

Skyler Vela

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Stacie Cone

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Questioning Methods

Through the ages, healthcare has evolved throughout many different areas of the world. Edward Moore, being the first homeless person in Seattle and becoming the president of the American Medical Association, exposed the PNW to new medical practices and promoted a broader outlook on various healthcare solutions across the region. As Edward's battle with mental illness during his homelessness increased, the communities of Seattle pursued treatments for him. Although the Pioneer Settlers and Indigenous both had significant methods for helping Edward Moore, the Pioneer Settlers' methods, which Western Europe influenced, sought to diagnose individual mental instability to be a biological or failing trait, while the Indigenous methods aimed to restore balance within the mind, body, and spirit rather than isolate the individual.

Seattle, WA, was around two years old and had a population consisting of Native people, British, and French; others had just about fifty residents. As the British and French took power and set their rules among the city of Seattle, they established the Poor Laws. Originally, these laws were made to control Vagabond Beggars, hold them captive for three days with little food and water, and then send them back out. Then, the Act of Settlement arrived, which banned poor people from moving anywhere outside their hometowns, no matter the circumstances. More so, within the society of Seattle at the time, mental illness and homelessness were commonly viewed as an individual problem and outcasted from the norm. It was because of these laws that harsh treatments were constructed, and Edward Moore was diagnosed as insane and viewed as a deserving criminal. In Josephine Ensign's book, which dives deep into the history of Seattle's homelessness issue, she states that "Edward Moore was deemed by the white pioneer leaders of Seattle to be insane and incapable of taking care of himself" (Ensign 13). It was then true that individuals

like Edward who were might have been sent to asylums with treatments like restraint, isolation, or even drastic medical procedures. These treatments aimed to correct their behavior, whether it was seen as a physical imbalance in the body or a moral defect. This means that Edward Moore's journey of healing was prolonged because of the dehumanization he was by these rules and regulations.

In contrast, despite the Settler's approach to treatment, the Indigenous had a quite different view and approach to helping mentally ill individuals. The Natives considered the mind, body, and spirit interconnectedness, mainly within one's self and community. When someone in the community, like Edward, needed help, they focused on restoring their state of mind. Josephine Ensign wrote, "What Western medicine would diagnose currently as depression, mania, anxiety, schizophrenia, or even alcoholism and substance use disorder were considered forms of "spirit illness" and were treated by traditional healers through the use of sweat lodges and spirit dances" (Ensign 28). For example, healing ceremonies may have included medicinal plants, songs, prayers, and the involvement of spiritual leaders who would guide the individual through the healing process. The native's more natural approach to curing mental distress had a more compassionate and caring way of restorment. Most importantly, the process was communal, meaning that the individual had others to lean on and were supported by those around them. There is more care and dignity within this method because of their view that the idea of mental illness was a part of something larger and blamed on one flawed person.

When comparing the Pioneer Settlers and Indigenous ways of treating the mental illness of someone who is without a home or in poverty, it is prominent that they reflect two very different world views. Settlers view it as a biological failing trait that should be treated with harsh conditions and rules to regulate the issue. Meanwhile, the Indigenous community comes to the issue with community and healing-based processes. Essentially, by including all aspects of what actually should be considered when someone is suffering from mental illness, the Indigenous's outlook on health care was more effective in the healing process. This offered a more sympathetic and humane approach to something that impacts people's lives greatly, making it a superior method for true healing.