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KINTSUGI AND PROCESSES OF PRODUCTIVE DAMAGE:

THE VALUES OF EMBODIMENT AND EMOTION FOR ANTIRACISM WORK IN

EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

What does it mean to say that race is an event, action, and encounter between bodies rather than an attribute of subjects? What may we come to behold when we recognize the inherent limitations of focusing exclusively on race as language and social construct, and the converse pregnant supplementary existential capacity of the material, especially in context to *matters* of race and racism for education and beyond? In pursuit of greater revalorization of the values of matter and embodiment for our understanding of race as simultaneous biological and cultural phenomenon, the following work offers an empirical anthropological sketch of multi-layered encounters with race as these emerge and unfold both intra- and inter-subjectively through and among a racially-diverse group of university students. Such relational focus further uncovers the simultaneous need to account for the value of emotions – which are always mapped through and over bodies – in our engagements with race and racism. It contends that racial subjectivities, old and new, emerge through material embodied encounters that then reproduce and reify within the psyche, persisting in variegated identity alignments of trust and estrangement. On such grounds, antiracism work comes to be an ongoing process of psychic and identity excavation that persistently relies on reengagement with the body and materiality, and such insight is demonstrated to hold particular salience for intersectionally-grounded antiracism work in education. A complex work of educational ethnography largely employing psychoanalytic and new materialist theoretical lenses, this dissertation follows racial subjectification and identification through seasons of ongoing becoming and flux co-constituted by iterative forms of violence and reconciliation. It leaves us with the challenge of re-conceptualizing relational antiracism work as akin to the metaphoric mending and revalorization of broken pottery. Our racial hurts and injured dreams, all different yet painful in iterative and varying degrees, paradoxically hold the very means through which the mending of relationships predicated on already existent embodied subjectivities and essences can once again occur. Notably, embedded

within the subliminal subtext of this work is the white man writer's own deeply conflicted and

contradictory movements of approach and evasion of both racialized others and racialized self.

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Alpha: Introductory Remarks

[I]t is hard to face this. But all our phrasing – race relations, racial chasm, racial justice, racial profiling, white privilege, even white supremacy – serves to obscure that racism is a visceral experience, that it dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth. (Coates, 2015, p. 10)

Throughout the ensuing chapters I will be asking you – the reader – to accompany me, a white man, as I engage with, among others, the emotional lives of Black and Brown students in relation to race and racism, and I realize that this is a really problematic thing that I'm asking you to do. Such accompaniment requires a lot of trust and trust is something that is ultimately difficult to earn. This creates a dilemma for me since how do I make it okay to talk about these emotional worlds – many which are very different from my own? To complicate matters, there is nothing subtle about racism. Yet, the very reality of this dilemma is simultaneously what this dissertation is about, namely how emotionally and politically complex antiracism work is. Consequently, at times I'm going to take risks throughout the work as it unfolds by sharing parts of my history and myself with you. Here, I especially desire to take Ruth Behar (1996) up on her call for researchers to embody greater vulnerability, while also hearkening to Denzin's (2003) important observation that vulnerability requires taking a clear political stand.

What does it mean to say that race is an event, action, and encounter between bodies rather than an attribute of subjects? What may we come to behold when we recognize the inherent limitations of focusing exclusively on race as language and social construct, and the converse pregnant supplementary capacity of the material, especially in context to *matters* of race and racism? Additionally, how may such epistemic reconfiguration enable us to rethink our understanding of what constitutes *human*, and how, if at all, does such shared sensibility ultimately help to reconfigure an ethical dimension for antiracism work in education? Such questions implicate the interrelated necessity for engaging with the matter of emotions in their relationship to matter since "emotions create the very surfaces and boundaries that allow all kinds

of objects to be delineated" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 10). Of course, unfortunately, within a normatively white supremacist patriarchal dispensation, such delineation generally takes the form of *difference* as disability, deficit, lack, and inferiority (see McDermott & Varenne, 1995).

In this dissertation study, I – an Africanist material assemblage of English and Afrikaans; a cisgender, heterosexual male with skin marked by pale complexion; flesh, blood, bone, and breath – will also engage with my own positioning, privilege, and power in relation to the theorization and practice of antiracism[1] work. Consequently, each of the ensuing chapters will engage in theoretical discussion interspersed with vulnerable (Behar, 1996) personal narratives in order to both provide a measure of context and declare my guiding assumptions throughout the process of writing. That said, the themes of race and embodiment; difference and racism; ethics and antiracism will run as common threads throughout the ensuing chapters, and will be accompanied by frequent references to the recent thought of Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015) who provides narrative clarity to matters of racialized embodiment as well as the affects/effects it generates in embodied human encounters.

Later, a new materialist approach infused with key psychoanalytic concepts will be used to analyze data collected during a semester undergraduate course on racism and its intersectional identity affiliates. Such a new materialist approach informed with key psychoanalytic concepts will prove invaluable towards delineating the vulnerability of the body as productive of emotions that give rise to racialized psychic melancholic formations and identity affiliations that need to be factored into both racism and antiracism work. As will become evident, it is precisely such embodied vulnerability – or sensibility (Levinas, 1998) – that constitutes an ethical foundation for antiracism education. Furthermore, I frame the scope of this inquiry through the following two fundamental research questions:

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[1] Here I purposefully break with convention so as to make a distinction between *racist* as both a countable noun denoting an individual exhibiting racist [adj.] behavior and *racism* as a set of social practices, laws, and institutions that reproduce and maintain white supremacy, and in which white people – often

i) How can antiracism work in teacher education benefit from deeper engagement with the body and emotions?

ii) How can the diverse racialized experiences and affiliations of the triad of learners, teacher, and curriculum practically inform intersectional antiracism work in education?

Importantly, both these questions presuppose the importance of the teacher/researcher as an intimate partner of the aforementioned triad rather than a detached technician or observer.

At its heart, this exploration views antiracism work in education as akin to the Japanese art of kintsugi[2] [golden joinery] whereby damage becomes productive. Furthermore, it strives to draw both race and racism from the realm of the abstract and foreground it instead as an embodied, material encounter among affectively energized bodies that operate in conjunction with torrents of desire. Granting primacy to the body ultimately holds much potential for anti-racism work in the university classroom where the dominant understanding of difference predicated on a degree of sameness can be troubled, affect and desire can come to be recognized as primary resources towards new forms of becoming, and the desiring body – as *matter* that matters – can be foregrounded. Here, it is important to emphasize that desire is not so much indicative of lack or pleasure [though a sense of lack or pleasure may comprise its constitutive parts] as an immanent psychical, corporeal, and social assemblage of life forces productive of vitality (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), and – may I add – the terrors / Terrors (Staples, 2016) of death [see latter discussion on Freud's *death drive*]. This said, in the ensuing first chapter, which lays the contextual foundation for this study, I begin by describing a profoundly meaningful experience I had with race as an anxiety-laden embodied encounter.

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[2] A creative process – derived from the Japanese Wabi-Sabi worldview that recognizes transience and imperfection as aesthetic values – of repairing broken pottery with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum. Here, brokenness is valued as part of the history of an object.

Chapter 1

Flesh Matters

. . . so that the branches of the black body might be torched, then cut away.
(Coates, 2015, p. 14)

/ˌmɛt əˈmɔr fəˌsiz / *The car shudders and chokes violently, not unlike a death rattle,*

before the engine dies in scorching peak-hour Cape Town traffic on a packed four-lane

eastbound incline. "Oh, for god's sake---s!", I exclaim, before swallowing my words. I am on the

straight and narrow now – a minister of religion. If only the road I am currently stranded on,

straight as it may be, were as narrow as the righteous road I am expected to walk daily. Drivers

are honking frantically, cursing as they pass by with stunted acceleration. The lights go from red

to amber to green to amber to red to an eternal green. The pressing sense of immobility sends my

heart rate and blood pressure moving at perceptibly increasing rates. I turn the ignition, over and

over again, to be met with the type of silence only ever encountered among jilted lovers. I

anxiously await the next red light before getting out of the car to ask the four [white men] in the

car beside me if they would please help me to push my car out of the busy road. The driver smirks

arrogantly and raises his electric window before driving off as soon as the light turns green. I

retreat back to my car, unsure of what to do next. I attempt to contact the insurance company but

in this kind of traffic it could take an hour or more for them to arrive with a company-validated

tow truck. "Bloody shite! Fucking bollocks!" – I'm no longer able to maintain the decorum of

Christian piety and propriety. The drivers keep honking angrily in what now has come to sound

like a cacophony of lost souls crying out from the vortex as they are being swallowed by the

throat of hell. My anxiety and frustration coincide at boiling point. Glancing at myself in the

rearview mirror I recognize in my brow the same perspiring degree of panic I saw in a pinned-

down-in-LA-traffic Michael Douglas moments before he goes postal in Joel Schumacher's 1993

loon-fest psychological thriller, Falling Down. Suddenly there is a loud thud on the window of my

driver's side door followed by a fusillade of thumps across the roof of the car. Bewildered, I gaze

around from the inside. An impi of five black men stand surrounding the vehicle. In a state true to

traditional white South African laager-mentality I briefly ponder the feeling before the rational

thought, am I under attack? I am on hyper-alert and by now, in split-second bursts, have listed

and crossed out the likely options of what is about to happen to me: They are going to hijack me

and take the car by force. No, this is irrational – the car has broken down in traffic. That would

be stupid. No, they know that the car has broken down and so have identified me as a sitting duck,

albeit a duck seated in a mid-sized Mazda sedan. They are probably going to rob me at either

knifepoint or gunpoint, or both. Fight-or-fucking-flight indeed is preceded by wink-of-the-eye

moments of crystal clear contemplation, I realize. Reluctantly I turn down the window – my left

fist clenched, ready, but out of view . . . my right hand reaching for the metal steering wheel lock

[it's still the year 2000] lying in the nook between my seat and the door. A black face peers into

the window by my side. The country at this time is paranoid with media reports of brutal car

hijackings and vicious armed robberies – often in traffic and broad daylight – to the extent that

South African motorists now have the option to install The Blaster[3]: a 1998 patented

flamethrower for cars that serves as anti-hijacking weapon by spewing liquefied gas-turned-

fireballs from both sides of the vehicle, hereby dispatching would-be attackers from the files of

the violent crimes unit to the beds of the burn unit (see CNN, 1998). Of course, I don't have a

blaster – the idea always seemed a bit over the top to me and confirmation of the stereotype of

South Africans as extremely violent and psychologically disturbed; the kind of bizarre solution

that might be portrayed on a billboard by a khaki-wearing, one-brow, grinning Chuck Norris

with the words, 'Now criminals can be toast before breakfast!' Of course, the dominant,

unrelenting media representation was that of black men being the dangerous perpetrators.

Another black man who had been standing at the front of the car now walks closely along the left

hand side of the car towards the rear end, exiting my peripheral field of view. I inhale . . . deeply

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[3] To view *The Blaster* in action, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQbHnLSasfQ (Paglinawan, 2006).

*. . . in the midst of a persistent pause that feels like the moment the needle of the clock on a time machine goes kaput. Suspended reality. Sweaty palms. Rigor mortis tongue. The face smiling radiantly this time, peeks into the car, addresses me – rather politely – and asks me to drop the handbrake. "What?!" I do so, intending to step outside of the car, yet before I am able to react the vehicle begins to move. Forward – gliding in spite of the traffic. The five black men push and push as I steer until eventually we reach a point in the road where the incline levels out and the curb subsides. On a small opening overlooking the mountain and Table Bay, about two hours from sunset, they leave the white man and his car. Running down the hill I hear them whistle and shout in Xhoza. Two, perhaps three, minutes later they drive by in an old, beat up, rusty builder's pick-up truck – waving at me. I wave back and shout: Baie dankie! Thank you! I only know how to say so in Afrikaans and English – not in Xhosa, Zulu, Pedi, Tswana. Then again, neither murder nor kindness requires words or language – a steel steering wheel lock or shoulders embedded into the rear metal end of a car are more than capable. I stay there for a while, standing – broken car the furthest matter from my mind. Now, sixteen years later, I can reflect on this experience and how it served as one of the numerous small, incremental encounters that caused a sufficient degree of emotional dissonance within me so as to instigate me to begin the work of excavating and renovating many of my central assumptions regarding race and racism. Yet, I am also left with the very unsettling awareness that this was not the experience of Terence Crutcher, the unarmed black father and motorist who – with both hands raised in the air – was gunned down at dusk by Oklahoma law en**force**ment on Friday evening September 16, 2016. I am 39; he <u>was</u> 40, and it is this switch in the tense of the verb 'to be' that demonstrates the distance between the experience of the world inhabited by Terence and people sharing his phenotype and an experience of the world traversed by those – who like me – can live to tell stories of transformation. And imagined thugs never threatened Mr. Crutcher – it was the tangible, statesanctioned apparatus of supposed righteousness that extinguished his body.*

Flesh matters. After all, the "ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die" (Mbembe, 2003, p. 11). While *the power and the capacity to dictate* in general is often framed as a feature of white privilege (see McIntosh, 1988), our discussions often fail to engage with the **matter** of *who may live and who must die* as embodied states and the manner through which powerful positions of privilege lay bare even more powerful systems of supremacy. For as we shall see later, who eventually lives and who dies – *life* and *death* not only as final states but especially as those daily conditions within which bodies dwell – more often than not bears eerie correlation with being of a particular phenotype (see Meghani, Byun & Gallagher, 2012; United States Sentencing Commission, 2012, pp. 51-61; Weldon Cooper Centre for Public Service, 2013; The Counted: People killed by police in the US, 2016). Unfortunately, within the contemporary global milieu the phenomenon of race is frequently relegated to assumptions of the post-racial and colorblind (see Goldberg, 2015; see 2008) in which explicit discriminatory practices against embodied melanin have been largely ameliorated – a perception amplified in the wake of Barack Obama's election to the office of President of the USA (Tesler & Sears, 2010). Increasingly, when racism as embodied material practice and experience is elicited it is usually done through deference to grand narratives from the past: bodies in chains during the Middle Passage and slavery, the yellow fabric Star of David, and extermination camps of The Holocaust, and the bodies of dead black schoolchildren – like Hector Pieterson – during Apartheid.

Yet, even contemporary tokens of progress cannot assuage the persistent reality that for many, the profile of their 'color, hair, and bone' (Du Bois in Foner, 1970) exposes them to, for instance, a greater chance of being, stopped, ordered out of the car, pushed into a wall, frisked, handcuffed, pushed to the ground, pepper sprayed, beaten (Centre for Policing Equity, 2016; Fryer, 2016), or even shot by law enforcement. What we seldom acknowledge then is the manner in which materialities coalesce in the moments before acts of brutality: skin color and a hoodie [Trayvon Martin], hair texture and a toy gun [Tamir Rice], the boned contours of skull moments

before it is slammed onto the asphalt [Sandra Bland]. Of course, this is true of not only Black

bodies, but also the bodies of Native Americans who are the "racial group most likely to be killed

by law enforcement" (Lakota People's Law Project, 2015, p. 1), as well as Latin@s.[4] "I believed,

and still do", writes Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015), "that our bodies are our selves, that my soul is the

voltage conducted through neurons and nerves, and that my spirit is my flesh" (p. 79). The reality

of this dependence of mind upon body as well as the frequency and brutality of these previously

cited encounters necessitates that racism as embodied and material engagement be foregrounded

in order to move beyond political understandings of race as solely a discursively-based attribute

of subjects. In other words, the time has come – especially in classroom contexts where curricula

imbued with tolerance-based multicultural ideologies predominate – to grapple with the ethical

implications of race, and racism, as event, action, and encounter between bodies. This is a crucial

matter since it cuts to the literal heart of what constitutes *human* as well as how certain lives come

to be relegated to the realm of the precarious on a global scale (see Butler, 2004).

While passionate social constructionists like Paul Gilroy (1991; 2002) and Ruth

Frankenberg (1993) may protest that *there is no such thing as race* and *race is not real* in the

sincere and well-intentioned belief that we can put an end to racial distinction if we cease from

performatively enacting such distinction through language, we need to remind ourselves that we

cannot escape both identity and body politics by merely censuring our language. There is a case

to be made, for instance, that racial identity is often experienced as a "true self", to draw on

Winnicott's phrasing, in the sense of a self that "contributes to the feeling of being alive in

relationship to others" (Farley & Kennedy, 2016, p. 171). This point ties in with Stuart Hall's

(1996) idea that while racial identity may be impossible [in that it is based on social constructs], it

is necessary [in that it ensures solidarity], and especially so in context to oppressed peoples for

whom identity isn't normative and invisible but a survival-based social resource. This view, in

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[4] See http://reclaimingthelatinatag.tumblr.com/post/35869235107/on-the-term-latin for a brief discussion
on the a-gendered significance of the noun form *Latin@*.

turn, accords with Spivak's (1998) notion of *strategic essentialism* whereby essentialist group

identities often come to be re-appropriated and deployed as resources through which to solidify

unity for the purpose of accomplishing healing relationships and sociopolitical objectives. Also,

while we may choose not to refer to *white privilege* and *black history*, race is not only spoken – it

is *read* as well. Bodies marked by ranges of phenotypic traits often evoke powerful emotions in a

process Baldwin (1955) refers to as the feeling of being "at the mercy of the reflexes the color of

one's skin caused in other people" (p. 93). Coupled with this is the reality that human conceptions

of raced bodies are loaded with complex unconscious desires and object investments (Daynes &

Lee, 2008) that intimately rely on phenotypic markers of difference. Here, for instance,

minstrelsy – whereby 19th Century white entertainers applied black cork on their faces to take on

the appearance of blacks – comes to serve as a fundamental source of threat and fascination for

white, working class US audiences in a social phenomenon deeply reliant upon the body.

Remarks Lott (1993): "blackface made 'blackness' flicker on and off so as simultaneously to

produce and disintegrate the body" (p. 117) in order to produce a white working class identity

through embodied performance and consumption, or *eating* the body of the other (hooks, 1992),

enabled by the body's deep association with libidinal sexuality and pleasure. As Biehl and Locke

(2010) point out, Foucault's (1976) assertion that power arrangements are not only normalizing,

but constitutive of social fields and practices does not contend with the Deleuzian primacy of

desire which operates via inventions, escapes, and sublimations that both undo and erupt

subjectivities. While the implications hereof for the unthinking of approaches that emphasize top-

down, asymmetrical power relations are legion, we might also consider its inverse: how desire

functions to open up racial subjectivities in a number of ways that colonize, capitalize, combat,

and turn a cold shoulder towards bodies, and communities of bodies, read as inferior. Remarks

Saldanha (2013), "[L]ike all power relations, racism operates first of all through the materialities

of desire and landscape far 'below' any mental or linguistic detectability" (p. 7). It is not merely

enough to ponder the lexical and semantic meaning of the word *racism*. Rather, it is essential to

think about *racism* through, for instance, the manner in which darker bodies have been exhibited

as the plunder and trophies of capture[5], hard earned gains of the Civil Rights-movement have

been resisted by force, Colin Kaepernick has been berated for dropping to his knee in protest, or

otherwise how silence has been enacted in the face of persistent social aggressions against black

and brown bodies that manifest in egregious material forms. Desire's shaping of social

perceptions of race then cannot be accomplished without the mediating role of "color, hair, and

bone" (Du Bois in Foner, 1970) that function not as common collections of traits but as

assemblages on a continuum (Haslanger, 2012, pp. 185-186) that show profound varieties and

difference, albeit profuse embodied differences that have unfortunately been reduced into

oversimplified taxonomies that have proven politically expedient to interests of white supremacist

domination.

The Ontological A Priori of Difference

To suggest the import of increased reflection upon the body as a phenotypic product of

human biological variation is not the same as to assert that race is an exclusively essentialized

biological phenomenon, and this is a crucial distinction to make. For instance, race is not

cognitively dysgenic – it does not produce deficient cognitive abilities through genetic inheritance

(Nisbett, Aronson & Blair, Dickens, Flynn, Halpern & Turkheimer, 2012) as, for instance,

Rushton and Jensen (2005) have sought to assert in their infamous straw man-type argument (see

Sternberg, 2005). Understandably, though, suspicion of biological explanations of race is clearly

warranted in the aftermath of the post-Blumenbach (1969 [1775]), Galton-era development of

eugenics, also popularly referred to as *scientific racism*, which in its most pernicious forms

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[5] Transported across borders and oceans as the work of taxidermy, the body of 'El Negro', was placed on exhibit in both France and Spain for seventeen decades – a nameless trophy later repatriated and buried in Botswana. Khoikhoi Sarah Baartman was interned as a freak show commodity in London and Paris before being placed on public display for one-and-a-half centuries. Caster Semenya, the black South African athlete is currently being displayed in not only the tabloids but across mainstream media as a non-gender conforming *freak*. Does Caster serve to coagulate or concurrent race/gender issues? Performance artists Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco in their exhibition, "The Couple in the Cage" [1992-1993], that toured major global Western metropolises, demonstrated through satire how racialized bodies placed on exhibition still encounter, in the 21st Century, the curiosity of diverse modern audiences.

pursued a pure Aryan genetic pool and the extermination of the supposedly lesser mud races (see Hitler, Manheim & Rogers, 1971). Yet, to claim of race that *all humans are the same; all people are equal* or that it is a "bioligistic fallacy" (Gates, 1997, p. viii) as a binary kneejerk reaction to the rapacious history of eugenics is to live in wishful ignorance of those clear, diverse phenotypic differences marking human bodies. Difference and biological variation is not the problem – it is an ontological given that exists prior to human life, pervading the entire Universe down to the minutiae of how atoms randomly arrange themselves to produce energy; an a priori that characterizes all of life.

