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# **Anti-Blackness at School: A Genealogical Case Study of Anti-Blackness during the Great Migration**

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## **Abstract**

Since the Great Migration, the white spatial imaginary (WSI) (Lipsitz, 2007) has worked to dehumanize and enclose (Sojoyner, 2016) Black families in California into particular spaces through discriminatory policies and practices. This paper uses genealogical and archival research to identify the practices of the white spatial imaginary during one family's migration. Part of a larger study of the Great Migration, this genealogical case study draws on interviews with Myrna Herndon, a black student who attended Vallejo schools in the 1940s. Historical records (photographs, yearbooks, maps) provide insight into the history of Vallejo schools as "site[s] of suffering" (Dumas, 2014) and "survival complex[es]" (Love, 2019) for Black children during this time. This study highlights the potential of genealogical case study as educational research method, and the white spatial imaginary as an explanatory lens for the dehumanization and violence Black youth, like Myrna, experienced during the Great Migration.

**Keywords:** African American; California history; case study; genealogy; Great Migration