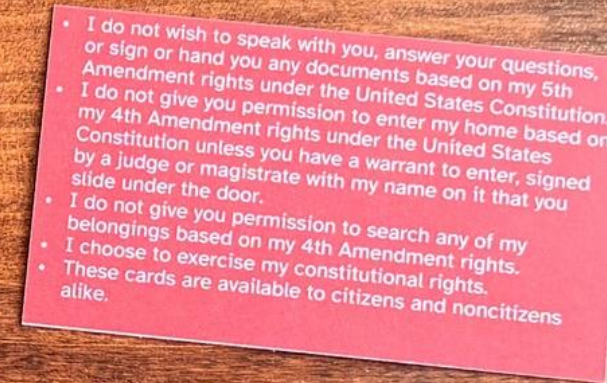
DON'T SHOOT

- Stay a safe distance
- If the officer gets too close, speak in a calm, audible voice that you are stepping back but have the right to record
- Ensure your phone is passcode protected.
- Don't go live on social media



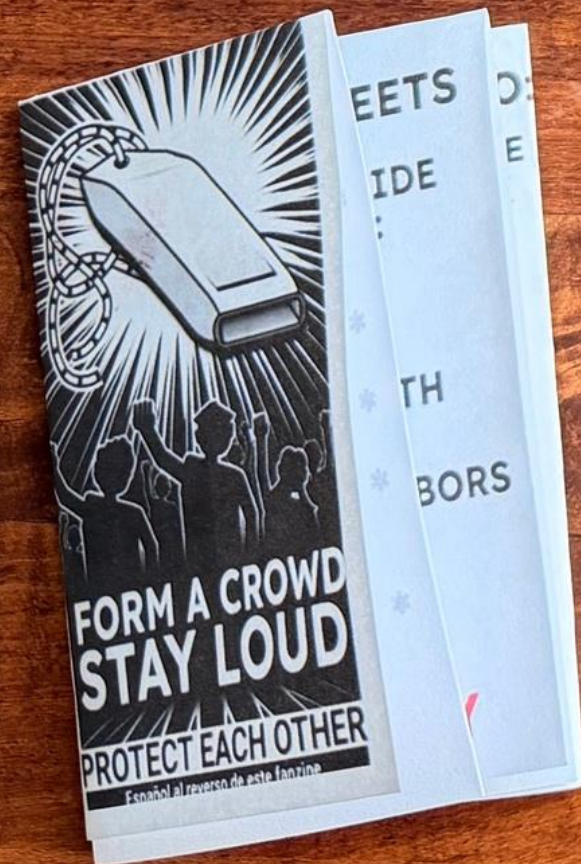
Kit Holder

Keep it All
Together



Red Card

Know Your Rights



Zine

Know
What to
Do



Whistle

Blow to Notify
Others ICE is Around

WHISTLE KIT



HOW WILL YOU MOVE FORWARD
WITH THIS INFORMATION?

Thank You

Heritage University
Social Work Department



References

American Civil Liberties Union. (2026). Agents of chaos and cruelty: How the Trump administration's national deportation policing force has attacked American communities. <https://assets.aclu.org/live/uploads/2026/07/agents-of-chaos-report.pdf>

American Immigration Council. (2021). U.S. citizen children impacted by immigration Enforcement. American Immigration Council. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/fact-sheet/us-citizen-children-impacted-immigration-enforcement/>

Blasingame, E. (2024). **City of Atlanta Land Acknowledgment** Elise Blasingame. July 20, 2026. [City of Atlanta Land Acknowledgement — eliseblasingame.com](https://www.cityofatlanta.com/land-acknowledgment/)

Burkhardt, B. C. (2024). From Private Prisons to Private Detention: Visualizing the Business of Immigration Enforcement. *Socius: Sociological Research for a Dynamic World*, 10, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23780231241277106>

Cox, E., & East, C. (2026). Labor market impacts of ICE activity in Trump 2.0., 0. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w35129>

Eisen, L. B. (2025). Budget Bill Massively Increases Funding for Immigration Detention. Brennan Center for Justice. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/budget-bill-massively-increases-funding-immigration-detention>

Frank, A. (1995). *The diary of a young girl: The definitive edition*. Doubleday.

Human Rights Watch, & Physicians for Human Rights. (2026). Dying in detention: Rising deaths in an expanding US immigration detention system. https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/media_2026/06/us_deathsindetention0626web_0.pdf

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network. (2025, January). Guidelines for bystanders & observers: Documenting ICE activity [Fact sheet]. https://waisn.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Guidelines-for-Bystanders-Observers_ENG_Jan2025.pdf