Of grave social concern however is the means whereby differences come to be elided in order to bring about a superficial veneer of equality – a fantasy in that it relies on "conscious day-dreaming or conscious assumptions for which there is no evidence" (Craib, 2001). And while there is a good point to be made, namely, that races were created through the categorization and naming of populations by white European men, this does not negate the reality of those broad phenotypic variations among populations upon which centuries of divergent and often contesting racial classifications have been pegged (see Hammonds & Herzig, 2008). Fullerton elaborates as follows:

> For while it is certainly true that science . . . has, in its investigation of genetic relationships among humans, shown clearly that no fixed, innate, biological differences categorically separate individuals understood socially as belonging to different racial groups, this is not the same thing as saying that no biological differences whatsoever exist among such groups. (2007, p. 242)

Bamshad, Wooding, Salisbury and Stephens (2004) elaborate on this perspective:

> Frequently, it is erroneously contended that the high within-group variance of human populations is inconsistent with the existence of races because differences between individuals are greater than differences between groups . . . positive FST [comparative genetic variation statistic] indicates however, that individuals from different populations

are, on average, slightly more different from one another than are individuals from the

same population. (p. 604)

It should be noted at present that seemingly insignificant genetic, bodily differences among

populations – where human phenotypic variations come to be largely organized along geographic

and regional patterns that bear evidence of both long-term material/environmental influence and

restricted gene flow – do in fact hold implication for material, embodied wellbeing in context to

health and medicine. Examples hereof include the elevated incidences of prostate and breast

cancers (Wiencke, 2004), as well as rickets, osteoporosis, and earlier mortality in cases where

there is a dramatic decrease in exposure to sunlight (Jablonski & Chaplin, 2000; Yuen &

Jablonski, 2009) among African-Americans, common lactose intolerance among indigenous

populations of the Americas (Bhatnagar & Aggarwal, 2007), and a higher incidence of cystic

fibrosis among Northern Europeans (Bamshad, Wooding, Salisbury & Stephens, 2004). Of

course, social factors[6] possess the potential to exacerbate and compound general genetic

vulnerabilities. And it is here, once again, where we come to see the intersection between the

embodied material (variance among group-based genetic markers, in this instance) and discourse

(racism as dependent upon the social construction of races, some supposedly more deserving;

some less, or "the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die", à la Mbembe [2003]). The

crucial point is that the dynamics of race and racism are not predicated on a simple either-or

among nature *versus* nurture. Rather, race and racism come to exist at the intersection between

the nature of materiality *and* the nurture of social factors, often unjust and egregious, and here I

purposefully recolonize eugenicist Francis Galton's (2005) binary nature/nurture distinction –

first published in his 1869 work, *Hereditary Genius* – in order to undo it.

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[6] Here, examples of the effects of pervasive, systemic racism upon health include the targeting of menthol cigarettes among African-American smokers leading to the highest national lung cancer mortality rates among Black men (American Lung Association, 2016), as well as a significantly higher incidence of cervical cancer among African-American women (Beavis, Gravitt & Rositch, 2017) ascribed largely to unequal access to medical screenings confirming the larger race-based effects of disparate access to quality healthcare (Agency for Healthcare Research & Quality, 2011).

In other words, difference is not only constructed through discourse and social practice –

it exists a priori in material and embodied forms that pervade the Cosmos as much today as they

did 12 billion years ago. The problem we face as societies living in the shadow of European

colonization is that, guided by a Judeo-Christian-inspired intellectual legacy, we – as supposed

unaffected observers – unconsciously judge, categorize, and hierarchize difference into social

typologies (see Kant, 1998 [1781]), hereby reducing the myriad occurrences of material

difference to bounded, linguistically-mediated taxonomies that unfortunately all too easily lend

themselves to domination and control. Such categorization is best exemplified in Linnaeus' (2003

[1758]) *Systema Naturae*, an Aristotelian-inspired endeavor in which the Swedish botanist and

zoologist undertakes the linguistic classification of the natural world into fixed hierarchies. As

will become apparent in the next chapter, such linguistically mediated hierarchies eventually

came to operate as a type of *great chain of being* in context to race where whiteness comes to

occupy a position of supremacy in relation to those forms of racial difference that are read to

differ from the existential requirements of itself as dominant norm. White supremacy then is not

only an explicit system of hierarchical categorization of difference such as the Nazi *Miscling* – or

mixed-blood – Test or the US One-Drop Rule. Rather, the hierarchical categorization of

difference that undergirds white supremacy runs backward through the thought of Kant (1998

[1781])[7], across the Western canon, and into colonial practices of binary representation.

The Privileging of Language over Matter

Ultimately, then, implications of the near total privileging of language at the expense of

material and embodied realities extend from race to racism as well. Racism is too often still

framed to reside expressly within the realm of language, and – once again – this holds deleterious

consequences for the wellbeing of certain bodies; most notably bodies marked by darker

phenotype. Consider, for instance, how we are often told that the incidence of macro-aggressions

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[7] In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant (1998 [1781]) attaches moral characterization to physical differences
and considers races – and raced bodies, in particular – other than white as inferior.

are on the downswing; that micro-aggressions and implicit bias now take on the form of *words* instead – as if words possess no *power and the capacity to dictate* the outcomes of bodies (see Schulman, Berlin, Harless, Kerner, Sistrunk, Gersh, Dubé, Taleghani, Burke, Williams, Eisenberg, Ayers, Escarce, 1999; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). And while there may be much weight to the idea that the means by which we structure social realities exists within the realm of language as the *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990) of invisible values and assumptions, it also needs to be recounted that Bourdieu speaks of bodily *hexis* – the manner whereby our symbol-based assumptions come to embody themselves in actions that ripple materially. An example hereof are those stories that nearly every person whose flesh is covered over by dark skin are able to recount: the white lady who unconsciously clutches her bag firmly beneath her arm when encountering a black person on the street from a short distance away; the skinny white guy who keeps peering over his shoulder after having noticed three black men walking behind him and in conversation. Clearly, here body and signification interact and to ignore the former in exclusive favor of the latter is to disembody racism – to frame it as abstraction: to assume that we are post-racial while ignoring the means whereby race is laid bare in embodied encounter; to claim colorblindness when clearly differences in 'color, hair, and bone' (Du Bois in Foner, 1970) come to regulate which *bodies* have the right of recognition and safe access to everyday spaces and places – the school corridor, the road, the Oscars, the Oval Office[8].

Of course, the current discussion risks obscuring the reality of bodies as not only raced but gendered as well. Writes Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015): "the bodies of women are set out for pillage in ways I could never truly know" (p. 65). Therefore, the traumatic experiences of black and brown women are often doubly compounded: read as the intersection (Crenshaw, 1991; Staples, 2016) of both a race and a gender, and this reality needs to be kept in mind throughout this work. This same observation also holds for all who are read as both the intersection of both a

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[8] Where possessing black skin called on by a Muslim sounding name, even as President of the United States of America, may have one's origins – and associated rights of citizenship – thrown into question.

race and gender that is non-cisgender conforming (see National Coalition of Anti-Violence

Programs, 2011, p. 22). As Purdie-Vaughns and Eibach (2008) point out, people who have

multiple subordinate-group identities [such as racial minority woman] do not fit the prototypes of

their respective identity groups [such as ethnic minorities; women] and so also experience

intersectional invisibility (p. 377), or "the general failure to fully recognize people with

intersecting identities as members of their constituent groups" (p. 381). While movements like

#SayHerName (Crenshaw, Ritchie, Anspach, Gilmer, & Harris, 2015) has attracted widespread

attention to the invisibility and erasure of black and brown women's experiences of state-

sanctioned violence, androcentricism – or "the privileging of male experience and the 'otherizing'

of female experience" (Bern, 1994, p. 41) – is still the dominant phenomenon across color lines.

      Neglect of materiality and the privileging of language is deeply rooted in the intellectual

genealogy of the Eurocentric worldview which traditionally has structured reality through

superior-inferior binary oppositions that almost always imply a degree of mastery of one over the

other: mind/matter, divine/human, human/nature, man/woman, subject/object, outer/inner,

reason/emotion, reality/fantasy, science/art, and so forth. Inherited from St. Augustine's late

Roman/early Christian-era renunciation of the body as wretched and carnal, these binary threads

run through Descartes' mind-body dualism (see Descartes, 1993/1641) in which the mind is

granted preeminence as the foundation of being: *Cogito ergo sum* [I think therefore I am]. Apart

from relegating corporeality to a position of lesser import, this dominant philosophical

perspective has also inadvertently brought about a fracturing of the social body corporate in the

form of autonomous individualism, making it gradually easier for people within dominant social

positions to conceive responsibility for contemporary social brutalities – such as racism and

sexism – as residing in the province of the individual; not the communal. Racism, in this

equation, comes to be defined along the lines of language-based insults – and occasionally actions

– committed by individuals against other individuals rather than material systems of domination

maintained by dominant groups against historically marginalized populations through everyday

social practices. Additionally, in this scheme, forms of communal political solidarity – such as Black Lives Matter – come to offend the aforementioned, supposed self-apparent Cartesian logic of autonomous individualism as illustrated by the counter-reply 'All lives matter!' Whereas the former draws attention to violence committed against a vulnerable group united by shared phenotypic attributes, the latter attempts to dissolve such solidarity through deferment to the individualized, abstract notion of *all lives* implying *every life* – anonymous, vague, and politically sterile; bereft of identity, social context, and the diverse forms of violence historically meted out against darker phenotype bodies: A convenient strategy of distraction. It is also through this same modus operandi of *individualizing abstraction* that post-racial, colorblind ideology manages to deflect attention from racism as a painful agglomeration of shared embodied experiences that persist throughout the present day.

Rather than exclusively residing within the province of representation / signification as sole mechanism through which races are socially constructed, we would do better to consider how both language and materiality coincide to bring about the conditions whereby races come to exist, dominate, experience brutalization, as well as how race-based social practices come to be undone. In other words, the relationship between materiality and discourse is more a matter of *within* rather than *between* (Kuntz & Presnall, 2012, p. 733) – an intra-relationship (Barad, 2003). Weheliye (2014) refers to this phenomenon as a racializing assemblage that etches "abstract forces of power onto human physiology and flesh in order to create the appearance of a naturally expressive relationship between phenotype and sociopolitical status: the hieroglyphics of the flesh" (p. 50). To illustrate such entanglement one would do well to consider how a phrase like #blacklivesmatter works to highlight both interrelated facets of subjectivity. Black lives matter in the discursive sense in that they are important, valuable, and truly human. However, as a double entendre, black lives also *matter* in the material *sense* that their humanity is predicated on the sensibility and subsequent vulnerability of flesh (see Levinas, 1998). While contemporary multicultural, tolerance-based ideological (Žižek, 2008) discourse pays lip-service to the former

through universal appeals to equality, the latter fleshy dimension exposes the vulnerable realities that being *darker* still all too often is *a visceral experience that dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth* (Coates, 2015, p. 10). If *matter matters* in relation to phenotype and the iterative forms it not only takes but also through the reactions it evokes within the realm of the social it does so by pointing us to the realities of violence, their relationship to intersubjectivity, and the possibility of an embodied ethics upon which to reconstruct a politics of human solidarity based on difference as radically singular and a priori (see Levinas, 1998) [a discussion to be taken up in the third chapter].

On Collisions of Matter: Bodies and Cameras

In a twist of irony, and in context to the broader foregoing discussion pertaining to matter, it may well be that the technology of smartphone cameras – a major enabler of the often narcissist social networking *selfie* (see Weiser, 2015) – is enabling us to become increasingly more aware that racism is as much an embodied encounter as it is a set of supremacist ideologies. There have been countless brutalities poured out over the bodies of darker phenotype wo/men throughout history. Yet, it is the motion camera lens that enables us to not only record these as a witness that speaks even when the law remains silent, but also to put a face, a body, a color to the name: Eric Garner. It is through the eye of the camera that we come to *see* the words *I can't breath* uttered in desperation from a position of intense embodied vulnerability. Here, smartphone cameras serve as agents of a resistant form of counter-surveillance (see Huey, Walby & Doyle, 2006; Wilson & Serisier, 2010), and material technology comes to constitute new cultural practices in context to surveillance (Monahan, 2011). Of course, cameras by themselves cannot guarantee justice, and Eric Garner's killers, the uniformed thug who slammed teenager Dajerria Becton to the ground – like so many others – have never been indicted. To add further insult to – literal – injury, social media platforms on which videos and pictures are posted are not digital public squares, as they are often perceived to be, but instead are regulated by private corporate

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entities who are able to enforce their user *Terms & Conditions* in arbitrary ways. An example of this occurred when Instagram was instructed by its parent company, Facebook, to cut the live stream of Black mother, Korryn Gaines, who was later shot by police[9]. This request, it emerged, had been issued by Baltimore County police. Additionally, and rather disturbingly, the use of wearable video cameras [like the *Body*VISION L3 that comes accompanied by the cheeky line, *It's not just about the camera, it's about the entire solution*.] by law enforcement officers – often trained to adopt a 'warrior' mindset (Stoughton, 2015) – has been associated with an increase in fatal shootings of civilians. Aware that video recordings collected during violent encounters can be used as evidence that justifies the shooting, officers may become less reluctant to engage in the use of deadly force, and particularly so against people of darker phenotype (Pang & Pavlou, 2016). Coupled with findings that demonstrate slow motion video replay can systematically increase judgments among viewers of intent because it enables the false impression that the actor possessed more time to premeditate prior to acting (Caruso, Burns & Converse, 2016), the compounding influence of point-of-view, the fact that body cameras can be left turned-off or become dislodged, vulnerabilities associated with the transfer and storage of footage, as well as institutional sequester of video recordings, even the most stringent watchdog policies attempting to regulate the use of body cameras (see The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights & Upturn, 2016) are still susceptible to both ideological and material influences and *accidents*.

Virilio's (1999) theory of the *accident* suggests that the creation of new technology engenders the double-bind engineering of blind spots and potential catastrophes that come to plague the technology. Here, disorder reasserts itself on the back of the very order it is hoped technology will enshrine.

> When you invent the ship, you also invent the shipwreck; when you invent the plane you also invent the plane crash; and when you invent electricity, you invent electrocution . . . Every technology carries its own negativity, which is invented at the same time as

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[9] See https://s3.amazonaws.com/s3.sumofus.org/images/Dear_Mark_Zuckerberg.pdf

technical progress (Virilio, 1999, p. 89).

In other words, *accidents* themselves can come to serve as technologies of control. This is not to do away with the value of technology in the pursuit of justice – only to highlight that not only the encounter of racism but also the work of combating racism is a mish-mash of entangled material and discursive influences that yield as much potential for order as they do for a chaos in which bodies come to be erased // *e-raced* // in new and unforeseen ways. Additionally, we need to contend with the horrific possibility that the rapid, continuous dissemination of moving images in which darker bodies are violated and destroyed may in the longer run desensitize us and cease to disturb, becoming instead but another mode of cannibalistic media consumption – an erotically charged racialized snuff film – in which we secretly enjoy the specter of bodily transgression as hyperreality-type entertainment; an *eating* of the other (hooks, 1992). After all, graphic representations of lynching have circulated the media since images were first captured in black-and-white and sepia tones. What if consumption was hijacked instead so that historical representations come to be destabilized through embodied encounters that defy both historical and day-to-day patterns of language-embedded racialized habitus?[10]

Language, Post-Racial Ideology, and the Erasure of Darker Bodies

Feminist new materialist thought draws attention to those performative "habits of mind that grant language and other forms of representation more power in determining our ontologies than they deserve" (Barad, 2007, p. 133). This insight is further inspired by Barad's (2003) prior observation that "Language has been granted too much power . . . the only thing that does not seem to matter anymore is matter" (p. 801). Of course, such insights are particularly pertinent in context to assumptions that hold racism to be something of the past wherein slavery and lynching come to stand as rather unfortunate historical footnotes. The dematerialization and *lingua-fication*

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[10] See Tyler Shields' *Historical Fiction* series: http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/05/13/a-black-man-hangs-a-white-supremacist-tyler-shields-s-charged-photography.html

of race coincides with popular contemporary sentiments that frame race as a historical phenomenon whose social significance has supposedly been relegated to a past (see Banks, 1998; Ikuenobe, 2013; Gallagher, 2003) prior to the emergence of tolerance-based multiculturalism (Žižek, 2008) – a social phenomenon Bonilla-Silva (2006) refers to as *racism without racists*. The result is a global *post-racial* arrangement in which racism has come to be "departicularized and dissociated from its historical roots" (Lentin, 2011). In the local US context these historical roots are entrenched in embodied, material practices related to early Capitalist modes of production, and date back to the first arrival of African slaves in Jamestown in 1619, but certainly also to the already existent British slave industry of the Caribbean. The Africans – unlike the native indigenous slaves before them – seemingly possessed natural immunities to Old World diseases, found themselves isolated in unfamiliar geographic territory without allies to support them, and had experience in growing increasingly valuable commodity crops like tobacco, corn, sugar cane, and cotton in their native lands (see Blackburn, 1997). Colonists soon realized that without Africans and the embodied strengths and material skills they brought, their enterprises would fail (Smedley, 2007, pp. 112-115). Such embodied practice of slavery in North America grew relatively unhindered for 335 years until segregation was challenged in 1954 – only 62 years ago. Yet, in the USA – as across many other parts of the Globe – these roots still persist in visible, arboreal forms that manifest in contemporary socio-material practices and processes that continue to position the lives of people of dark phenotypes in conditions of precariousness.

Hesse (2011) refers to the phenomenon of the post-racial as the "political horizon of racism's depoliticization" (p. 155), which I take to also mean the further abstraction of racism via global neoliberal discourses in which human agency is framed as a series of individualized choices (Roberts & Mahtani, 2010; Apple, 2001) so that the deleterious effects of racism come to be ascribed as the responsibility or fault of the one aggressed against through a supposed inability to pull oneself up by the proverbial bootstraps. Here, recognition of the complex structured, institutional foundations of racism comes to be erased; personal experiences of racial aggression

are relegated to the realm of the anecdotal, and talk around the embodied practice and experience of race draws silent, while racism in its many forms continues to lead to the brutalization of embodied others in lived contexts across the globe (Macedo & Gounari, 2006; Orelus, 2013). In more localized contexts this situation plays out intra-nationally through legislation and policy that – operating beneath a "veneer of professed tolerance and diversity" (Gillborn, 2006, p. 11) – often sanction individual manifestations of racist behavior, à la Donald Sterling / Donald Trump, while leaving the dominant structural impetus of socio-material racism unchallenged (see Gillborn, 2002). Simultaneously, the relating of personal accounts of raced experience is frequently relegated to the realm of taboo since the *matter* of race – difference predicated on phenotype – is largely considered inappropriate within public discourse. Yet, as Durrheim, Mtose and Brown remind: "Race is absent precisely because it is so troubling" (2011, p. 56). This chapter contends that the phenomenon of race – here defined as an arbitrary, socially constructed sign nevertheless simultaneously entangled with a range of real, phenotypic, embodied differences – is troubling precisely because it still holds the potential for producing the reaction of a steel-toed combat boot to the face, the disproportionate caging of particular human bodies behind iron bars; a bullet to the head. "[R]acism is a visceral experience, that is dislodges brains, blocks airways, rips muscle, extracts organs, cracks bones, breaks teeth" (2015, p. 10), Coates echoes.

