



Doctoral School Research Award (2023)- Rosalind Hulse, Media Arts.

The Third Wave experiment, which occurred in the Spring of 1967, represents one of the strangest moments in American Holocaust education. It also occurred in preceding years of what would be some of the most tumultuous and violent moments in twentieth-century history. As a neglected example of unorthodox learning, The Third Wave experiment and the socio-political climate it emerged during needed further scrutinising. My research in September 2023 enabled me to achieve this.

The Doctoral School Research award allowed me to travel to Palo Alto, California, in September 2023. Over two weeks, I conducted archival research at the Cecil Green Library, Stanford, and interviews with former students and teachers in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The research established several essential factors that have since been central to my thesis. Firstly, by studying the local newspapers (Palo Alto and the Bay Area), I could chronologically identify the growing politicisation of education in Northern California. I also established whether there was a broader silence around the Third Wave experiment. Additionally, through the coverage and my interviews, I identified the influence of the newly elected Governor of California, Ronald Reagan, on the climate around education and politics during the late 1960s.

My interviews, which totalled nearly five hours, also proved incredibly useful. I identified further tensions within the Palo Alto community, conflicts within the school district and the school, and the profoundly emotional insight each participant offered. The Vietnam War, which, while present in my thesis, had never played a central theme, became an omnipresent concern when interviewing former students. Hearing of how teenagers would follow the War daily, due to their knowledge and fear that they too might be drafted in the future, emphasised a personal aspect to their response to the Third Wave experiment that previous studies had otherwise neglected. Because I could interview the participants in person, I was rewarded through their frank and provocative contributions.

I am indebted to Royal Holloway's Doctoral School Research Award for supporting this project. While some information about the period and the experiment is available through online archives, the overarching evidence that I desperately needed to support my thesis was restricted to several undigitised newspapers stored at Stanford University. Furthermore, because the Award allowed me to travel to Palo Alto, I could visit and explore neighbourhoods at the heart of the cultural and political change during the late 1960s.

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