

“This is not a conversation about Black parent shaming,” Dr. Neal A. Lester, Director of ASU Project Humanities, repeated twice at the beginning of the online Spare the Kids podcast event on 4 June 2020. It was also made clear that this conversation had nothing to do with “telling anybody *how* to parent.” Instead, this conversation was about “generational trauma, respect for Black bodies, and ultimately respect for children.” Dr. Neal Lester was then joined by Dr. Michelle Melton, a clinical psychologist and Project Humanities Community Ambassador. Dr. Melton summarized the podcast on Dr. Stacy Patton’s *Spare the Kids* book as “bringing in connections of white supremacy in a practice of corporal punishment or whuppings.” The largest thing I wrestled with while observing the podcast discussion and writing this review was where I should speak and where I am entitled to have an opinion. I say this not to suppress my own voice, but to ensure that the voices of those who are affected by the subject areas the podcast covered, and in turn the crisis of severe inequality occurring in America today, are amplified.

To be completely honest, before entering this conversation I had never spent much time examining the idea of ‘whuppings,’ especially not in the context of the history of Black people in America. Something that stood out to me was when Dr. Melton talked about how she felt this whooping culture, as violent and ineffective as it may be, made her feel connected to her own community. This resonated with me because it is such a unique perspective to take, yet it is understandable. Oftentimes, in tough situations, we cling to whatever we can to stay connected, even if those things have negative associations.

Another topic of discussion that stuck with me was when Dr. Lester and Dr. Melton began reflecting upon how often these aggressive, violent acts are said to be beneficial toward the child’s growth. Dr. Melton put it clearly when she said, “We as Black folks began to accept that we process Black bodies into better human beings through violence.” She then spoke about how this doesn’t have to do with the religious aspect of it anymore. Instead, it has to do with “conditioning.” I found this particularly interesting because I had never thought about whuppings in that sense. This made me reflect upon why Black parents whupping their children is so prevalent in their culture and why violence is used. I learned that it has to do with this generational trauma, passed along from many, many years ago, possibly derived from American

slavery where whipping was believed to manage and control enslaved people's actions and behaviors.

Attending this event in particular was an extremely different experience for me than the last event because this topic area felt a bit more prevalent, given what we are seeing in the media today. It was also a unique experience because it forced me to confront ideas that I may have been too uncomfortable and uneducated to think about in the past. At the end of the podcast discussion, I felt overwhelmed with the sheer amount of new information and perspectives I gained because I have never learned about the specific topics covered in Spare the Kids. It simply goes to show that there is always more to learn and new knowledge to gain around every new corner.