In the previous sections I have attempted to briefly argue the case for reengaging with the material, embodied reality of racism in addition to the dominant language-centered approach which views race as a social construct. I have also highlighted the post-racial pitfalls that accompany overemphasizing an exclusive language-centered approach so as to better make sense of race and combat racism. Both these aspects comprise crucial threads that run through my work. Yet, what accounts for my interest in studying race – and racism – in specific context to embodiment and materiality in education? The remainder of the present chapter will focus on grappling with this question. In this first chapter I will continue to locate myself as a scholar engaged in the study of difference within educational contexts. Yet, I also ask at this time: *How*

has my own understanding of difference and its relationship to phenotype come to be molded? Is it possible to write from the messy quagmire of self where both suffering and evil potentially coexist? This last question, in particular, is initiated by Moltmann's (1979) observation that: "Oppression destroys humanity on both sides but in different ways: on the one side through evil, on the other through suffering" (p. 24). I suspect that the socio-material practice of evil can bring about its own forms of suffering and that the perpetrators of racial aggression unknowingly both hide and generate trauma within themselves as well. In this regard, both W.E.B. Du Bois (2001) contention that "the price of repression is greater than the cost of liberty" (p. 4) and James Baldwin's observation that "I imagine that one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, that they will be forced to deal with pain" (1955, p. 101), deserve deeper reflection. Such reflection, however, can only best be accomplished *vulnerably* in relation to the *self* as political (Behar, 1996). Behar (1996), quoting Sandra Harding (1987), writes: "The beliefs and behaviors of the researcher are part of the empirical evidence for [or against] the claims advanced in the results of research. *This* evidence too must be open to critical scrutiny no less than what is traditionally defined as relevant evidence" (p. 29). Of course, the historical recognition that informs my account of self is itself partial and incomplete since I speak in a discourse that is not the same as the time of my life (Butler, 2005, p.35). However, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987, pp. 293-294) point out in *A Thousand Plateaus*, memory itself can be thought of as operating as a form of middle-path of *becoming* that allows for existential movement and growth beyond that limited span of recall that resides between the distant points of then (history) and now. They add: "'a' child coexists with us, in a zone of proximity or a block of becoming . . . that carries us both off – as opposed to the child we once were" (Deleuze & Guattari (1987, pp. 294). The time has now arrived to be carried off – the two of us, to write and ignite new lines of flight – to become (see Deleuze, 1997) . . . or perhaps, to die? Please take note that these are *unhappy stories of racism*[11] rather than *happy*

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[11] The kind associated with the predatory, psychotic, and otherwise banal.

stories of diversity[12] (Ahmed, 2007, p. 164). I wonder, how does one write about racial identity when white supremacy is not so much merely an idea but an actual enacted encounter between bodies – one's own body and those of others?

Race, Place, and Vulnerable Reflections on Violence and Becoming

Musical interlude: Slayer [1986] – *Angel of Death* (see Skeeleraar, 2014)
[CLICK HERE]

> *Sadist of the noblest blood . . .*
> *Destroying, without mercy*
> *To benefit the Aryan race*

A sunny Sabbath Day morning in the Orange Free State[13], in a house at the edge of a koppie[14]. The large full spread picture on the front page of the Sunday morning Afrikaans newspaper – Rapport – shows a full spread front page black man driving a spear through the torso of another black man. It is 1989. I – a boy of 12 at the time – feel deeply disturbed, nauseous with fear. Previous media images of blacks in the townships flood my mind and confirm that blacks are violent and savage – necklace murders in which a tire is placed around the neck and forced down over the shoulders before being doused with petrol and set alight, blacks burning down their schools, AK-47s, and the limpet mines we are reminded to always be on the lookout for by the large 2D poster on the wall. The police have been to our school many times before with their sniffer dogs. We had to evacuate – a bomb-scare, we were told. I fear them. I hate them, later I feel.

By 1993 I have come to believe wholeheartedly the idea that black influence in South Africa is a cancerous blight that threatens to extinguish the progress secured by white toil and sacrifice over a period of more than three centuries. The *moederland* is being raped and needs to

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[12] The kind generally associated with sanitized university tolerance-based diversity initiatives where a watered down type of antiracism becomes a form of organizational pride (see Ahmed, 2007).
[13] A province in the center of the Republic of South Africa; once the independent Boer republic of Oranje-Vrijstaat prior to British annexation and incorporation into the Union of South Africa.
[14] A *koppie* is a South African colloquialism for a small hill surrounded by larger, flat areas.

be defended. I begin regularly attending rallies of the AWB – *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging* or Afrikaner Resistance Movement – a far-right white supremacist movement. I somewhat religiously read Hitler's *Mein Kampf* and shun all forms of non-white art and entertainment. I break off friendships and begin containing myself. I amass a small collection of knives, knuckledusters, batons, badges, and flags. I steal my grandfather's gun. I build up a near encyclopedic knowledge of the far right in South Africa and the ideology of radical Apartheid from which I believe we have strayed to our peril. My purpose in life – I believe – is to prepare myself to fight in the coming race war [which in 1992 appeared very likely]. In many ways such an ideology corresponds to the 14-Words slogan, popular among contemporary white supremacist groups who espouse the idea of white genocide: *We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children.* The year is 1992 now, and I live about 180 kilometers to the west.

The bleached semi-desert sun of the Northern Cape is perched atop the Camel Thorn trees lining the rough tarred surface of one of the many streets running down the hills leading into the old diamond mining quarter of the city – now a working class, all-white neighborhood of brown brick-faced houses and roofs tiled in red. But I don't live here – I come from a suburb on the far side of the hill above – located beyond the war memorial and gender-segregated preparatory high schools, one of which I attend. I am in the area to visit a friend – a friend with whom I share a deep bond and extremely strong political affiliations. I see her approaching – her pastel-colored headscarf and faux-leather handbag are conspicuous and flap around as she gains speed peddling down the hill. Her bicycle is an old, heavy metal frame – the cycle equivalent of a Low Rider if it where a Harley – with thick white-rimmed tires. I kicked her off her bicycle that day. She hit the tar with the full weight of her black body, screaming in both voice and blood. I did not know her – and I didn't care. She was black and deserved to die. It's better to let these animals know what's waiting for them the day they come for us, I thought to myself. "Fucking kaffir", I shouted at her. I felt no guilt or remorse back then – they are bringing this on

themselves. The Swastika and pictures of Hitler, Himmler, Heydrich, Goering, Goebbels, and

other notable German National Socialists covered the walls of a vacant room at the back of the

property I had claimed as my own. Among these portraits also was a picture of Hendrik

Verwoerd, the first prime minister of fully independent Apartheid South Africa [1961] –

assassinated in 1966 after the second attempt on his life; body: torchbearer of white civilization

and justice in Southern Africa, visionary leader, and exemplar of moral virtue. I would have told

you this, without your needing to ask.

> Time-out: I find it impossible to forget her. Is it an irony that I, the assailant, feel torment? If my attack on her were a loaded gun, the gun simultaneously injured the intended target while backfiring. I find no delight in recounting these crimes – only shame, embarrassment, regret, and a disgusting sense of nausea to my stomach. I have no way to go back and face her or him. They are nameless faces removed by time and space - untraceable. This is not a confessional, and I am not attempting to absolve myself of responsibility. I have accepted that I am responsible. In my attempt to construct a semblance of self, I did the work of attempting to destroy the selves of those different from me. Evil happens when means and end turn indistinguishable within the self. My point is to attempt to demonstrate the reality that racism is both embodied in the circumferences of its enactment and experience, and both emotional at its point of origin and persistent through its lingering effects. Of course, black and brown people are most often already aware of these realities. And, yet, the atrocities persist. My violence is attributable to me. And I cannot say – as some others do, and has become social currency among many white South Africans – that we knew, that we fought against social oppression; that our families and us were, in hindsight, freedom fighters all along. Lies! Most of us were in fact fighters against freedom, and you didn't require a weapon. Your skin color accomplished a sense of smugness, coziness, and security for you so that you never really had to fight for anything until it became fashionable to be non-racist by simply declaring you never were once the ruling political order had changed colors. Yet, the preceding reflections are less about freeloaders than about my own transgressions. Ahmed (2004) speaks of a *politics of admission* whereby individuals and institutions 'admit' to forms of bad practice, and where such 'admissions' are valued as a form of good practice. Ahmed goes on to critique such utterances as not performative in themselves since admitting to ones racism does not necessarily equate to antiracism as social action. Rather, what such unfinished texts do depends on how they are taken up, both by self and others in iterative, active forms. What if writing then can serve as a conduit of the process of *becoming* something new – a process of birth-extinction-birth, of transformation? [see Biehl & Locke, 2010; see Deleuze, 1997].

Not long hereafter on a star-laced evening – the frigid kind – the following scene unfolds.

Friday night: It's dark. In the veld we spot an even darker figure walking. Bandanas

drawn over our faces, we walk faster narrowing the distance between him and us at the tempo of

my increasingly accelerating heartbeat. His face glows black in the faint light of the distant streetlights. I smash him over his shoulder with a lead pipe. He screams in shock or pain or. He drops his bags of supplies. He starts running. The two of us give chase . . . he narrowly escapes through the barbed-wire cattle fence – ripping his clothes. We return and destroy his supplies. I trample the bags of milk into the earth; I trample the loaf of bread into the ground; I kick the cans across the brush. I obliterate everything. No longer will the motherland be raped. We shout into the empty darkness of the cold night, and for a moment, surrounded by an invisible Teutonic pantheon of warriors of noble blood, experience a primal sense of unity. Belonging. Being.

The following year – once again having relocated 500 plus kilometers away to the province [former Boer republic] of Transvaal – I regularly attend AWB rallies. I am wearing a cherished object. *Die Boere is hier om te bly!* My 'The Boers are here to Stay!'-T-shirt replete with the fuck-you flags of the two former Boer republics. Boers: A people I still value – being *part-*.

On Republic Day 1n 1993, May the 31st, thousands of us assemble on the golden terraces in front of the Union Buildings. Men clad in khaki, camouflage uniforms, smoking pipes, flaunting beards well hung; women in dresses or traditional Boer costumes. We head off on a mass march down Church Street and through the CBD of Pretoria. Voices singing the Apartheid South Africa anthem in Afrikaans, Die Stem van Suid-Afrika, as well as various Boer folk songs. At one point the march crams around an intersection and hell breaks loose. A small number of black pedestrians and bystanders have become wedged between the masses of white bodies claiming space for themselves across the entire width of the street and sidewalks. Procession of defiance moves resolutely forward along its innermost margin. Yet, on the fringes sporadic, violent encounters are beginning to erupt. The statue of Paul Kruger who was president of the then Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek [Transvaal] prior to the British invasion of 1899 stands in the central square not far away – his city is ours through birthright! Blacks and all who love them – UIT! OUT! I am on the fringe, and raise my baton to hit a young black man. His face contorts in

anticipation of the blow. An old white man grabs me from behind, by the collar, before I strike, and castigates me for acting in a way that is bringing our cause into disrepute. Later, back on the golden winter lawns of the Union Buildings – our leader – Eugène Terre'Blanche speaks. Eugène praat! We cheer his poetic descriptions of how the Republic of South Africa has been built on die bloed, sweet, en trane [blood, sweat, and tears] *of Boers in generations past. While it is true that Boers suffered greatly under British colonialism and the expansion of Capitalism*[15] *– the British instituted concentration-cum-extermination camps for the internment and destruction of the Boers four decades prior to the Nazis – I never stopped to consider that the Boers and the Blacks shared something profound to human experience in common: they both had been fucked over by the Brits once latter had learned of the great wealth of gold and diamonds; of course, the Boers much less so bearing in mind that even a non-Boer lover of 'freedom' like Gandhi actively campaigned against the interests of Blacks at the Southern tip of Africa so as to ensure favor for Hindu workers in the eyes of the ordinary-everyday-rat pack of British colonial administrators [see Singh, 2004; Desai & Vahed, 2015]. If double consciousness exists in a South African context in the way Du Bois [2003] so poignantly describes it, its disproportionate and excessive corollary surely exists in having to live under the controlling gaze of both Brit and later Afrikaner rule by force as a human being whose being was never quite human enough. I wish I knew back then.*

Musical interlude: Nina Simone [1967] – *I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free*
(MrThizeos) [CLICK HERE]

I wish I knew how
It would feel to be free
I wish I could break
All the chains holdin' me
I wish I could say
All the things that I should say
Say 'em loud say 'em clear
For the whole 'round world to hear

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[15] See Aktuele Publikasies' (1996) controversial yet descriptive collection of correspondence to both the British government and monarchy in which is advocated for a formal apology from the British aforementioned towards Afrikaners as well as the institution of measures of restorative justice.

Before analysis can occur regarding how it is that certain groups come to dominate, control, and brutalize groups of humans we regard as other to ourselves in ways that are most often morally-reprehensible, it will likely prove helpful to declare ones presuppositions regarding the general nature [if there is such a *thing*] of *Homo sapiens* as a recently evolved species – one who were the history of Planet Earth to be represented as a 24-hour time-cycle on a clock only emerged around the 11:58:43pm mark. In this scheme, we are a young species living within the 2-minute space between our origins and the midnight of violent turmoil we find ourselves in in 2016, or as the late Christopher Hitchens once so articulately framed it – Homo sapiens live within the following biologically regulated parameters: a prefrontal cortex [that regulates the sense of future and consequence] which is too small; an adrenaline gland [that regulates aggression] that is too large, and the very unfortunate privilege among all other primates of having a perfect index-thumb finger alignment. And I am no exception in my struggle to evolve.

The first thing – being – my brother and I ever murdered was a snake. Hiking together across a wooded and rugged Drakensberg mountain trail I was 12 – my brother had just turned 10. We saw a serpent a few meters in the ravine below us. Paul and David had no idea whether or not it was dangerous – only that it was a snake, and that snakes, cursed by god, cursed to eat dust and dirt all of their lives, deserved to die à la Genesis 3-fucking-14-to-15. At no moment did the snake present a threat to us; at no time did it strike at our heels. I sent my brother down the ravine with a stick. Then, from the ledge above I threw a huge rock down on its head. The beautiful serpent rolled over and over as it writhed in pain. I shouted at my brother to beat it. The green snake slowly slithered off behind a rock where I still could see it. It went there to die.

Is the shared capacity for destruction in its multitude of forms what makes us all human? Nikki Giovanni (2013), in her poem *Allowables*, writes:

> I killed a spider . . .
> Who should have run
> When I picked up the book
> But she didn't . . .

And I smashed her

The grasp of the fundamental human drive of aggression reaches across all species and being, often with deleterious consequences. Freud (1961), for his part, quotes a line from the Roman playwright, Plautus, to illustrate the seemingly brutal propensity dormant within human beings: *Homo homini lupus* (p. 58). Man is a wolf to man: a reality that necessitates Freud (1961) to question the assumed self-apparent validity of the ante-Christian moral injunction that *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself* (p. 56). Freud goes on to carve out a way of beginning to think about reasons for why human history has consistently been so blood-soaked that is not ontologically predetermined by heredity, yet which lies on the frontier between the mental and the physical; the place at which the physical inserts itself into the psyche (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, p. 215). Freud distinguishes between drives (Ger. Triebe) and instincts (Ger. Instinkt), locating the former among human beings (see Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, pp. 214-217). Rather than being purely physical [as instincts are], drives – indicative of the irresistible nature of pressure (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, p. 214) – allow impressions of the social dimension of life to emerge and coalesce within the mind. Craib (2001) describes this phenomenon in the following manner: "[I]f the [physical] energy comes from the inside, our mental representations, the ideas and objects which we associate with the energy, or to which we attach it, are taken from the outside" (p. 19). The social realm then emerges through the intersection of physical energy and mental representation. However, it is important at this time to make an important distinction between two crucial drives as these occur in human beings. First, the libido – or life drive – drives sexuality, social bonding, and self-preservation through, among others, the pursuit of alleviating hunger and the wish for love (Assoun, 2000, p. 89). And yet, Freud, writing from the perspective of painful post-Great War suffering, complicates the vital nature of drive by pointing towards its paradox: the unconscious death drive marked by "the phenomena of repetition and aggression" (Assoun, 2000, p. 89). In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1961), Freud loosens these two core features of the death drive from the individual by demonstrating how the repetition of aggression functions

as a central feature of human societies. Comments Freud (1961):

> The existence of this inclination to aggression, which we can detect in ourselves and
> justly assume to be present in others, is the factor which disturbs our relations with our
> neighbour and which forces civilization into such a high expenditure [of energy]. (p. 59)

In this grand scheme of things, civilization – or ordered society – comes to exist under perpetual threat of disintegration, a theme, now tired, described in William Golding's (1954) *Lord of the Flies* in which the attempt of a rather amicable, at first, group of young boys stranded on a deserted island to govern themselves brings about grotesque consequences. And it is precisely at this point that the Superego of prescribed social norms and sanctions – which itself initially engenders a degree of order amidst chaos – attempts to assert itself. Here, agents of Superego resort to violence in the attempt to curb violence through law en***force***ment, reifying the functioning of the death machine in the process, while revolutionary movements attempting to destabilize dominant social structures often bring about new Orwellian forms of violence in which the brutalities of the former are superseded by the atrocities of the latter. In short, and as pointed out by Derrida (1974, p. 112), the violence we strive to condemn in its myriad forms of social manifestation – racism being one of these – often is itself the violent consequence of a prior inscriptive order that is itself violent through the exclusionary and curtailing practices it often engenders. Think here, for instance, of the forms of multicultural censure which exist to sanction and shame individual eruptions of racist utterance as akin to the behavior of *redneck* or *white trash*, yet which have allowed racist emotions and desires to boil and froth relatively unhindered at the bottom of the illusory so-called melting pot for decades – ironically, through this very dynamic, leaving entire racist structures uncontested. The law is not counter to violence since it is a regulated form of violence that enforces sanctions, partitions, and penalizes in order to structure a particular, selective form of morality.

Moving on, Craib (2001), picks up on the dire, terminal capacity of the death drive by pointing out that – in context to the release of pressure and existential stress – unlike the life drive

which "chooses a circuitous route through the formation of relationships with others, sexual activity and . . . the continuation of life" (p. 20), the death drive chooses instead "the release of tension forever" (p. 20). It is this finality that adds an incredible amount of weight to the three recent accounts recounted immediately prior to this section. Violence – the means whereby bodies devalue, deface, and delete other bodies [and, by implication, the consciousness that emanates from the body] – then has, at its kernel, the psyche[16] of the individual. Psyches – the totality of mind both conscious and unconscious – exist intersubjectively in the very world from which they also desires outcomes that – while not always rational, and often unconscious – are complex, multifaceted, and often contradictory. Note here that violence is a culmination of the mutually dependent intensities of body and psyche. Interestingly, it is when aggression is directed against an external enemy that the death drive comes to be subordinated to the life drive and the will to survive, hereby maintaining the possibility of an uninterrupted persistence of the death drive. Of course, humans are also capable of profound and sustained acts of altruism, yet such reality – not unlike a musical counterpoint where interdependent harmonies exist as the collision of independent rhythms that foreground one another – serves to accentuate, rather that do away with, the horror of the violence and often resultant suffering that so often arises from human aggression.

Yet, the violence arising from aggression should not be simply condemned outright, since – drawing from the deconstructive political insights of Derrida in *Of Grammatology* (1974) – Grosz (1998) raises the following cautionary remark:

The very position from which a condemnation of violence is articulated is itself made possible only because the violence of the morally condemnatory position must remain unarticulated. Which is of course not to say that moral condemnation is untenable or impossible, but rather, that its own protocols are implicated in their very thing it aims to

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[16] I am inclined towards the lexical expansiveness of the German noun *Seele* that equates *psyche* and *soul* as synonyms.

condemn. (p. 11)

This is a salient point since it highlights that even seemingly benign condemnatory practices within antiracism work can bring about new, unforeseen violent consequences precisely because such are left unarticulated and unexamined. Or, in other words, self-apparent and unquestioned righteousness often is little more than a golden mask for the ugly face of social evils.

At this point then it is imperative that I distinguish the previous three personal accounts from the practice of *white* confession whereby *white* self-disclosure comes to imply "speaking as a . . ." (Chater, 1994) or "Coming out as white" (Charles, 1992) – usually in the form of narrative autobiography that, as pointed out by Bonnett (1997), all too often results in moralizing discourse comprised of "self-generated altruistic interest for 'others' as well as well as for 'White people's' own moral well-being" (p. 182). Such practice unfortunately runs the risk of foregrounding white experiences and identities as the moral epicenter of antiracism discourse, hereby diminishing the vital voices of people of colors and tones other than white, and leaving those supremacist structures that exceed the individual's whiteness unchallenged (see Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire & Davis, 2013). Such violence unnamed is not my intention. Rather, I wish to place my own desire[s] to be involved in antiracism work under the scrutiny of interrogation and questioning without first assuming that such desires emanate from a place of moral certitude. And, so I ask regarding the ideological work of my teaching and research that engages – in a very personal and engaged manner – with matters of race and racism on a daily basis: i) Is it an attempt to reduce guilt or avert shame? ii) Is it maybe because – as a white South African – I have needed to fill in an existential vacuum brought about by the disintegration of a previous racialized identity that I once experienced as relatively stable and normative? iii) Or is it that I am seeking a symbolic degree of atonement with those I have previously harmed by working to avert future harm from befalling those I associate with them across racial lines? iv) Also, does my teaching / research center vital matters of race and racism because I really desire to bring about a measure of *good* within the contexts within which I work,

and if so, what does my conception of *good* reveal regarding my ideological and desire-based investments? v) Why *eye* / I?

