

"Liberty and Justice for All": A Reflection

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MULTIMEDIA

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: The Guatemala STD Experiments, conducted from 1946 to 1948, aimed to investigate the prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. The experiments, which were largely inconclusive, involved the intentional injection of STDs into prisoners, mental patients, prostitutes, orphans, and school children without any informed consent. While many subjects were treated with antibiotics, many were not, resulting in at least eighty deaths and countless infections both inside the study and in the larger population.

This piece aims to showcase the experiences of four victims of the Guatemala experiments: Ana, a prostitute injected with an STD later paid to expose prisoners to her illness, Oscar, a prisoner who was infected with an STD via sexual contact with prostitutes like Ana, Pedro, a conscripted Guatemalan soldier injected with syphilis, and Maria, a young orphan infected with an STD. My purpose is to uncover the issues of justice in these unethical experiments—how American doctors took advantage of vulnerable populations to expose them to STDs, and how the diseases that infected the experimental group have now spread beyond the confines of the study to the general population. I hope to shed light on the perspective of victims abused by American doctors in these scandalous experiments.

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