In posing these questions I remain especially aware of foundational critiques of engagement in antiracism work such as that tendered by Black Consciousness intellectual, Steve Biko [see 1987 [1978], pp. 19-26], who writes that first and foremost "[t]he liberal must apply himself with absolute dedication to the idea of educating his white brothers", and by implication her white sisters (Biko, 1987 [1978], p. 26). Also, I stand aware of Derek Hook's (2011) call for an acknowledgement of modes of disingenuous white antiracism:

> (1) a fetishistic preoccupation with disproving one's racism; (2) ostentatious forms of
> anti-racism that function as means of self-promotion . . . (3) the consolidation and
> extension of agency through redemptive gestures of 'heroic white anti-racism'; (4)
> 'charitable anti-racism' which fixes tolerance within a model of charity, as an act of
> generosity and that reiterates the status and role of an anti-racist benefactor. (p. 19)

I have come to understand that traces of numbers 1, 3 and 4 above – a fetishistic preoccupation with disproving one's racism, the consolidation and extension of agency through redemptive gestures of *heroic white antiracism*, and the deployment of *charitable antiracism* which fixes tolerance within a model of charity – can be located within the pages of a previous piece I wrote in my attempt to make sense of my past roles and future responsibilities pertaining to racial identities, racism, education, and the movement from belonging to becoming (see Badenhorst, 2010). Furthermore, the risk exists that my reflections and ruminations in the narrative sections contained within the current work can serve the work of number 2 in Hook's (2011) quote: ostentatious forms of antiracism that function as means of self-promotion. In other words, and in immediate context to the content of this chapter, the idea that my graphic confessions of past wrongdoings serve as an *exposing* form of antiracism practice that possesses a higher degree of authenticity relative to their potential shock value. It is indeed tempting to believe that, in writing about one's own participation in both racial atrocities and systems of privilege predicated on

phenotype, one is *set free* by the proverbial truth. For these reasons it is important to constantly bear in mind – both you, the reader, and myself – that what often appears to be progressive antiracism on the surface instead may come to serve as a cover for the reiteration of white supremacy and privilege (see Matthews, 2012). It is always wise to maintain a healthy distrust of the motivation to do *good*, to be charitable, and – I add – to do 'social justice' work which can all come to serve the purpose of recalcitrant ego masturbation.

Fantasy and the Revenge Work of Atonement

Ultimately, the questions I tendered earlier are accompanied by a host of uncertainties and possibilities that are intricately interwoven with unconscious desire. Žižek (Big Think, 2012) points out the possibility that: "We don't really want to get what we think that we want". Rather than negating the validity of our self-investments, this claim instead draws attention to the unconscious dynamics behind the ideological enterprises in which we invest ourselves. Here, our reality-based ideological investments come to comprise a fantasy-construction that enables us to mask the traumatic, real kernel that unconsciously structures our desire (Žižek, 1989). As with most fantasy-based (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, pp. 314-318) imaginary scenes, the subject is able to assume the role of protagonist – sometimes a *hero* – all the while remaining unaware that s/he is in fact merely applying bandages to deep, festering wounds. Certainly, the passions and concerns that we bring along with us into teaching and research come replete with years of prior experiences, disappointments, joys, and aspirations.

I, for instance, come from a relatively privileged banker home background and my upbringing was characterized by all-male boarding schools, access to a diverse range of literature at home and in school, as well as material comfort and provision. Yet, my childhood years – going back as far as I can remember – were also marked by the regular witness and experience of excessive forms of violence in the immediate spaces within which I lived, and then the experience

of being at the receiving end of an almost non-stop barrage of bullying when I was in primary

school. I made the transition from a spritely child to a shy boy to a rebellious adolescent through

the rite of passage of fist and insult, and my experience of paternal *nurture* ranged to-and-from

bi-polar expressions of genuine affection to sudden outbursts of near-homicidal rage. Here, I

came to be filled with an insurmountable shame during moments in which affection was shown

and profound anxiety during periods of outburst. I constantly walked, as it were, on the fragile

shells of the egg from which I had hatched. Volatility. I remember a nauseating sense of dread

accompanying me as a never-ending background white noise to my daily comings and goings,

from sunset to sunrise, and then from sunrise to sunset again. This is not to say that there weren't

precious moments of beauty, happiness, and contentment – only that it felt as if such moments

comprised single pages interspersed throughout the chapters of a larger book. These events

transpired against the background of socialization into a restrictive, punitive, and moralistic

Pentecostal worldview lorded over by a demanding god of omnipresent surveillance and

omnipotent vindictiveness. Object relations theory (see Segal, 1973; Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973,

pp. 277-281; Craib, 2001) provides a way of thinking about how we often come to map

experiences from early childhood as expectations over circumstances later in life. In other words,

images of people and events in early childhood turn into *objects* in the unconscious that the 'self'

carries into adulthood and relative to these *objects* violence may become indistinguishable from

masculinity, guilt synonymous with humility, and punishment a way to take control. It is for no

small reason then that Austrian psychoanalyst, Wilhelm Reich (1946/1933), in his discussion of

fascism, describes the family as "the most important place of reproduction of the reactionary and

conservative individual" (p. 88), and this theme is, in turn, taken up by Deleuze and Guattari

(1983) who highlight Reich's factoring of the role of desire in fascist becoming: "no, the masses

were not innocent dupes; at a certain point they wanted fascism" (p. 29), later adding that

"Groups and individuals contain microfascisms just waiting to crystalize" (1987, p. 10). Of

course, none of this is to impute blame or sole responsibility upon one's paternal/maternal origins

since daddies and mommies also surface from historical contexts of childhoods that have often been invaded by Trojan Horses of violence and trauma. Yet, how to make sense of it all while simultaneously undergoing the clamorous process of entering into the world?

Throughout my adolescent years the often-stifling control that marked my childhood came to serve as fuel for a raging, hungry wildfire of appetites that could scarcely be satisfied. And it was here that I came to perceive Mein Kampf as *my own struggle*, consequently drawing a large measure of existential value from explicit white supremacist ideology. Is this what Coates (2015) refers to when he states that, "Hate gives identity" (p. 60)? It likely provided the blueprint for a world in which random, out-of-control circumstances could be harnessed and brought under control while, paradoxically, yielding opportunity for the experience of a kind of freedom that accompanied participating in the ultra-Right Wing rallies of the AWB and learning about why my blood and sweat were supposedly *noble*. Eugène Terre'Blanche always had the highest praise for white *bloed en sweet*. It allowed for a means whereby *good* and *evil* could be converted – through projection – from a coalesced internal neurotic mess into external forms that were neatly and clearly distinguishable. It enabled a sense of power in the face of profound inner feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy. It also compensated for deep loneliness by allowing a sense of brotherhood founded on the belief in a shared noble cause. All of these descriptions highlight the confluence of the inner world with the outer world in a projective manner that allows the opportunity for the outer world to accomplish the emotional work of the inner world. I had bought into years of the consistent representation of Black people as savage, dangerous, and life-threatening via the Apartheid-era media, school, and religious apparatus, and on this basis they provided me the opportunity to strike back at every moment I had ever felt threatened or helpless: to take revenge. Had I projected the object of the *bad breast* – a Kleinian bio-psychoanalytic metaphor for perceived threats encountered during early childhood (see Segal, 1973, pp. 26-27) – onto black skin? Here, the contemporary phenomenon of disaffected young people undergoing

developmental transition into early adulthood who are joining the ranks of the Islamic State (see

Vitale & Keagle, 2014) comes to mind. Haque, Choi, Phillips and Bursztajn (2015) describe such

phenomenon metaphorically:

> Have you ever purchased junk food when tired, irritable, and jet-lagged at an airport? For
>
> lonely young people in transition, ISIS provides a quick fix to the perennial problems of
>
> human life . . . Specifically, the relief in question concerns the human desire for identity,
>
> certainty, social connection, meaning, the optimal amount of freedom, and glory. (p. 11)

Coupled with the desire for such affirmative, life-sustaining experiences is the inverse side of the

Freudian idea of compromise formation (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, p. 76) whereby a defense

occurs against the desire or wish being denied or frustrated. In some cases, such psychic defense

may be participation in social groups that engender extreme degrees of exclusionary identity

politics, and which – on these grounds – allow for revenge to be actualized. It is at this point that

terrors – often experienced in durable, emotional forms earlier in life – are converted into *Terrors*

that have broader social repercussions (Staples, 2016). Rather than arising from a coherent belief

system, the ensuing play-acting (see Ezekiel, 1995) possesses the ability to materialize inner

fantasies into violent effects that are embodied and all too real.

The problem with revenge[17] is that it delays the necessary work of mourning (see Rosen,

2009). Mourning occurs when we come to the position where the lost idealized internal object has

to be replaced by a more realistic internal object (Craib, 2001, p. 77). Revenge, on the other hand,

maintains the inner pathology of fantasies that deny us the opportunity to contend with our own

feelings of powerlessness. In the process, the person who desires revenge remains angry at

her/himself because of the sense of powerlessness stemming from the reality that s/he couldn't

have prevented or stopped the initial experience of loss is sustained. It is ironic then that in

wishing for, and doing the work of revenge, we come to install a continuing relationship with the

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[17] Here, I am also indebted to Dr. Gail Boldt for her insightful comments in our discussions on the atonement/revenge dyad.

object under attack while simultaneously reinforcing an association with the initial aggressor of

our lost internal object – a loop that, in a social sense, may account for the obsessive nature of

extremist political engagement, though it is reasonable to assume that there are multiple other

reasons why people engross themselves in extremist politics.

Of course, this discussion is not to attempt to make excuses or deny responsibility for the

violence I am responsible for and which I described in an earlier section. *Let me be emphatic*

about this. I also have no natural right to forgiveness for such resides outside the province of my

influence so my writing in this section has not been some masked attempt to have someone tell

me, *Go in peace, your sins have been forgiven*. If anything, the foregoing discussion has been but

an attempt to better understand – not explain. Unfortunately, explanation forecloses the need to

pose ongoing questions – it is a *cul de sac* in the search for understanding. Instead, the foregoing

has been an attempt to acknowledge my own destructiveness and ponder its alternatives. This is

the inner work of reparation (see Craib, 2001, p. 77) and is essential in order to identify and

empathize with not only the pain of the aggressed but the human condition itself: *at-one-ment*.

And, yet again, as Rosen (2009) points out, even a seemingly benign phenomenon like atonement

can reproduce the work of revenge. In a deeply engaging piece, *The Atonement-Forgiveness*

Dyad: Identification with the Aggressed, Rosen analyses the means whereby revenge and the

aggression that accompanies it can be redirected from the external aggressed towards the inside:

oneself. Atonement then too can become pathological – one can become an addictive atoner. In

order to demonstrate this phenomenon I recall a Whiteness Studies special interest group I once

attended at a large North American education conference. Some presenters expressed profound

guilt and shame at *being white* while others were brutally castigated by the discussant for their

ignorance [in a manner only an older white man could ever accomplish]. Even I had the whip

pointed towards me at one point in this saddening orgy of self-loathing after I posed a question

out of curiosity regarding how some of the ideas tendered could be applied in a university

classroom where students often already experience degrees of anger, guilt, and shame. The

problem, as I see it, was that we never got to talk about how we could work to dismantle systemic and emotional structures of white supremacy. Instead, we left feeling guilty, and fixated on whiteness and the supremacy of our own history and ability to be bad. Of course, guilt potentially holds productive capacity when it is viewed as a signal of the need to commence the work of inner transformation, yet guilt of-and-for itself is an existential dead end. Without a doubt, most of those present in the session were engaged in vital work and had much to offer from which we could have learned. And this is precisely the reality challenged by Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire and Davis (2013) who draw attention to the insidious idea that the only crucial action white people need to take is to confess their privilege by checking off items from McIntosh's *Invisible Knapsack* rather than, for example, taking antiracism action. This is the crucial distinction I wish to make at the close of this chapter – a distinction that constitutes the blueprint of my own desire to engage with antiracism pedagogy, practice, and lifestyle from the perspective of a scholar. It is not so much that I aspire to undo my wrongs from the past, as egregious as these were, for such may be a never-ending endeavor. Rather, I work within the field – a student, educator, and scholar – as one who is fully human, yet one who because of experiences *all too human* can hopefully engage more empathically and humbly with humans. If there is any meaning to be found in the rags of one's former *belonging* it is that these may fuel the fire of one's becoming. Biehl and Locke (2010) describe *becoming* as: "those individual and collective struggles to come to terms with events and intolerable conditions and to shake loose, to whatever degree possible, from determinants and definitions" (p. 317).

The challenge facing antiracism pedagogy in 2018 and beyond, ultimately, is to attempt to sensitize – not sanitize – race and its discussions again. Focusing on race as it occurs in language holds great utility, but to only focus on race from this perspective ignores the tremendous capacity for change that can come when people are confronted with the material, vulnerable, and powerful presence of race. To view people – and maybe later other species as well – as faces of flesh, each investing self in complex object and material relations that speak to

particular iterations of desire and aspiration: this is an important step in attempting to break with self-reifying cycles of representation in the work of antiracism. Rather than only speaking of race and racism as socio-historical discursive constructs we should also be talking about the flesh, the body, blood, bone, and skin. How can it be that a wo/man on duty to *serve and protect* kills a son, a father, a brother – the *tears*, anger, and longing of the mother, the daughter, the sister – in a neighborhood he doesn't even live in, goes home and manages to reconstruct a very livable home and *self* environment after that? What does s/he eat, drink, dance to, purchase, lock up in the metal safe, pray, laugh at, sleep on, drive in, swim in, consume on the Internet; fall asleep to when head hits pillow – or perhaps, lie awake thinking about? *Matter matters*, and especially so in a world prone to aggressive outbursts that spill over the body and seep into bones, marrow, and electro-neural passages. It is especially necessary to keep such insight in mind as we continue working our way towards the matter of how the triad of curriculum, learner, and teacher work together as an entangled material and emotional process to co-constitute antiracism work amidst the chaos of a university course.

Freud's (1961) useful discussion of the human inclination towards aggression as well as the complications inherent in human desire and relationship – previously discussed – needs to contend with the possibility that a concurrent prior, ontological ethical responsibility accompanies the resident drive of human aggression [a theme that will be elaborated on in the third chapter through discussing the emergence of an ethics centered on the body]. Aggression and vulnerability intersect through the human body and comprise the tension inherent in all politics and ethics. For now I wish to move the present discussion – which has sought to contextually ground the ensuing study – into a new chapter literature-focused where I will be, among others, exploring the question *What is whiteness and how does it operate?* by developing a conceptual framework based on the Slinky. This discussion will seek to highlight White Supremacist Patriarchy in its historical forms of entrenchment and the manifold, dynamic ways it deploys and

reconfigures itself in our present day-and-age. First, though, we need to briefly return to Cape

Town, South Africa – albeit a return to the past.

Chapter 2

And the Flesh was Made Word

And the process of naming 'the people' has never been a matter of genealogy and physiognomy so much as of hierarchy. Difference in hue and hair is old. But the belief in the preeminence of hue and hair, the notion that these factors can organize a society and that they signify deeper attributes, which are indelible – this is the new idea at the heart of these new people who have been brought up hopelessly, tragically, deceitfully, to believe that they are white. (Coates, 2015, p. 7)

In 2007, on a quiet, windy Cape Town beach at a favorite spot near where Table Mountain, Lion's Head, and the harbor are visible in full panoramic splendor[18], *I met a refugee – Patrice – who had fled a conflict related to the brutal civil war in the Congo. Previously an accountant he was now selling handicrafts on foot. Our interactions became more engaged over time and we spent lengthy periods of time conversing on the same bench nearest the breakers and the rocks. I always attempted to be there on at least one of the two days of the week when he would make his rounds on that stretch of beach. Often we spoke on grand topics – sometimes we laughed together. Admittedly, I found enjoyment in our vibrant conversations at a time when I was going through the cauldron of a painful divorce. And then for a number of weeks Patrice broke his routine. I didn't see him, and when I enquired after him, no one was able to tell me where he had gone. Later, and quite accidentally, I ran into him. His eyes appeared sordid – at the verge of tears and sore . . . raw. He recounted to me how – in the shantytown where he lived on the other side of the sprawling city – a group of local thugs, black, who spoke Xhosa had identified him and his friend as foreigners through their markedly different phenotype: taller, much darker bodies with sharper cranial features. The thugs tested the two men by speaking in a local dialect. Patrice and his friend could not respond. Patrice continued, crying from a very deep place inside. One of the thugs, he said, had – without warning – pulled out a firearm and shot a stray dog that had been passing. He then turned towards Patrice and his friend and said, "Just like I shot that dog I am now going to kill you." He lifted the gun to within point-blank range of the face of*

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[18] See http://satravelblog.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Bloubergstrand.jpg

Patrice's friend – and pulled the trigger. Patrice's friend's head exploded. Patrice ran off

through the narrow unmarked streets and alleys of the shantytown – and miraculously he got

away. Deeply disturbed I asked Patrice if he had gone to the police – if I could accompany him?

Patrice explained to me that, even though the gang was known among the locals whom it had

terrorized for some time, there were places where even the police refused to go; places that only

ever elicited a shrug of the shoulders – that it would make no difference. We embraced for only a

few moments. I was never able to find Patrice after that again. I feel at a loss for words.

Later, I moved to Northeast Asia. A Caucasian among Asians, I was now, according to the racial

category originally developed by German comparative anatomist, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach,

in 1795 (see Bhopal, 2007).

> *Daejeon Metropolitan City, Republic of Korea. In 2010, early one summer evening, my*
>
> *wife – who is Korean – and I went downstairs from our apartment to purchase vegetables from*
>
> *the truck of a traveling grocer: the kind that drives around the grid-like streets of the newer*
>
> *suburbs with a pre-recorded message exclaiming his produce and blaring it loudly over a mobile*
>
> *PA system. It was humid but the night was filled with promise. We both approached and greeted*
>
> *politely in Korean, and were met with a friendly response. After purchasing fresh peppers and*
>
> *lettuce, the grocer – a middle-aged Korean man – turned to my wife and asked who I was. She*
>
> *answered that I was her husband. He seemed genuinely puzzled as to why she would have agreed*
>
> *to marry someone from another race, but especially also someone who wasn't 'pure' Korean. He*
>
> *then asked me where I was from. I stated that I was from Nam-Aprika-Gung-Aguk – South Africa.*
>
> *His jaw dropped in shock and surprise. "But you're white?", he mumbled incredulously in*
>
> *Korean – followed by the accented words, "Aprika? Aprika?". I remembered how, on the very*
>
> *day I boarded the flight from Johannesburg, South Africa to Incheon, South Korea a black*
>
> *customs official had looked over my passport before saying to me, "I hope we never see you*
>
> *again." I was in Korea now; I felt bemused.*

A few weeks later I decided to visit a mekju-jib – or beer bar – on the other side of the neighborhood. As I quietly sat by myself looking over paperwork, sipping beer, and eating slices of Korean pear, two middle-aged Korean men approached me. One introduced himself as an off-duty journalist, the other as his videographer. We engaged in amiable conversation with Korean Trot (an older form of Korean pop music characterized by a two-beat rhythm and a wirey vocal style known as Gagok) playing jovially in the background. It was then that the topic of my being from Africa arose. After some banter the off-duty journalist leaned over and asked me, in a somewhat accusatory tone, what it felt like not being of pure blood like Koreans supposedly are – what it felt like being mixed, the bastard product of miscegenation? Feeling taken aback by his question, and slightly amused, but not wanting to back down I retorted with the question: "What does it feel like to not be white?" He became silent for a few moments before declaring how Koreans still had a way to go before achieving such "status" as "America" as he worded it. Clearly, in his mind, "America" and being white were synonymous. I felt offended.

Sometime the following year an older work colleague and myself went to a cozy pub to talk through a large project we had been charged responsibility to implement. The owner of the establishment came to take our orders. With excitement and anticipation burning in his eyes he asked me, "Where are you from?" I, somewhat hesitantly, replied that I was from South Africa. A visible look of disappointment swept over his face. Without saying a word to me he turned to my fellow white colleague, this time with a miraculous, newfound, desperate attempt look of excitement and anticipation waxing across his face. He uttered the same incantation, "Where are you from?" "USA", she replied. His eyes lit up and – struggling to contain his adoration – he brought her a drink . . . on the house. Glee drenched, his shirt with the perspiration of a gambler who had hit the jackpot. I felt annoyed.

Around the same time my wife befriended a young African American man. He too was from the USA, but the painful stories he told clearly indicated that his nationality hardly mattered – he was black: The supposed phenotype of darkest Africa. It mattered neither that he was from

the USA and not the large, very diverse continent of Africa. Within this particular society, where racial phenotype equates with a prescribed position in the social hierarchy, and yet where, until recently, a Korean equivalent for the word 'racism' has not existed, his matter – the color of his skin and the texture of his hair – spoke louder than his words. His color spoke for him before he could open his mouth – and it was read, too, yet often, sadly, like a scarlet letter. While by now I realize that phenotype doesn't equate with morality, his was a purer soul. I felt affected.

Musical interlude: Ghostpoet (2013) – *Cold Win* [CLICK HERE]

Can someone show me the way?
I don't know this place
I rose awake in a dream
I need to go back before the sun goes down on my heart

I am a student of race because I am as profoundly intrigued by the variety and beauty of human difference, as by the dynamic evolutionary capacity of our most visible organ: skin. The beauty of Angélica Dass' photographic, chromatic inventory, *Humanæ*, that reflects on the immense range of human skin colors that transcend the boundaries of human linguistic codes by referencing the PANTONE® color scheme (n.d.)[19]. Skin is material in that it breathes and grows while simultaneously being susceptible to the effects of exposure to water and flame. It is also aesthetically diverse through degrees of the relative presence and absence of pigmentation-based variables such as eumelanin polymers that produce black and brown tones of color, and pheomelanins that produce the reddish-pink or yellowish coloration (Ito & Wakamatsu, 2003) of soft tissue such as the lips, nipples, penis glans, and vagina (Sani, 2013, p. 47). Yet, the story of human skin and its tonal varieties cannot be told without credit to the sun, and this reveals yet another material dimension to skin – it is the product of our ageless human dependence upon the

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[19] Dass (n.d.) goes on to describe *Humanæ*: "The project development is based on a series of portraits whose background is dyed with the exact Pantone® tone extracted from a sample of 11x11 pixels of the portrayed´s face. The project's objective is to record and catalog all possible human skin tones." A sample of her collection may be viewed at the following location: http://humanae.tumblr.com/

Cosmos. Dark pigmentation originally evolved as a natural protection mechanism against folic acid deficiency caused by elevated demands for folate during the UVA stimulated physiological processes of cell division, DNA repair, and the production of melanin. However, numerous, gradual migratory movements from tropical Africa, from where all humans derive their shared ancestry, exposed migrating populations to decreased, largely seasonal levels of UVA [able to deeply penetrate the dermis of the skin] and UVB [able to superficially penetrate the epidermis of the skin] in the northern latitudes (Jablonski & Chaplin, 2010). Both these forms of light rays are essential for the production of Vitamin D, mood improvement, sleep, and the deactivation of surface viruses and bacteria. Referring to the effects of life in northern regions characterized by substantially less sunlight upon the human body, Jabonski (2012) explains:

> In these environments, the challenge of producing a vitamin D precursor in the skin from available UVB was met by natural selection acting on mutations capable of producing varying degrees of depigmentation. The range of pigmentation observed in modern humans today is, thus, the product of two opposing clines, one favoring photoprotection near the equator, the other favoring vitamin D photosynthesis nearer the poles. Recent migrations and changes in lifestyle in the last 500 years have brought many humans into UVR regimes different from those experienced by their ancestors and, accordingly, exposed them to new disease risks, including skin cancer and vitamin D deficiency (p. 58; see Jablonski & Chaplin, 2012).

Skin colors therefore equate with varying distant historical points of regional origin and global migratory flows that occurred across a range of 50000 to 10000 years (Jablonski, 2011; see Tucci & Akey, 2016), and are traces of evolutionary compromises relative to higher or lower incidences of solar rays (Jablonski & Chaplin, 2000). It is only in recent prehistory that "humans became adept at protecting themselves from the environment through clothing and shelter, thus reducing the scope for the action of natural selection on human skin" (Jablonski, 2004, p. 585). Of course, science has not always as sober regarding its assessment of skin and pigmentation, reminding us

that there is no field of knowledge "that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1976, p. 27; see M'Charek, 2005). Up until rather recently, scientific discussions of skin color that undertook "systemic anatomical and pathophysiological investigations of 'white skin'" in a manner that linguistically framed other skin tones as "'ethnic' and . . . a deviation from the norm" (Jablonski, 2013, p. v). It appears that one cannot discuss skin color without eventually wading into its hinterland – that unbounded territory where the emotional investments and ideological motifs come to insert themselves over, under, and within phenotype.

I am also then a student of race because I find myself continually disturbed – both through memory and contemporary witness – by how easy it is for human markers of difference to become the bull's-eye for racist slurs, stares, and slaps as well as those systems of neglect, violence, and abuse of power known as racism: how easy it is to map our rage and desire to hate over the bodies of others. The stories of my own encounters in South Korea that I shared at the start of the chapter heightened my curiosity about human differences as well as differences in human experiences of difference. My encounters with Patrice [being a particularly emotional encounter for me to relate], as well as that of my black colleague's painful experiences in Korea, however have served to add complexity to my thinking about the social significance of both skin color and the means through which it comes to be coded and charged with volatility: whiteness.

James Baldwin (2010) in *On Being White . . . And Other Lies* writes of white as "a totally false identity" based on the practice of people "deciding that they are white" (p. 137). Here, Baldwin foregrounds the idea of race as a social construct, in a manner similar to Coates' (2015) latter declaration that "race is the child of racism, not the father" maintained by those who "believe that they are white" (p. 7). Baldwin (see 1995), like Coates, writes eloquently, decisively, and vitally regarding whiteness from the experience-based perspective of black embodiment. The idea of being white, as social construct, that relies upon equally constructed social categories of lesser-than-white in order to exist, center, and reproduce itself [based on

gradations of difference from the centered norm of whiteness] is quintessential towards

understanding the role that language, among others, plays in the ongoing social construction of

social phenomena, including race. Language possesses the ability to significantly aid in the

construction of lifeworlds (Kraus, 2014). Kraus (2014, p. 3) defines the concept of *lifeworld* as a

subjective construction that is simultaneously non-arbitrary in that it is structurally coupled with,

influenced, and limited by the social environment. Yet, the effects of such lifeworlds, however

much socially constructed, are experienced as tangible and real the further away from whiteness

one moves, so that the same critique of criticisms yielded against Benedict Anderson's (1983)

idea of nations as *imagined communities* holds true for race as well: that something is imagined

and socially constructed makes it no less real among people who live it as a daily reality, and

especially so if the materiality of their skins often *speaks* and is *read* in the most literal of ways.

Hacking's (1999) contention that it is not only ideas or people that are socially constructed, but –

most importantly – "experiences of being" (p. 28) is of particular relevance here. As Saldanha

(2011) rhetorically points out: "What is race then constructed from?", adding that, "race is not

constructed merely from ideas or meanings and not even only by people, but is constructed by

and in material reality as well" (p. 32). Yet, if this is true of race then what about whiteness? And

for that matter, what is whiteness? I pose such questions as a means of launching us into the

discussion of literature that is pertinent to the broader study at hand.

Giving Witness to Whiteness: An Attempted Definition

I am inspired by prior discussions on whiteness by hooks, 1992; Thandeka, 1999;

Rasmussen, Klinenberg, Nexica and Wray, 2001; Garner, 2007; Clarke and Garner, 2010; Matias,

2016. I am also aware that whatever definition I provide remains irreducible, pliable, and open to

ongoing development relative to the fact that the term *whiteness* itself is highly contested

(Bonnett, 1997). That said, I tentatively define *whiteness* as *[Take a deep breathe!]*:

i) A continuously shifting, multileveled bodily, emotionally, and psychologically

deleterious agglomeration of individual and social embodied deployments, identity

formations, participatory social practices, unconscious values, orthodox norms, and forms

of cultural capital; ii) A disposition borne of conquest and extermination and predicated

on socially constructed fantasies of embodied lighter phenotype that demonstrates bias in

favor of and confers privileges upon people deemed to be white at a particular time in

history as well as their allies in a normative, invisible manner, and iii) The means of

reifying white supremacy, various forms of racial, gendered, ablest violence[s], and

socioeconomic domination over those whose purported existential offense it is that they

are not white.

Of course, the above definition of whiteness, as pointed out by Garner (2007, pp. 8-11) in a prior

discussion on the idea of whiteness, poses the risk of both reifying an ideology into an object and

re-centering whiteness itself in the attempt to deconstruct it. While such concern is warranted

relative to the highly performative nature of language (see Austin, 1962) whereby identities and

social phenomena come to be constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be their results

(Butler, 1990, p. 34), it needs to be emphasized that the effects of whiteness already exist in

reified material forms – with black and brown people most often on the receiving end – ranging

from the gun of the cop and the iron door of the prison cell to significant disparities in school

funding at district level, racially exotic consumption habits, redlining practices, and gentrification

of the hood. Also, Jupp and Slattery's (2010) contention that the essentializing of white identities

is both unrealistic [in that whites are not a monolith (see Lensmire, 2014)] and counterproductive

to antiracism work is an important one. It raises a cautionary question: How does one write about

social phenomena without reducing entire groups to static representations? Brubaker (2002)

points to the reification that occurs when "discrete, sharply differentiated, internally

homogeneous and externally bounded groups" are taken as "basic constituents of social life, chief

protagonists of social conflicts, and fundamental units of social analysis" (p. 164). Instead,

Brubaker (2002) sees within the idea of a group:

> [P]ractical categories, cultural idioms, cognitive schemas, discursive frames, organizational routines, institutional forms, political projects and contingent events. It means thinking of ethnicization, racialization and nationalization as political, social, cultural and psychological processes. (p. 197)

Hoagland (2007) amplifies this observation when she contends that, "Whiteness does not exist independently from engagements with people of color" (p. 98), adding that, "our possibilities emerge from within the collectivities we engage" (p. 110). Bailey (2007, p. 90), in turn, finds ignorance to source from, among others, many white people's failure to see ourselves as multiple. At present it is important to restate that the purpose of this broader work is ultimately not a study of whiteness itself, nor of white people per se, but rather an exploration of the productive potential that engaging relationally with race and racism through materiality, multimodal literacies, and the senses holds for antiracism work in the classroom. Here, curriculum, learner, and teacher work together as an entangled em(o)bodied process to co-constitute antiracism work amidst the chaos of a university course. Yet, to this end, a practical conceptualization of whiteness needs to be undertaken in order to delineate between the productive and less productive approaches of its unsettling and undoing. Henceforth a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) will be deployed so as to demonstrate the tactile nature of whiteness: whiteness as Slinky.

Whiteness as Slinky

The Slinky – a pre-compressed spring manufactured from high carbon steel, and often used as a gravity-obedient, step traversing toy known for its flexibility and seeming ability to levitate – was invented by Richard James, a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University, in the early-1940s. Remarks the Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine, "You don't have to be smart, athletic, rich,

or clever to appreciate the Slinky. It's a toy for regular people".[20] Holmes, Borum, Moore III, Plaut, and Dillard (2014) describe the Slinky as "a highly flexible helical spring, exhibiting large, geometrically non-linear deformations from minimal applied forces" (p. 236), and go on to explicate several of its attributes such as its ability to maintain a stable state when deployed on a level surface, to extend many times beyond its initial length and oscillate when suspended, as well as the manner in which its 84 coils become easily entangled. When in motion it is, as it were, a phenomenon of transverse vibrations and waves, and exists as a constant movement between static equilibria and unstable transitions. In this section, whiteness will be demonstrated to manifest the range of force-and-context dependent properties characteristic of a Slinky: multi-coiled structure, non-linearity, stability, ability to coil, ability to become entangled, and even malleability. These six[21] abilities enable whiteness to operate in a highly agile manner among *regular people*, often of multiple races, sometimes through regimes of coercion, yet more often through covert, unconscious, and unspoken habitus-based social practices of complicity (Gramsci, 1971). Significantly, whiteness also operates as a series of *push* and *pull* forces that work to bring about an eventual state of equilibrium – the *regnum sempiternum*, or eternal reign, of the system of whiteness itself. To phrase it differently, if we were to map the system of whiteness over Francis Fukuyama's (1992) discussion of the ascension of Capitalist, liberal democracy as the *end of history* or – the endpoint of the sociocultural evolution of homo sapiens – we may equally suggest that whiteness as a self-sustaining cultural and ideological autarky left unchecked may very likely assume a global position of totality into which all other cultural and ideological iterations of difference eventually come to be subsumed for a protracted,

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[20] See http://www.blogarama.com/frame?siteId=27651&postid=8921810
[21] In ancient metaphysics, the number '6' symbolizes completeness and beauty. It is the first perfect number in Ancient Greek algebra, and in theology is associated with *man*. Therefore, it serves as an ideal template for the very characteristics whiteness claims exclusively for itself.

undetermined period of time[22]. It is precisely the flexibility and adaptability of whiteness that frames this potential as a matter of concern, and to this end it is necessary to view the agility of whiteness through six brief historical examples where I purposefully move the discussion from the local US context to other global contexts so as to demonstrate the comprehensive pervasiveness of whiteness. Please note the role that aspiration plays in many of these examples whereby individuals and societies come to draw on whiteness as a means of elevating their own social capital and concomitant standing within the structured global hierarchy of the whiteness machine. Daynes and Lee (2008) find strong correlation between attachment to racial ideas and pleasure, in other words, the argument that desire shapes the social perception of race. Consequently, bear in mind that the following examples are more a matter of *what* is happening rather than *who* is doing the action (Law & Mol, 2008), and consequently concur with Ahmed's (2007) phenomenological approach to the study of whiteness as the repetition of embodied ways of taking up space (p. 159). Whiteness is not so much about individual whites acting in racist ways, as about diverse humans appropriating *white* as a material-discursive motif for the purpose of being recognized as part of a dominant social norm.

Whiteness is multi-coiled. It is possible to be considered *lesser than white* at one point in time and yet to gradually be accepted into global whiteness at a later point in time: to become another coil. Prior to their political ascendancy under the National Party in 1948, the Boers – later known as Afrikaners – in South Africa were considered by the English to be a racially inferior people (see Okoth, 2006, p. 155). In the Anglo-Boer War [1899-1902], 32000 Boer women and children, a significant portion of the Boer population, perished in British concentration camps. In later years, after the annexation of the two Boer Republics by the British Empire, Boers were

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[22] Unless, for instance, influential US political scientist, Samuel Huntington's (see 2009) greatest nightmare turns global 2.0: migratory flows of otherness as 'aliens', 'flood', and 'invasion' (Cunningham-Parmeter, 2011; O' Brien, 2003) settling to unsettle the spaces currently occupied by coagulated and dominant forms of embodied whiteness. Recent mass migratory flows are bringing about such destabilization across Europe, yet such encounters are also accompanied by an increase in the reemergence of Euro-nationalist and nativist movements.

openly discriminated against in the public sector, and being identified by a Boer surname meant the prospect of being disabled in receiving promotion. However, by 1961 – when South Africa became an independent republic under an all-white, overwhelmingly Afrikaner government largely through six decades of increased Afrikaner population expansion and political mobilization – the Afrikaners worked to intensify and expand upon longstanding British laws that discriminated against black and brown people. Furthermore, the Apartheid apparatus uniformly sought to sanitize the Afrikaner experience from cultural influences that it deemed racially inferior and corrupting through an education system that ensured social reproduction (Engelbrecht, 2006; Nash, 1990) of Christian Nationalist values inspired by Calvinist ideological themes (Elphick, 2012; Korf; 2007; Abdi, 2003; Ritner, 1967) emphasizing the election of whites by God, through covenant, to be a civilizing influence – a light – in *deepest, darkest Africa*. Afrikaners came to see themselves as the vanguards of the preservation of the *purity* of the white race – an irony considering that the history of the Afrikaner is one characterized by significant appropriation and exchange of the cultural practices of those deemed non-white (Baderoon, 2014). Through unleashing extreme violence upon black and brown racialized subjects it deemed inferior, the Afrikaners were able to incorporate themselves as yet another coil in the Slinky of the global whiteness machine. White establishments around the globe – existing coils in the Slinky – were also now provided with the convenience of an extreme racist police state that they could boycott and sanction, hereby deflecting attention from those inherently racist structures that marked their own societies. Clearly, it takes a lot of violence to become regarded as an authentic white-race coil. *Lesser-than-white* minorities have regularly utilized such motif in the recognition work of becoming white.

   Whiteness is non-linear. The seeming contradictory nature of many iterations of whiteness, which erupt in the shared dimensions of space-time, adds a measure of elusiveness and unpredictability to whiteness. Within the Dominican Republic, Haitians are perceived to be black

whereas Dominicans widely believe themselves to be white and deny black ancestry (Harris, 2007), even though large similarities in phenotypic trait exist between the two groups. Discrimination against ethnic Haitians is rife within the Dominican Republic, and while such identity violence persists through, among others, the recent mass expulsions of thousands of ethnic Haitians, this legacy of racial aggression predicated on self-ascribed whiteness can be traced back to the ethnic cleansing of Haitians along the Dominican-Haitian border in 1937 by the regime of then dictator, General Rafael Leónidas Trujillo. However, in the social space of the neighboring island, Puerto Rico, Dominicans are largely perceived to be black (Duany, 1998). Here, again, Puerto Ricans largely view themselves as white and superior on such basis. The proverbial plot thickens once Haitians, Dominicans, and Puerto Ricans arrive in the USA and are recast as either Latin@ or re-cognized as black, not white. Such glaring contradictions, much like the ever-changing spine of a Slinky that readjusts itself relative to each new gravitational pull, allow whiteness to independently operate in local places so that even if one works to counter it in one location, it simultaneously persists in others. Whiteness then is a largely chaotic and unpredictable social phenomenon.

Whiteness is stable. Occasionally, whiteness operates in a manner that appears stable, or, at least so on the surface. Norway. A nation associated with among the highest global standards of living and progressive international social justice work (Eriksen, 2000). Norwegian society, in many ways, is the epitome of socio-economic and political stability, and generally prides itself in its non-participation in the European colonization practices of the preceding centuries. As Gullestad (2005) points out about Norway's general perception of itself, "Norway is a *victim* of colonization (by Denmark) and occupation (by Nazi Germany), and not a colonizer" (p. 43). Yet, Svendsen (2014) reports on the effects of the denial of the existence of racial differences and racism within Norwegian society, especially so within the social sphere of education, and the resulting intensification of racial binaries. Such intensification occurs through the repression of

anxieties related to white Norwegian as perceived authentic insider, and Muslim immigrants who are identified both through different phenotypic markers and dress. Through a process Melanie Klein refers to as *splitting* (see Segal, 1973), or the processes of extreme idealization and devaluation, negative aspects of Nordic history are assigned to other regions and people such as the Swedes and Icelanders who are regarded as having been complicit in aiding and abetting National Socialism. The dominant white society can now pride itself on being *good* and hold its supposedly non-racist credentials as evidence that it is the other who is dangerous, threatening, and destructive. The supposed stability of colorblind ideology therefore serves to covertly bolster white Norwegian ethno-nationalism. In the process, immigrants experience feelings of *not being Norwegian* even though they share in full citizenship, while occasionally being lauded through the social parade of individualized success stories. Citing previous work by Trøften (2010), Svendsen (2014) reports the sentiments of a young former immigrant, now citizen, a first generation Norwegian: "I don't feel particularly Norwegian . . . Because I don't have that skin colour, and then I can never become Norwegian for the Norwegians, quite simply" (p. 20). Notes Svendsen (2014), "perpetuating the notion of a nation that is 'innocent' of racism is continuously making it guilty of racism as an effect" (p. 21). Similar examples abound outside of the Norwegian context. In the *Rainbow Nation* of South Africa, more than two decades after it held its first democratic elections, whiteness continues to reproduce through, among others, a cynical undercurrent surfacing through discourse around *braaivleis* [barbecue] fires (Verwey & Quayle, 2012) while also lauding their respect for Nelson Mandela. In the USA, such phenomenon persists under the presidency of Barack Obama. Remarks Coble, Cobb, Deal and Tuitt (2013):

> [W]hile most Americans would acknowledge the ape, thug, and terrorist images as racist, many would struggle to recognize the racism embedded within images of President Obama as messiah, magical creature, and best friend to Whites. (p. 28)

The seeming stability often associated with social alignments characterized by benevolence and altruism always needs to be scrutinized since whiteness thrives under conditions where its significance appears to have been eradicated. In other words, a stationary Slinky, resting on a seemingly stable, flat surface is still a Slinky.

Whiteness possesses the ability to coil. Deleuze (1992) writes: "The coils of a serpent are more complex than the burrows of a molehill" (p. 7). Coiling refers to the ability of a body or object – such as a Slinky – to be turned in, on, over, and across itself in circular iterations. In a serpent, for instance, the coiling adjusts to the body as it moves and wherever it moves. Such ability to coil enables a body to return to itself full circle, and if one were to imagine a movement *away* from racism, say through attempted antiracism work, movement along the coil inevitably leads back to the object of one's departure. Burroughs (2015) finds in Hannah Arendt's (1959) *Reflections on Little Rock* – her lofty philosophical dismissal of the civil rights-based concerns of black people and the means through which she prescribed what black people ought to fight for – a pervasive racism stemming from *white ignorance* (Mills, 1997). Hannah Arendt, herself a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany who was all too familiar with the banality of fascist ethnic violence, was then not immune to the dominant group-based cognitive disposition of remaining ignorant to structural racial inequalities. It is possible to recognize manifold forms of social evil but remain ignorant and unaware of the destructive effects of one's own participation in whiteness. One may add other examples to this claim: whiteness scholarship by whites that takes on a berating tone towards other whites as a supposedly monolithic group that needs to be the overriding concern of antiracism work (see Scheurich, 1993), as well as *invisible knapsack*-type confessional approaches (see McIntosh, 1988) that emphasize discovering one's *white privilege* without explicitly drawing attention to the contemporary reality of white supremacy and the concerted work across color lines required to destabilize and uproot it (Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire & Davis, 2013; Tanner, 2015, p. 33). When being white comes to

be treated as *prime evil* within antiracism work without any regard to the agencies of darker people or our racial interdependency it only serves to coil and center whiteness in much the same way that the idea of *good whites simply acting on the behalf of black victims* (Hoagland, 2007, p. 102) does. Think here of the general premise of a host of *white savior* films (Vera & Gordon, 2003) where the tears of the white educators come to signify well-intentioned behavior in contrast to the tears of urban students of darker phenotype are cast as a sign of their weakness, wretchedness, and need of salvation (Matias, 2016, p. 6).

Whiteness is entangled. The Slinky is not a Rubik's Cube. It doesn't manifest its racial modes of operation or repercussions in the kind of tidy algorithmic patterns expected of cubes. A cube cannot entangle itself and so operates within the domain of fixed probabilities. In other words, you can attempt to trace your way back through previous moves with a Rubik's Cube. The same is not true of the highly flexible Slinky (Holmes, Borum, Moore III, Plaut, & Dillard, 2014). The Slinky can entangle itself in highly complex ways that prove extremely difficult to undo. The tendrils of whiteness run not only through race but through gender (see Crenshaw, 2015) and social class as well (Isenberg, 2016). Colonial Ecuador – a picturesque Andean nation first colonized by the Inca and later by the Spanish and gunpowder in the 1500s – provides a vivid example of how whiteness brings about the entanglement of race and socioeconomic class (Roitman, 2009). Within colonial Ecuador there arose seven distinct socioeconomic classes, each predicated on phenotypic traits and ethnic origin and occupying a social particular position: i) Españoles, or original Spanish settlers who maintained close ties with Europe occupied the highest position in the social hierarchical order; ii) Criollos, or the privileged descendants of the Españoles who, like their ancestors, where schooled in Latin – a signifier of their privileged class *distinction* (Bourdieu, 1991); iii) Mestizos – the descendants of miscegenation between the Spanish settlers and indigenous populations, often through rape so that the "Spanish Conquest was primarily a 'conquest' of indigenous women" (Powers, 2002, p. 7; see Anzaldúa, 2012, p.

134). Mestizos though were characterized by their atavist phenotypic traits with Blancos [white] enjoying more social favor than Morenas [brown] or Negras [black]. Interestingly, Roitman (2008) finds evidence of persistent ethnic and racial discrimination among upper class *white-Mestizos* who refer to certain darker Mestizos as *longo* and *cholo* – derogatory racial epithets. By drawing on the multicultural state ideology of mestizaje [mixture], they are able to performatively enact racial distinction predicated on a superior/inferior binary that inhibits the creation of socio-economic networks among mestizos and, therefore, render the returns from education for certain individuals limited, also checking their opportunities in the labour market, and impeding their social mobility; iv) Mulatos – those of mixed black and indigenous heritage; v) Negros libres, or free black people who were not slaves; vi) Indígenas, or mainly Kichwa indigenous people, and vii) Esclavos, or slaves, who were either black or indigenous, and occupied the lowest rung in the racialized hierarchical order.[23] It is important to note that each of these social positions was intimately related to the *encomienda*, or the common practice whereby the Spanish crown would grant white men a specified number of indigenous laborers – slaves. In turn, encomenderos were responsible for, among others, socializing the indigenous slaves into the Christian faith and ensuring their political docility and subjugation. Empires of great wealth have been generated through the blood, sweat, and tears of black and brown bodies. Giles (2006), for instance, finds that in the case of the USA, slavery generated over 20 trillion dollars in wealth (see Coates, 2014). It is therefore impossible to talk of whiteness without taking into account how racial supremacy and privilege are entangled with extreme past gendered and socioeconomic brutalities that persist into the present day.

Whiteness is malleable. Violence of every kind, and predicated on subtle differences in skin tone, exists within color lines too, as so effectively portrayed by Pierre (2012) who investigates the existence of postcolonial racial tropes of *whiteness* that exist within majority

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[23] I am indebted to Dr. Meliza Ramirez, then from the Universidad de Cuenca in Ecuador, for her insightful explanation of the seven rungs of racial identity in colonial Ecuadorian society.

black Ghanaian society as part of a larger global racial hierarchy, and evident in, for instance, the colorist practice of skin bleaching (Pierre, 2008). Here, the malleability of whiteness stems from its ability to be contorted and bent out of shape so as to take on new forms that allow whiteness to emerge in ways decoupled from white people per se. Subtle intra-group differences among those who are phenotypically darker then come to be accompanied by prejudice and discrimination predicated on perceived degrees of lightness. Hunter (2011) takes up the matters of skin-bleaching and cosmetic surgery and claims that the "merging of new technologies with old colonial ideologies has created a context where consumers can purchase 'racial capital'" (p. 142). Remarks Bryant (2013),

> Black women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of European standards of beauty, because these standards emphasize skin colors and hair types that exclude many black women, especially those of darker skin . . . European standards of beauty can have damaging effects on the life trajectories of black women, especially those with dark skin, primarily in the form of internalized self-hatred. (p. 80)

While tropes like *Black is beautiful* (see Biko, 1987 [1978]) have been deployed sporadically throughout the history of the oppression of darker people, whiteness is not exclusively a matter of asymmetrical power relations but also manifests when social practices tied to *racial capital* (Hunter, 2011) are taken up and deployed within intra-racial groups. To this end, *blacker the berry, sweeter the juice* (see Talley, 1922, p. 95) performs a counter-white supremacy force in that it militates in terse, poetic form against the exclusive association of lighter phenotypic traits with beauty.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will largely be undertaking a literature-based discussion that centers on deleterious reactions to difference stemming from White Supremacist Patriarchy (hooks, 2004) in both its historical emergence and forms as well as those manifold dynamic ways it deploys and reconfigures itself in our present day-and-age. Of particular salience

will be an analysis of literature and ideas that contend with both social constructivist [*Word*] and

embodied [*Flesh*] perspectives of race and racism in context to white supremacy and its

entanglement with patriarchy. Initially, however, I will begin by correlating the emergence of

whiteness and racism as system of coupled degrees and divergences of ontological superiority to

that supremacy accorded to the white face of Christ.

<div align="center">

Imperium: The White Face of Christ [24]

</div>

Global whiteness, rooted in beliefs, affects, and social systems that subscribe [either

consciously or unconsciously through habitus-based social practices (Bourdieu, 1990)] to white

supremacy, finds its roots in the white face of Jesus Christ. This is not the face of Christ that

demonstrates the Dionysian joy of the artist's questioning, searching portraiture [as in Andres

Serrano's 1987 *Immersion / Piss Christ*], but rather its politico-historical deployment in

predetermined, structured form. In their landmark work, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and

Schizophrenia*, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987) have the following to say about the

centrality of the face of Christ for better understanding white supremacy and its contorted

relationship to human differences and – more substantially – the way in which we fundamentally

conceive of difference:

> The face is not universal. It is not even that of the white man; it is White Man himself,
>
> with his broad white cheeks and the black hole of his eyes. The face is Christ. The face is
>
> the typical European. (p. 176)

They elaborate:

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[24] Here I use *the white face of Christ* as a metonymical device for white supremacist patriarchy. Metonymy – rather than draw direct correlation between an object and that being referred to [metaphor] or indirect correlation between an object and that being referred to [simile] – instead substitutes the name of an attribute or adjunct for a plurality of that to which is being referred.

If the face is in fact Christ, in other words, your average ordinary White Man, then the first deviances, the first divergence-types, are racial: yellow man, black man, men in the second or third category . . . They must be Christianized, in other words, facialized. European racism as the white man's claim has never operated by exclusion, or by the designation of someone as Other. (p. 178)

To this they add:

Racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face, which endeavors to integrate nonconforming traits into increasingly eccentric and backward waves, sometimes tolerating them at given places under given conditions, in a given ghetto, sometimes erasing them from the wall, which never abides alterity. (p. 178) [also see Colebrook, 2013]

For Deleuze and Guattari:

From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior, there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be. The dividing line is not between inside and outside but rather it is internal to simultaneous signifying chains and successive subjective choices. Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out. (p. 178)

I have purposefully chosen to quote Deleuze and Guattari (1987), with them using more accessible language than they are renowned for, at length, in the sections above for the radical way in which they rethink the mode through which violence comes to be meted out against extant human differences that deviate from what has been framed as the norm. Also, Deleuze and Guattari – two white, anti-fascist, yet equally problematic Frenchmen who are the quintessential philosophers of *difference* – are particularly expedient for rethinking the nature of social change.

Rather than pose the fundamental question *How can we make change?* as Marxist, neo-Marxist, and Post-Structural approaches have done, Deleuze and Guattari instead ask, *If change and difference are constant and an ontological given – how do we account for the stasis of domination and control?*[25] How do we account for the necrosis of metamorphosis? How do we account for fascism (see Griffin, 1995)? How do we account for being sterile of becoming?

For Deleuze and Guattari, certain political regimes, especially fascist orders, need the face and this phenomenon becomes especially evident from the era of Constantine and the Christianization of Europe onwards when Christian holy art progressively becomes associated with the power and reign of monarchy and the ruling classes. The face of Christ is not a representation of any purported historical Christ-figure, but rather a regime of signs constituting the ideological Christ-machine of whiteness in whom beauty, righteousness, salvation, and conquest eventually come to be imbued with political force. Such is the force of a particular identity and mode of being in the world[26] – the emergence of archetypal *human* circa-1492 who colonizes as he converts in order to accelerate, as Columbus wrote, the Second Coming of Christ (Wynter, 1995, pp. 24-26). In short, the face of Christ functions as a privileged substance of expression through which social relations operate, and in this regard faciality comes to produce both the subject and the world within which the subject both moves and comes to dictate the right to mobility of subjects deemed *other*. Here, seismic historical displacement of text becomes visible in the workings of power in that the former precedent authority of linguistic word comes to be subverted beneath the over-coding of the body through the symbolic power of the visual face. For Deleuze and Guattari, the *faciality machine* "performs the facialization of the entire body and all its surroundings and objects, and the landscapification of all worlds and milieus" –

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[25] Credit to Dr. Gail Boldt for originally tendering a similar distilled insight.
[26] See Césaire's (1972 [1955]) observation: "without his being aware of it, he has a Hitler inside him" (p. 3).

"The face is a politics" (p. 181) and exists "as a mode of subjectification and signification peculiar to Europe and Europe-derived cultures" (Watson, 2005, p. 04-7).

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) further go on to describe how subjectification and signification operate as the two systemic yet largely unconscious components of the faciality machine: the subject comes to invest her or his affective energies [which can range from fear to happiness] in the "black hole" or unknown areas of the face while the "white wall" serves to rebound or reflect signs which are reflected onto it. This insight corresponds with the findings of psychological subliminal priming evaluations (see Greenwald & Banaji, 1995) that are accomplished, for instance, by rapidly flashing black and white faces on a screen so that the observer only sees a brief flash of something s/he does not consciously recognize. When these subliminal faces are paired with positive [e.g. happiness] and negative [e.g. hurt] adjectives, there is a tendency for black faces to be paired alongside negative adjectives and white faces alongside positive adjectives – a phenomenon also present among black respondents (Jost, Banaji & Nosek, 2004).

Watson (2005) – citing the work of Mathews (1993) – argues that the traditional frontal view of Christ's face as the template of the facialization machine develops out of the Roman-era authoritarian cult of emperor (p. 04-10), and it is notable that Constantine issues the imperial edict that 'the human face is a simulacrum of the divine beauty' (Wolf, 1995, p. 170). This correlation of the divine beauty with what comes to be considered as human ties in to Deleuze and Guattari's (1987, pp. 176-178) discussion of the function of faciality as a normalizing grid that operates along binary mediating distinctions. The face is that of a man or a woman; it is white or black, adult or child. Each of these faces, in turn, exists by degrees of deviation from the norm-based facial units of the grid and is accordingly judged as either acceptable or worthy of rejection. In this way the social field comes to be structured by the faciality machine.

Deleuze and Guattari, then, confirm the observation of antiracism scholars like Robin DiAngelo (2012) who writes that "society sends constant messages that to be white is better than to be a person of color" (p. 111) through, for instance, "Religious iconography that depicts . . . key Christian figures, and even God as white" (p. 112). The face of Christ then is the bedrock upon which the social reproduction of the normativity of whiteness – through facialization – is founded. Such normativity based on a particular phenotypic profile extends to, for instance, "[n]orms and standards of beauty that emphasize blonde (or at least straight) hair, blue eyes, slim hips, narrow noses, and almond-shaped eyes" (DiAngelo, 2012, p. 112). Comments Fanon (1967 [1952]), "I am white; in other words, I embody beauty and virtue, which have never been black. I am the color of day" (p. 27). Over six decades later, Coates (2015) reports the enduring persistence of this phenomenon: "black beauty, was never celebrated in the movies, in televisions, or in the textbooks, I'd seen as a child. Everyone of any import, from Jesus to George Washington was white" (p. 43) [27]. Dyer (1997), in his landmark work on the overwhelmingly dominant aesthetic of racial representations of heterosexual whiteness (see Colebrook, 2013) in both the visual and performing arts, cartoons, and commercials, *White*, demonstrates how even in spite of its hegemonic pervasiveness, the construction of whiteness remains a curiously evanescent phenomenon. Here, the dominance of whiteness as a prototype for what is considered human comes to be propelled through themes such as nostalgia for lost empire and the death that emerges when the inequities/iniquities of empire can no longer sustain themselves, as well as strategic use of artistic lighting to suggest ethereal properties to whiteness through the simultaneous effacing of black skin. Such normativity brings about an invisibility of whiteness to itself so that only what deviates from it comes to be associated as being *of* a race – an emotionally precipitous experience for darker people:

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[27] See Lippi-Green (2012, pp. 101-129) for a discussion on how both the deployment of racialized onscreen accents and phenotypic markers do the work of grounding representations of lighter phenotypic beings as both beautiful and morally superior in Disney animations.

The race-tribe exists only at the level of the oppressed race, and in the name of the

oppression it suffers: there is no race but inferior . . . there is no dominant race; a race is

defined not by its purity but rather by the impurity conferred upon it by a system of

domination. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 379).

Stallings (2003), in turn, challenges the invisibility of whiteness in the deconstructive exposé,

Whiteness: A Wayward Construction, wherein twenty-eight artists explore representations of

whiteness as ideological instruments of power: blue eyes come to be transplanted across a range

of racial phenotypes of skin and polemical images of police brutality come to be equated with the

relatively kitsch *hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil* monkey trope.

Significantly, however, a crucial departure by Deleuze and Guattari from mainstream

approaches to social exclusion, which emphasize the Other locked in a position of binary alterity,

is their recognition of the racially deviant as *someone who should be like 'us' but isn't* – "Racism

never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist

identification have been wiped out" (p. 178). Yet, as Watson (2005) points out in a manner that

brings Christianizing practices during the European onslaughts of colonization around the globe

to mind:

If the first divergence types are racial, this does not mean that divergent facial types

remain racial. A face of colour can be Christianised, or facialised, and made acceptable.

Certain nonconforming traits have been integrated into the realm of acceptability. The

faciality machine whirs constantly, ceaselessly refining the grid, always testing for

deviance. The grid adapts to changing circumstances, incorporating new faces, rejecting

other previously acceptable faces. (p. 04-11)

Of course, examples of deviance from whiteness becoming facialized are the Irish, Slavs, Italians,

and Jews (Roediger, 1994; Ignatiev, 1995; Brodkin, 1998; Anagnostou, 2013) who at various

points in recent US history *became* assimilated within the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant [WASP] dominant norm – the Italians, for instance, being lynched by local Irish-instigated US mobs as recent as 1891 (Gauthreaux, 2010) yet not long thereafter becoming assimilated into white mainstream culture: DiMaggio, Sinatra, Capra, Puzo, Scorsese, Leno, Cuomo. Remarks Coates (2015): "The new people", "who have been brought up hopelessly, tragically, deceitfully, to believe that they are white", "were something else before they were white – Catholic, Corsican, Welsh, Mennonite, Jewish" (p. 7), later referring to this phenomenon as "the process of washing the disparate tribes white" (p. 8)[28]. In fact, there is also evidence to suggest that the lynching of black bodies was occasionally used by newly arrived European immigrants as a means of asserting their place in society (Nevels, 2007) – if not a kind of grotesque initiation into mainstream whiteness then at least an attempt to be recognized as 'worthy' of whiteness. Whiteness, then, is a shifting social field that is able to adapt to the ever changing, complex circumstances of life, at times even by incorporating those it once considered deviants as its own. Such ability for mutation simultaneously ensures the ongoing [re]production of white domination through circulating bodies while also strategically obscuring whiteness as a social field that cannot be pinned down or described through fixed definition (see Staples, 2016a)[29]. I wish I knew then. The pursuit of self through whiteness – "If we'd only know it was sheer madness // We'd stayed away many nautical mile". Two lines of truth I take from the Ahab's *The Isle*.

Musical interlude: Korranator's Music [2013] – Ahab - *The Isle* [CLICK HERE]

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[28] Coates (2015) recognizes the complicit participatory mechanism operational in assimilation into whiteness in a manner reminiscent of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) claim that, "Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out" (p. 178). Coates writes: "I am black . . . But perhaps I too had the capacity for plunder, maybe I would take another human's life body to confirm myself in a community. The nigger, the fag, the bitch illuminate the border, illuminate what we ostensibly are not, illuminate the Dream of being white, of being a Man. We name the hated strangers and are thus confirmed in the tribe" (p. 60).
[29] Dr. Jeanine Staples elaborates on the "highly adaptive" and "incomparably persistent" nature of white supremacist patriarchy in her 2016 PSU *State of the State* talk: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcUUA3_awTs

Suffering and the Wages of Whiteness

Yet, it is not only the white Christ man that comes to provide an aesthetic template for the normativity of whiteness. Rather, the iconic image of Christ on the cross as a savior of the world communicates the message that suffering is redemptive and that we are good if we suffer (see Brown and Parker, 1989; Jones, 1973). The secondary intimation is that our own suffering will save the world. This observation holds profound implication for antiracism work among white scholars and activists where whiteness can often come to take root and re-center itself. At the heart of the matter – and tying in to a discussion in the previous chapter wherein tendered that revenge and atonement can function as 'obverse sides of the same very thin coin' (Rosen, 2009) – is the idea that suffering can bring about racial atonement through a metaphoric *shedding of blood*; that in suffering we *pay the price* or *bear the punishment* for racial injustices past and present; that through our pain others will escape pain. The catch here is that we [white antiracism scholars, teachers, and students] can become so fixated on our own internal suffering that the motivation for focused antiracism work – those who are at the receiving end of racism its manifold aggressions and deletions – only come to serve as props for pathological ego aggrandizement. Another terrifying possibility is that only a *victim* for whose suffering we are in some way responsible has the power to confront us with our guilt and move us to new action. Here, the suffering of those under racist systems of domination – their victimization – serves as a persuasive reason for white people to become more caring, empathetic, and responsible in thought and action. This orientation grounded in asymmetrical power disparity views black and brown people as chronically vulnerable and fragile, while white people are elevated – in an ironic case of *reigning superior even in debasement* – to the position of inherent perpetrator and destroyer. Black and brown people, in this social equation, come to be cast as eternally dependent on the graces, mercy, and kindness of white people. The paradox here is that the suffering of black and brown people that serves as impetus for change among white people is required in

order to ensure such change. The focus here is not primarily on bringing an end to forms of racial domination and the suffering these bring about but rather on the motive of the moral redemption of white people. Consequently, black and brown people exist to appease the guilt that inevitably arises from the very supposed destructive nature of white people. Brown and Parker (1989) provide incisive critique of this phenomenon:

> To glorify victims of terrorization by attributing to them a vulnerability that warrants protection by the stronger is to cloak the violation. Those who seek to protect are guilty. Justice occurs when terrorization stops, not when the condition of the terrorized is lauded as a preventive influence. (p. 13)

The question to white atoners therefore should not be, *Are you prepared to suffer?* Rather, *Do you desire for others to live – and to thrive in their lives?* should be the question at the forefront of antiracism work by white people. Additionally, as pointed out by Jones (1973, p. 55), the historical struggle of black and brown people to eliminate – or at the least reduce – their suffering and challenge the conditions of their lives is, by such very act, a direct challenge to said suffering and condition, as well as the accompanying pain.

As an aside, while the preceding section in no way is a polemic against the smorgasbord of Christian beliefs, faiths, or practices – much of which has been taken up in contexts related to, for instance, Black identity and resistance politics (Wilmore, 1998; West, 1999; Erskine, 2008) as well as contested within the realm of Black theology as in when Jones (1973) incisively asks *If God in Jesus brings about liberation where is this liberation for Black flesh? Is God a white racist?* – it has argued for the emergence of racialized subjectivity relative to the normative template of the white Christ man which, while no longer the hallmark of European global conquest, has by this time, through its effects, been sufficiently grafted into the cultural DNA of the globalized world – a world first globalized through colonization. Furthermore, I argue, it is through this starting point that the brutalities of colonialism and slavery, the violence of Jim

Crow, and the ongoing racist wars of a Western coalition against *terror* – the supposed *Axis of Evil* – become possible. However, if white supremacist patriarchy is rooted in the faciality machine it follows that the undoing of such domination resides in bringing about dissolution of the domain that determines facial imperialism and its results. Remark Deleuze and Guattari (1987) regarding the parameters: "we are born into them, and it is there we must stand battle" (p. 189). It is such battle that I will engage with in the remainder of the present chapter, and especially so in context to prior discussions surrounding the undoing of dominant modes of white patriarchal supremacy. In order to attempt to do so effectively it is necessary to further locate the historical conditions within which a white subjectivity arose, all too aware that our pervasive contemporary understandings of *history* themselves center Western worldviews (Young, 1990).

It is within Descartes (1993/1641) onto-epistemological *cogito ergo sum* that the authority resident in the faciality of the white Christ man is supplanted into a new form: whiteness proper; white supremacy no longer solely dependent on royal and ecclesiastical decree. Think, the motivation for colonial conquests wherein white men disembark in brown wooden boats across blue waters destined for greener pastures, and embodied through the very individuals who subjectively occupy the spaces they encounter and gaze upon through their I-eyes. Without divulging into the obvious asocial character of *cogito ergo sum*, a worldview that obscures one's interrelationship with other bodies precisely by way of fact that other bodies come to matter substantially less when one's own mind – and the perceptions that stem from it – is foregrounded to a position of preeminence[30], it needs to be pointed out that *I think, therefore I am* is a blueprint for supremacy. Here, there is no you, singular or plural, they, or we as starting point – only an agglomerated I to whom everyone and everything is both reducible and accountable. Dussel (2000) however suggests the idea that Descartes' 1641 framing of *I think, therefore I am* is

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[30] Here, Merleu-Ponty (1994) is useful towards conceiving of perception as an effect of the co-enactment between *body* and *mind*: "Indeed we cannot imagine how a *mind* could paint. It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings. To understand these transubstantiations we must go back to the working, actual body . . . that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement" (p. 283).

preceded by 150 years of *ego conquiro* or *I conquer, therefore I am*. Stannard (1992), for

instance, provides exhaustive historiographical evidence of the willful decimation of indigenous

bodies across the current North American continent. Hobsbawm and Ranger (2012), in turn,

expose the colonial invention of cultures deemed *not white enough* (see Deleaze & Guattari,

1987) by European colonizers: the colonial subjects of Victorian India, 'Africa', and Scotland,

among others. Here, human desire – or the desire of a certain group of people that had claimed for

itself the sole privilege to be centered as human – comes to manifest in very particular forms:

categorization, coercion, control. Domination. Remarks Grosfoguel (2013), "[T]he arrogant and

idolatric God-like pretention of Cartesian philosophy is coming from the perspective of someone

who thinks himself as the center of the world because he has already conquered the world",

adding, "After having conquered the world, European man achieve 'God-like' qualities that gave

them epistemic privilege" (p. 77). Here, the white man assumes the position of authority he had

previously conferred upon Christ, and in the process coronates himself *vere deus et vere homo*:

Truly god and truly man. Grosfoguel (2013) however finds a missing link between the *I conquer*

therefore I am and the *I think therefore I am*: *ego extermino* – I exterminate, therefore I am.

Extermination enables the success of conquest through the denial of the right of people to secure

and govern their own bodies (Coates, 2015, p. 8). The modus operandi of extermination then

corresponds with Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) claim related to racism as "a dominant and all-

encompassing fascism" (p. 379), cited before:

> From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior, there are no people on the outside.
>
> There are only people who should be like us and whose crime it is not to be . . . Racism
>
> never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who
>
> resist identification have been wiped out. (p. 178)

Here, the tentacles of extermination reach into all spheres of life. In other words, white

supremacy – whiteness – need not only be thought of as the sole egregious, mass erasure of

bodies deemed so by degrees of appropriate, somewhat acceptable, or even deplorable verdicts

passed over by self-ascribing *full humans* who range from poor, generally conservative, well-

meaning *white trash* whites to wealthier, more liberal, well-meaning 'upper middle class' whites.

These realities – embodied and material; emotional, too – exist independent of one's privileged

white position to voice an opinion that will be taken seriously whether or not one dismisses said

realities with a seeming shrug of the shoulders or words that affirm their pervasiveness. Daily

social practices of extermination persist in the here-and-now. *Opinions are fucking irrelevant.*

Contemporary evidences of socio-embodied marginalization (Jones, Schmitt & Wilson, 2018)

and extermination as process, not necessarily due to the character traits of individual whites who

often draw upon colorblind motifs they believe grant them indemnity from the requirements of

personal responsibility, are tendered:

> - Significant higher incidence of the killing of unarmed black people by police at a rate
>
> 3.49 times higher than unarmed white people (Ross, 2015), and often at a rate 7 times
>
> higher than the national US murder rate in at least 18 US cities, even though 1 in 3 black
>
> people killed by police were not suspected of a violent crime or allegedly armed, and
>
> with only a 97% chance that officers involved would not be charged with a crime
>
> (Mapping Police Violence, 2016).
>
> - Racial disparities are also evident in police stops, searches, handcuffing, and arrests
>
> (Hetey, Monin, Maitreyi & Eberhardt, 2016) – where officers often expect and demand
>
> compliance while lacking legal authority (United States Department of Justice: Civil
>
> Rights Division, 2015; 2016) – even though black and brown people exhibited the lowest
>
> ensuing rate of contraband recovery (The Blue Ribbon Panel on Transparency,
>
> Accountability, and Fairness in Law Enforcement, 2016). In fact, even in certain
>
> 'consent'-based contexts black and brown drivers were anything from twice to 4 times as
>
> likely to be asked during a routine traffic stop to have their car searched while white

motorists were between half to twice more likely to have contraband discovered during a consent search, depending on the city (ACLU, 2014; Police Accountability Task Force, 2016).

- Significant bias-based increase in the use of force by police officers upon people possessing darker phenotypic traits (Kahn, Goff, Lee & Motamed, 2016) at rates as high as ten times for blacks compared to whites (United States Department of Justice and United States Attorney's Office Northern District of Illinois: Civil Rights Division, 2017); a trend also compounded by the fact that 9 out of the 10 off-duty officers killed by other officers in the United States since 1981 were black or Latino (New York State Task Force on Police-on-Police Shootings, 2010).

- Highly disparate incarceration of blacks at rates far exceeding those of Apartheid-era South Africa, often connected to profound racial disparities stemming from drug enforcement stemming from the infamous *War on Drugs* onward (Alexander, 2012) in a disturbing legal cycle often referred to as both the prison-industrial complex and the school-to-prison pipeline. Disturbingly, there is evidence to suggest that exposure to extreme racial disparities in incarceration can lead people to support the very harsh criminal justice policies that produce those disparities, through implicit bias whereby blacks are associated with criminality, thus perpetuating a vicious cycle (Hetey & Eberhardt, 2014).

- Wholesale post-Jim Crow, post-World War II exclusion of *people of colors more than white* from gaining access to the housing market and benefit from home equity growth (Kaplan & Valls, 2007) resulting in the higher residential incidence of blacks, Hispanics, and Asians[31] in segregated (Weldon Cooper Centre for Public Service, 2013) poor

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[31] Admittedly, the present discussion does little to name and account for the historical, generational experiences of *other* peoples that have been written out of history. I grew up with a staple of films featuring marauding hordes of 'Injun' tribes at fiery fisticuffs with John Wayne and his supposed vulnerable white women co-cast. Such is why we cannot dispense with the power of representation, even while discussing

neighborhoods (Satter, 2009; Logan, 2011) – a situation compounded by home loan

pricing disparities predicated on race (Gruenstein Bocian, Ernst & Li, 2006).

- Ongoing and pervasive disparities evident in educational funding between white

students and students of darker phenotypes[32] (Spatig Amerikaner, 2012) leading to a

double segregation by race and poverty (Orfield, Kucsera & Siegel-Hawley, 2012).

- A racial wealth gap between those of darker phenotype and those of lighter phenotype

that continues to widen (Shapiro, Meschede & Osoro, 2013; McKernan, Ratcliffe,

Steuerle & Zhang, 2013).

Overarching this power and capacity to not only 'dictate who may live and who must die'

(Mbembe, 2003, p. 11) but also especially what socio-economic forms such life and death will

take is domination – white supremacy. As Alcoff (2015) highlights:

> White supremacy . . . can manifest itself quite differently depending on historical periods
>
> and social groups: From Klan violence to law-backed disenfranchisement to paternal
>
> scolding that blames victims for their "culture of poverty" to entitled gentrifications of
>
> neighborhoods that force the nonwhite poor out of cities with an indifferent shrug. (p.
>
> 15)

It is essential to keep in mind however that white supremacy and the various modes of violence it

employs relate not only to a white/black dichotomy, but also include offences against Latin@s,

indigenous populations, and Muslims who – since 9/11, but especially during the 2016 US

presidential elections – have been transposed from a religion to a racial category (Selod &

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material reality. Indigenous populations have been continually written out of history via images long after
their physical betrayal and subjugation. If representation yields effects that continue to tear into peoples
experiences of identity, is this not flesh – material?

[32] Here, I purposefully use the designation *people of darker phenotypes* in order to a) impress the
recognition that the traditional term *people of color* fails to demonstrate the phenotypic range visible in
darker skin tones that may include most people of recent African descent, indigenous Americans, Latin@s,
and people of Asiatic or Middle Eastern descent, and b) decenter *white* as the norm from which all different
phenotypic forms come to be regarded as *non-white* or *of color* – as if *white* were anything less than a color
and a marker of difference itself. For this reason I have also decided not to utilize the designation *people of
color* since it still leaves the impression of an alterity founded on the normativity of white and its *other*
intact.

Embrick, 2013; see Abdelkader, 2016).

In the scheme of Weheliye (2014), *not-quite-humans* and *nonhumans* clearly do not equate to belongings and allegiances to whiteness which occupies greater correspondence with being *full human*. Rather, extermination also occurs through the dehumanizing defacement of cultures and identities: the vilification and fetishizing of black and brown bodies detached from historical context. Terence Crutcher, the stranded black motorist shot by law en**force**ment in Oklahoma after being identified as a *bad dude* from the distant perch of the police chopper circling above as well as the media-based consumption of the experiences of black and brown people. Of this phenomenon Williams (2015) writes: "This country will continue to burn long after Baltimore begins to rebuild, as long as we allow the souls of black folks to entertain the same America that ignores the very real scars it's inflicted" (¶. 16). Scars, may it be added, that are entangled as both material and emotional.

Races, Bodies & Emotions

While Sara Ahmed's (2004) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* explores the relationship between lived emotions and the material and discursive structures of the nation-state, her insights can be applied to the way in which emotions produce other social and material realities such as communities where emotional experiences of terrors translate into visceral Terrors (Staples, 2016b). For Ahmed, emotions work on the surfaces of bodies – think, among others, of phenotype – leading to the production of, among others, violent and exclusionary practices both between and within groups, affective ideological alignments, and identity politics predicated on value and neglect. Furthermore, due to the inevitable disconnect arising from the distance between the production of meaning through language and the original context it attempts to signify, divorcing the material from its linguistic referent while maintaining only its trace, connection with the material conditions that gave initial rise to the attempt to signify are lost. The result is that emotions come to take on an ahistorical, almost natural appearance hereby allowing

words to continue accumulating cultural meanings, through repetition, that continue to do the performative work of the production of particular kinds of bodies (Ahmed, 2004, p. 93). Such words powerfully come to attach themselves to material entities and objects that in turn produce affective effects of their own in the encounter. Asks Ahmed (2004), "[T]he important question is: What effects do such encounters have on the bodies of others who become transformed into abject objects of hate?" (p. 60). To suggest that coded racial slurs such as *savage* for indigenous peoples or *boy*, *drug dealer*, *thug* (see Darity, 2008, pp. 41-42), as well as that other word that I will not use for black people have yielded destructive effects upon the bodies over which they were uttered is a glaring understatement. The scars are real.

Williams (2008), in her book, *Black Pain: It Just Looks Like We're Not Hurting*, takes up the theme of these scars in her discussion of the effects of emotional pain and deep internalized depression inflicted over several centuries of exploitation and brutalization of black bodies: lashing out through desperate acts of crime, violence, drug and alcohol abuse, eating disorders, workaholism, and addiction to shopping, gambling, and sex. Such phenomenon has also been referred to as trans-generational transmission of trauma (Salberg & Grand, 2017). The relationship between emotional pain – especially encountered in contexts of household dysfunction during childhood – has previously been explored by increased social, emotional, and cognitive impairment, health-risk behavior, disease, disability, and premature death in adulthood (Felitti, Anda, Nordenberg, Williamson, Spitz, Edwards, Koss & Marks, 1998), hereby indicating the lingering and compounding destructive effects of white supremacy. These effects are undoubtedly compounded by the extreme psychological tension brought about by double consciousness as survival strategy in majority spaces dominated by white (Du Bois, 2003). Sullivan (2013), in her discussion of epigenetics and the transgenerational effects of white racism, finds compelling evidence for durable effects on the biological constitution of human beings that are not limited to the specific person who is the target of white racism, but instead extend to that person's offspring. Among others she quotes an African American lawyer and mother who in

spite of her elevated education, financial situation, and general good health experienced a preterm

birth. She articulates the phenomenon whereby trauma-induced physical sensation comes to

encode itself within the human body in the following manner: "When you're confronted with

racism, that covert racism, your stomach just gets like so tight. You can feel it almost moving

through your body; almost you can feel it going into your bloodstream" (2013, p. 191). Sullivan

goes on to describe the effects of this phenomenon as *racial disparities in health* that often occur

in conjunction with racial disparities in wealth: a weathering down of the body that corporately

accumulates over generations[33]. Such a socio-biological phenomenon troubles Bell Curve-

inspired (see Hernstein & Murray, 1996; see Shannon, 2014, pp. 59-16) stereotypes of the black

family as perpetually broken and dysfunctional through its very *nature*, as well as the idea that

our societies in 2016 are post-racial. While post-racial, colorblind ideology correctly points

toward the need for the value of human life to be determined beyond the consideration of

phenotype it unfortunately places the proverbial cart before the horse. Racism and its effects are

trans-generational in circumference and contemporary in scope, and affect the body and its mind.

Post-racial / colorblind ideology serves to obscure this reality hereby enabling ongoing emotional

and material violence against peoples of darker phenotype. Conversely, as described by Thandeka

(1999), whiteness produces shame-based negative psycho-emotional affects/effects among white

people, too, through socialization practices that often cause them to compromise on forming

deeper, more meaningful human relationships with people of darker color and one another

leading, in turn, to disciplinary codes of silence, shaming, and anxiety. Matias (2016) provides a

rich analysis of *emotionalities of whiteness* such as guilt, shame, anger, defensiveness, denial,

sadness, dissonance, and discomfort that leave painful impressions upon darker and lighter

skinned people: both darker people and whites are significantly affected by whiteness and racism,

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[33] The account of trauma-induced physical sensation encoding itself within the human body corresponds
with an older folk-based account of the generationally distributed emotion of grief that comes to manifest
through a wearing down of the body and arising from a shared burden of brutal ethnic oppression and
subjugation – the Korean idea of *han* [a theme to which we will return in the third chapter].

albeit in different iterations and forms. For Matias, emotions are a state of being that are both – in context to the persistent presence of race – able to spill over into embodied outbursts, and manifest through physical pain and psychic trauma. Moving on, now that a strand of the ideological origins of whiteness and its deleterious affects / effects has been provided through brief epistemological and phenomenological description we need to turn our attention to the matter of an antiracism project founded on material-discursive orientation – an endeavor that will further connect with my position as a student working to make sense of the entanglement of matter and discourse.

Toward a Material-Discursive Antiracism Project

Any attempt to reassert the importance of materiality in antiracism work needs to build on diverse previous attempts towards such endeavor. Engels, Thompson, Praylow and Rodríguez (2006), for instance, provide the extremely substantive 143-page *Towards a Bibliography of Critical Whiteness Studies* that showcases substantial shifts in thought among scholars from diverse racial and epistemological backgrounds. However, their bibliography primarily centers largely on work from the period of the early-to-mid 1990s through until the mid-2000s, and I maintain that whiteness studies can be traced back to the work of a number of movements and writers that precede contemporary whiteness studies. The decolonizing work of black Négritude writers such as Martiniquais psychoanalyst Frantz Fanon's (1967[1952]) quintessential, *Black Skin, White Masks*; Francophone Martiniquais poet and writer, Aimé Césaire's (1972 [1955]), *Discourse on Colonialism*, and South African anti-Apartheid activist, Steve Biko's (1987 [1978]) *I Write What I Like*. By the time of Roediger's (1994) seminal work *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness* that undertakes the task of uncovering the historical development of whiteness against the background of working class identity politics, calls for dissent from white identity are being uttered. Roediger maintains that whiteness is, above all, oppressive and false. Such impetus is further reflected in academic enterprises such as Noel Ignatiev's (1997) *The Point Is Not To*

Interpret Whiteness But To Abolish It, the journal *Race Traitor*, and *The New Abolitionist Society*, all of which call for treason to whiteness and the abolishment of the white race and its associated privileges[34]. Here, Peggy McIntosh's (1988) original *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* privilege-based approach comes to be infused with class and labor relations-based Marxist critique and egalitarian idealism so that *capitalism* and *bourgeoisie* as targets of revolution are replaced with *whiteness* and *white people* as targets of abolition. The problems, as I see it, with such privilege based approaches is that they ignore the reality that privilege is merely a characteristic of whiteness, that whiteness is highly complex and flexible [Slinky] in the manner it functions as process, and that race and racism are constituted and enacted through a range of social interactions (Frankenberg, 1993). However, I add to these the reality that – as I have contended thus far – race is itself also constituted through a range of material interactions[35] that are also often riddled with desire.

The primary implication hereof for work that engages with the effects of white supremacy [such as privilege] as a powerful territory demarcating phenomenon is a recognition that desires and emotions are interwoven with bodies and phenotypes in a manner that makes the realm of the material-discursive irrevocably entangled (Barad, 2007). "Race and racism occur through . . . intersections of desire, whereby bodies assemble to form territories" (Colebrook, 2013, p. 35)[36] via "the *systemization* of affects" (Saldanha, 2010, p. 2418). This means, among others, that oversimplified attempts to foreground privilege, for instance, as ground zero for the undoing of white supremacy are likely to prove woefully ineffectual. This also means that the strategies we employ in classroom spaces to engage in the work of antiracism [the theme of the next chapter] can no longer be restricted to the perception of racism as ideology, narrative, representation, and discourse – in other words, the epistemological problem of how race was

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[34] See http://racetraitor.org/
[35] See Saldanha's (2011) interesting discussion on how climatic and geographic material forces come to co-constitute the racial encounter in the contemporary epoch of Anthropocene.
[36] This is in line with Ahmed's (2004) prior discussed assertion that emotions work on the surfaces of bodies to produce a range of social encounters.

invented and becomes known. Saldanha (2006) however makes the case for approaching race

ontologically – in other words, race as an immanent process of bodies and physical events in

which the materiality of phenotype plays a substantial role. Writes Saldanha (2006), "When

understood as immanent process, it becomes clear that, though contingent, race cannot be

transcended, only understood and rearranged" (p. 9).

I believe that such a new materialist approach holds much potential for antiracism work

in the university classroom where the dominant understanding of difference predicated on a

degree of sameness comes to be troubled, affect and desire come to be recognized as primary

resources, and the body comes to be foregrounded. Such endeavor simultaneously connects with

professional critiques of second-wave white teacher identity studies (Jupp, Berry & Lensmire,

2016), the move within whiteness studies from an infertile focus on white privilege to an explicit

engagement with white supremacy (Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey,

Lensmire & Davis, 2013), and – ultimately – the contemporary reality that university classes are

becoming increasingly more diverse so that whatever strategies we employ need to deeply engage

with the em(o) bodied presence of darker students, too. On this note, it is necessary to now turn

our attention more directly to the field of education, in general, and curriculum in particular. In

the ensuing chapter these foundational education-related concepts will be dissected relative to

their relevance for antiracism work in education. Later, I will introduce the methodological

framework to be employed in the latter half of this study.

Chapter 3

Affected

I would have you be a conscious citizen of this terrible and beautiful world.
(Coates, 2015, p. 108)

The philosophical assumptions that constitute the research of the researcher comprise an

integral part of which research methods become relevant in the hands-on work of research. This is

especially true of teacher-based research (see Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Brookfield, 1995;

Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Lysaker & Thompson, 2013) where the one doing research and

that being researched coincide in a profoundly inextricable manner. In short, the teaching event is

a research event. Such insight, though, is not new, and has been given thorough treatment in a

substantial body of literature advocating for reflective teacher practices. Zeichner and Liston

(1996, pp. 10-12), for instance, frame John Dewey (see Dewey, 1998) as providing the

foundational perspective of teachers as reflective practitioners who should ideally be engaging in

wholehearted inquiry-based practices characterized by open-mindedness through which

professional orthodoxies come to be constantly interrogated in mind of one's social

responsibility. However, it is in Schön's (1983) notions of *reflection-on-action*, reflection both

pre- and post- the teaching event, and *reflection-in-action*, or reflection during a teaching event,

that provide the opportunity for the overriding of the false dichotomy often erected between

theory and praxis. Of particular importance here is his understanding of the embedded nature of

knowledge in the teaching practice of the individual. Of course, teachers are equally as prone to

blind spots in their pragmatic worldviews, and to this end Bourdieu's (1991) theorizing of *habitus*

– a set of durable, inculcated, unconscious dispositions that structures social action – needs to be

contended with earnestly. Lynsaker and Thompson's (2013) description of teacher inquiry as a

relational, interactional tool among practitioners provides a possible solution to the challenge of

one's invisible habitus, yet it can also be tendered that social, dialogic, and group-based forms of

reflection are themselves vulnerable to group-based forms of habitus, power plays, and ideological manipulation that may result in both complicity and coercion (see Gramsci, 2011). Hence, reflective practices face a daunting paradox – reflective practice conducted in relative isolation is vulnerable to the reification of hidden assumptions whereas those reflective practices conducted within social contexts that are meant to dialogically uncover the blind spots of subjects may instead reify dominant forms of discourse.

Admittedly, the presence of teacher research/inquiry as a multifaceted set of interrelated pragmatic educational endeavors (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) is immensely more preferable compared with the alternative – it's absence. The following chapter therefore seeks to build on the existent body of research regarding how educators come to contend and grapple with their own memories, assumptions, anxieties, biases, desires, uncertainties, and professional practices. In so doing, the idea of refractive teacher/researcher practice will be drawn upon. Refraction – as opposed to reflection that implies a *bouncing off* – involves a change in the direction of waves as they pass from one medium to another: light passing through a prism is its most apparent example. The trajectory is not determined, but contextual; not linear but contingent upon the effects of both *passing through* and *across* different states. Significantly, the prism is altered in its internal constitution as light passes through it. Yet, the prism also alters the properties of the light as well as the ensuing visible trajectory that it emits. In context to education, it is tendered that the ongoing development and improvement of professional teaching practice and character by teachers relies on coming to recognize that there is no *inside / outside* division in teaching. In other words, teaching and its exigencies are not merely an *external* that teachers can reflect upon and transform as an observer. Rather, the *person* of the teacher is as much a participant in the education event. This means that while a pensive thinking through of professional practices may ideally yield fruitful results, such thinking itself emanates from one affected; the teacher is not only the transformer of teaching practices but is ultimately and intimately changed by the contingencies of teaching. Furthermore, such observation, as I hope to demonstrate, is

indispensable to white educators engaging with antiracism work. The teaching/research event – and what it *produces* in the classroom, in the world, and both in and through the teacher – is determined by the confluence of myriad affective intensities and contextual contingencies which includes, among others, learners and curriculum. For now, I wish to recount a vignette that demonstrates how simultaneously teacher works upon learner and learner works upon teacher relative to the broader context of a curricular activity. I will do so from the perspective of the learner since, as will become apparent, such position allows me the opportunity to pose the type of questions for which I have no answers; yet, questions that persist to fill me with deep intrigue.

Shortly after returning from second break, or recess, Ms. Baumeister – her real surname [meaning 'builder' in German] – excitedly instructs all the learners in our grade two class to go to the back of the classroom and collect the large sheets she had carefully cut from a heavy roll of white butcher paper; one for every mixed group of girl/guy students [all dressed in pants because the weather has turned colder]. Her eyes are gleaming with excitement, and I – a boy of seven – cannot wait to see what we are going to do next in class. I still love going to school [this is two years before we moved to Bloemfontein and the bullying started]. Looking back, during the previous year – my first year of public schooling in 1984 – Ms. Bullie, a proud and severe Jewish lady, provided us with opportunities to live out our creativity, as long as we never spoke while someone else was speaking. Doing so would temporarily knock Ms. Bullie out of the orbit of sanity, and I once remember her picking a boy named Rory up by his blonde hair and carrying him, boy in tears, to the back of the class. Rare moments of Ms. Bullie's Gestapo-like tactics aside, I fondly remember our story times at the start of class everyday when we would gather around on the large rug in the corner of the class and talk about whatever had happened the previous day after we had left class. It was here that I encountered a girl who used to cry a lot, another girl who stuttered less like me and more like my father, a different girl named Shannon who – giggling – would rub and entangle her legs against and across mine, as well as the impressive spectacled son of a professor of astronomy who knew as much about dinosaurs as I

knew about building elaborate structures out of Lego blocks[37]. Talking freely and regularly in a

group where bodies are positioned in close – one may even say intimate – proximity to one

another uncovers forms of knowledge that the pedantic cannot uncover: pinching, touching,

holding, never-before-experienced odors, tastes of candy-contraband stealthily passed from

hand-to-hand – with no small amount of trepidation – at floor's altitude underneath the radar of

teacher's gaze. However, I was in Ms. Baumeister's class now, and I can sense that she values

compliance more than creativity; doing talking more than listening, and bodies always seated in

tidy rows behind individual desks. She instructs us to choose one student within our group to lie

down on the large sheet of paper. The other students would then collaborate to trace the student

and later all would add details to the empty trace of the body. We spend most of our time working

on the face – then the hands. Ms. Baumeister calls on us to finish up our human drawings.

Suddenly I am jolted by an impulse. I lean over the drawing and erase the solid, undefined line

near the bottom of the pelvis, and attach to the emptiness I have created a large-ish flaccid penis.

Across the bust I draw two succulent breasts – the likes of which would surely have made

Botticelli proud. A number of years before I even uttered and understood the word

'androgynous', I was able to play across the rigid, truncated gender territories within which I

was being raised as supposed binaries comprising a larger social field. My only regret – in

hindsight – is that I didn't draw the penis and nipples erect; at least then I would have earned the

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[37] MANIFESTO FOR THE LEGO OTAKU: The secret to becoming an enthusiastic Lego craftsperson is never to keep the sets separate. Once you have broken open the box, build the advertised design, then deconstruct it and refrain from building it that way again. Take two or three learning points away from the initial experience and ~~re~~produce these anew along with the range of other insights accumulated over time, as well as investigating new unexplored possibilities. And, very importantly, never put your blocks back into the box from which they emerged. Throw the box away and mix all of your blocks into a bag, bucket, or crate. Only ever going back to a Lego design and rebuilding it is tantamount to going back to praying to god after scurrying through the marketplace claiming *God is dead . . . We have killed* him like Nietzsche's (2009) madman. Also, while keeping Lego blocks in their sets allows for an impressive display of collection, it *displaces* play. Play is unbridled desire and creative flow – the ground of meaningful learning where physical, cognitive, emotional, and social spheres of being coalesce counter to contemporary trends in education that seek to structure and discipline both learner and teacher (see Singer, Golinkoff & Hirsch-Pasek, 2006). Such central philosophy pervades my own teaching philosophy. As such, play then should be allowed to comprise an integral, indispensable part of transfer between both educational practice/s and learning experience/s. Lego as play enables the transcendence of rigid identity and functional boundaries. See http://www.snopes.com/business/market/legoletter.asp

wrath of god that was to follow my invocation of simultaneous she/male sexual signifiers by breaking the taboo placed upon public eroticism.

Alas, I knew little of such matters back then, and Ms. Baumeister was instead summoned by the hyena cries of other students. Tattling always has been the numero uno way of getting into teacher's good books. Baumeister peers over my shoulder – her medium-small frame towering over mine. She doesn't utter a word, but the ominous shape of her frown serves as a foreboding omen of an approaching mini-apocalypse. The earth tremors; I swallow a heavy chunk of my anxiety, and reluctantly look into her eyes. Baumeister, the builder, goes fucking berserk! The scaffolding of months of teacherly niceliness comes crashing down upon me heavier than Ms. Bullie's descending fingers plucking poor Rory up by his hair a year prior. Teacher becomes hysterical – like a screaming child. Teacher grabs me by the back of my collar and drags me across the classroom floor, down the aisles between rows of little-people desks, over khaki felt and neon nylon school bags, and underneath books and pencils falling from desks as I attempt to – impossibly – regain my foothold. Meister – master – locks me in the classroom storeroom until home time. The words 'disgusting' and 'sis' pass from her throat to her tongue and across her lips many times. Alone, I quietly cry in the presence of boxes of chalk, colorful crayons, smudgy pastels, mountains of paper, and the powdery, dry whiff of Tempera paint. I feel so ashamed of myself; dirty. Thinking back, what I did felt so natural – I gave no thought to it; I was deeply engaged in meaningful play. I had never before – to the best of my knowledge – drawn a boob-dick person before, yet the impulse of its possibility seemed brilliant to me at the time. I felt like I did when I was in the safe-zone of my inner sanctum while playing Lego: mixing, reconfiguring, inventing. Sadly, I had encountered such emotion-laden sanction prior to that afternoon in Ms. Baumeister's class through the scolding of my aunt and – later – kindergarten teachers who, in berating tone, would frantically scrub my mother's nail polish from my toenails and fingertips. Yet, rather than dismissing Ms. Baumeister's emotional reactions as histrionics, I desire to better

understand the complex nature of emotions transferred and counter-transferred between teacher

and learner and learners and teachers relative to curriculum. Ms. Baumeister may very well have

been consciously offended at the larger perceived social 'impropriety' or 'perversion' of the

penis and breasts I put to paper, but it is also possible that her emotional-embodied reaction was

unconscious, tied to her prior fears, experiences, or sprouting out of concern for me should I

offend in another less forgiving context [though this is hard to imagine other than public

castration or beheading]. Undeniably, the material properties of my young body, paper, eraser,

HB pencil, and phallus coalesced in a manner that generated a profound degree of emotion

within her.

I raise a number of important questions for pondering relative to this account:

How did the prior life experiences and assumptions that the teacher brought into class culminate

with desire to produce powerful emotions in the embodied immediate? How did she react within

and upon herself in the hours after class – in her car [an old Renault], apartment, and bathtub?

What were her emotions and what did these, in turn, produce relative to her future classroom –

and life – encounters? How can this event – and all teaching events – add to our curiosity of the

entangled relationship between teacher, learner, and curriculum?

Additionally, I also wish to understand the larger significance of bodies for teaching in

context to their in situ ability to affect and be affected. I especially take body to extend from the

human body to material bodies like the classroom, seating configurations, cultural artifacts,

syllabus printed to paper, nervous twitches and body language that betrays unspoken affect, the

weather outside, blood-sugar levels, the tense encounter with Johnny-self-imagined-football-hero

in the hallway moments prior to entering class, the phenotype-gender-sexual orientation-ability-

age-health configuration of each and every person present as part of the group, and the smell of

coffee. These examples of material forces are able to exert agency, or influence,[38] over emotions

that in turn produce particular ways of relating and being – a reality that hints at a potential

ethical significance of the body. Furthermore, I regard the contingent states of such material

bodies themselves to comprise a substantial part of curriculum as it works – alongside teacher and

learner – as an entangled em(o)bodied process.

In the next section of this chapter I will etch out discussion of those common

philosophical assumptions that will inform both the research questions and interpretive paradigm

that will guide my proposed thesis work. Such will occur against the background of narrative

illustrations. Later, I will provide brief description of the research methodologies and design to be

used in the study, as well as pertinent information pertaining to data collection and analysis.

Curriculum and Chaos

It's an enigma that teaching – and learning – happens at all bearing in mind how

complex, multifaceted, and unpredictable curriculum[39] is. It just so happens that the English

infinitive form of curriculum – currere [among others, a term alluding to the autobiographical

method of Pinar (1975)] – also means *to run / a racetrack for chariots*, and I harbor conviction

that the reason so many teachers are *running* from both the practice and profession of teaching is

that the increasing standardizing and quantifiable impositions being imposed upon curriculum are

untenable with the complex, multifaceted, and unpredictable reality of curriculum. Curriculum –

at its uncommon core – is undeniably more about entangled materialities than prescribed

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[38] See Donna Haraway's (1991) cyborg, Karan Barad's (2003) agential realism, Graham Harman's (2002) object-oriented ontology, Bruno Latour's (2005) actor-networks, and Jane Bennett's (2010) vibrant matter as new materialist theorizations of matter as possessing agency in encounter.

[39] The term 'curriculum' has been used in English since 1633 when it was adopted from the Calvinist movement that emphasized discipline of conduct (Goodson, 2005, pp. 42-43). While the term is given the scantest attention, for instance, in Monroe's classic *A Brief Course in the History of Education*, published in thirteen editions between 1907 and 1952, curriculum itself becomes a focal field of study as of the 1960s. Later, works like Schubert's (1985) *Curriculum: Perspectives, Paradigm, and Possibility* and Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery & Taubman's (2006) *Understanding Curriculum* claim prominence.

materials, more about unpredictable people than performance charts, and more about deference to difference than the straightjacketing of difference. This argument is central to the current chapter since, I contend, planned and prescribed course outcomes are but one agency operating among a choir of coinciding influences that constitute the often-chaotic teacher-learner relationship.

Understandings of what constitutes curriculum are as legion as attempted definitions of curriculum (Marsh, 2004, pp. 3-7). These range in origin from Bloom's (1956) outcomes-based model for curriculum as objectives arising from both prescribed behavior tied to content, Phenix's (1962) emphasis upon curriculum as prescribed content, and Taba's (1962) centering of curriculum as the provision of opportunities to learn through experience tied to prescribed content. More recently, Goodlad (1994) introduced the idea of curriculum as a locally contextualized, albeit systematized plan for prescribed instruction that is directed towards a particular population in a specific context. The shortcomings of these traditional approaches and their lateral, more recent, offshoots – most visible in contemporary standardized, increasingly corporatized education movements within the USA – is that they rely too much on the prescription of knowledge, methods, and objectives already decided upon weeks, months, or even years prior to the in situ context of the classroom as a multi-tiered interactive space. And prescription of the *word* of curriculum – through teaching practices tied to rigid syllabus – spouts proscription whereby the desire-rich *world* (see Freire, 1985) of the learner comes to be largely elided. The same may be said of teachers who now come to serve as *teaching machines* of pre-formulated and prescribed bodies of knowledge potent with the political significance of the hidden curriculum (Apple, 1990) of the formation of inculcated citizens and a docile workforce, all the while relegating the role of teacher within education to that of an anti-intellectual paradox (Pinar, 2004, p. 170). Additionally, curriculum comes to be sanitized from the vital – and occasionally flawed – human presence of the teacher. Concurrent with such omission is the devaluing of emotion and embodiment that are near impossible to plan for since these arise from

co-constituted encounters embedded within the gritty, always unfinished and emergent contexts of the immediate. Additionally, even relatively recent approaches such as the learner-centered movement (Weimer, 2002; Blumberg, 2008) – emphasizing of the importance of less didactic in favor of more dialogic negotiated classroom practices – largely maintains the traditional dichotomy between teacher and learner. While a socially constructed distinction for purposes relating to management and accountability[40], and derived from older conceptions of apprenticeship, the teacher-learner dichotomy is a rather fluid relationship. The teacher is as much a learner as the learner is a teacher: teachers – like learners – bring bodies vulnerable to fatigue, as well as particular aspirations, uncertainties, hopes, anxieties, memories, home relations, frustrations, talents, and limitations into the classroom. Epistemic authority – not to be confused with authoritarianism – resides dialogically in both so that the construction of meaningful knowledge is dependent upon in situ relationships between and among teachers and learners in ever shifting configurations. Here, we can add to the mix of relationships among learners, as well as the relationship of all to syllabus. This is not to deny that teachers often come to these relationships with already existent and valuable skills, forms of knowledge, and experience in place, yet such can only be deployed – for better or worse – within highly contextual encounters with learners. Also, while there are numerous other means through which teacher-learner encounters can be theorized by employing more traditional constructivist modes of analysis – social constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978; Moll, 2014) and cognitive constructivism (Bruner, 1960; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000) being the most mainstream – these still present learning as a relatively stable, linear process, leave the instability of asymmetrical power relations between teacher and learner largely underexplored, and fail to account for the complexities of desire in teaching and learning. Furthermore, the productive capacity of chaos is never engaged.

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[40] "Accountability is the face of fascism in America today" (Pinar, 2004, p. 163).

Red interlude: Paul Badenhorst [2009] – *The Owl* [CLICK HERE] (see Badenhorst, 2010)

Assuming, for a moment, that the words – *chaos reigns* – spoken by the disemboweled fox during Lars Von Trier's (Garde, Jensen, Brokemper, Slot & Von Trier, 2009) deconstruction of the Oceanic (Freud, 1961) harmony of 'Eden' in the film *Antichrist*, are in fact the ontological bedrock from which the Cosmos, and by implication all human existences emerge and cycle, one would do well to ask what productive potential reckoning with the reality of chaos holds for education in general and emergent classroom practices in particular. Importantly, Doll (1993) heeds us to consider that "chaos is not a wild, random abandon. Far from it; the pattern is quite orderly but complex . . . random, but it is a pattern" (p. 93) – a process that Doll refers to elsewhere as "unpredictable determinism" (p. 17). I add to these insights that the pattern is a vast, complex, alternating grid upon which lines of embodied affect move and cross in directions that often yield unintended deflections, collisions, and assimilations. These lines of flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) characterize the becomings and transmutations of all things that are entangled with all other things: the ever-expanding Cosmos, thermodynamic turbulence, the birth-death-life cycle, human relationships, knowledge production, and those bodies of flesh and paper that coincide and circulate in and across space-time within classrooms. Chaos reigns as the eternal generator of difference: the ontological a priori of all that was, is, and ever will become. And chaos pervades curriculum as a quantum (Bernard & Slattery, 1992), highly complex (Davis & Sumara, 2006), living, breathing, and sweating cyborg-of-sorts: a hybrid of organism and *machine* (see Haraway, 1985) composed of multiple intersecting agencies that are as material as they are discursive (see Barad, 2003, 2007; Bennet, 2010; Braidotti, 1994).

Furthermore, Doll (1993) – who also provides a useful sketch of the emergence of the recognition of complexity relative to the history of curriculum design (2012) – draws attention to the dynamic, nonlinear implications of chaos theory for curriculum where, for instance, a break occurs between cause and effect making predictability and anticipated outcome tenuous at best.

This is a crucial point of departure from those structural approaches to curriculum cited earlier in that learning comes to be recognized more as the unpredictable in situ rupturing of multiple forms of conscious awareness about the interrelationship of "true self"[41] (Farley & Kennedy, 2016) to *word* and *world* (Freire, 1985; see Gramsci, 1971, p. 35) rather than a formulated process through which prescribed knowledge is to be uniformly assimilated. Curriculum then – to use a musical allegory – is much more akin to Arnold Schönberg's postmodern *Pierrot Lunaire*[42] than to Bach's mathematically structured *The Well-Tempered Clavier*[43]; more Miles Davis' *Bitches Brew*[44] than James Last's *Trumpet a Go Go*[45]. Slattery (2006) draws correlation between curriculum and improvisational jazz in which random and extemporized events build on each other and create a symphonic community experience (p. 280), though – admittedly – the discordant ~~symphony~~ cacophony of teaching is not always to the liking of all who desire to be grounded practitioners. This fluid interplay however, also, has a number of crucial underpinnings: a loosening of dependence upon metanarrative, an appreciation for paradox in the place of bifurcations, awareness of the interconnectedness of all things, respect for uncertainty principles that are always at work beneath the surface of what is visible and can be explained, and vulnerable deference to the productive potential resident in the idea that "in order to understand knowledge, I must experience intimacy" (Slattery, 2006, p. 295; see pp. 294-295) which, in turn, I rephrase as *in-to-me-see* [/ˈɪntɪməsi/]. Is it possible for curriculum to provide the kind of experience alluded to by Fitzgerald (1921): "They slipped briskly into an intimacy [*in-to-me-see*: parenthesis mine] from which they never recovered" (p. 27). What forms of teacher/learner becoming may emerge when the curricular space of the classroom becomes a web\space of *in-to-me-sees*?

Musical interlude: Tori Amos – Topic (2014) – Tori Amos – *Raining Blood* [CLICK HERE]

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[41] Winnicott's phrasing for a sense of self that "contributes to the feeling of being alive in relationship to others" (Farley & Kennedy, 2016, p. 171).
[42] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KsIATAaR-X0
[43] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPHIZw7HZq4 (performed by German/Japanese pianist, and Olympic powerlifter, Kimiko Ishizaka)
[44] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbCt-iXIXlQ&t=41s
[45] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCN8Nz0PGgs

Teacher Vulnerability to Curriculum and the Unforeseen

I have developed numerous curricula and syllabi over the years, most notably as researcher and teacher training instructor for the Daejeon Metropolitan Office of Education in the Republic of Korea, and have also taught in the vicinity of around ninety courses, classes, and modules in a number of cultural and national contexts. Yet, recently something destabilizing happened to me, or shall I say, the foundations of my confidence as a teacher have been shaken and tested – a claim I do not make lightly. Perhaps it is necessary for me though, at this point, to provide a few cursory descriptions of the backdrop of my life experiences these past few months so as to dispense at once with the idea of *transformation* as dependent upon blessed, blissful annunciation or the supposed I certainty that transformation culminates in radical change for the *good*. Transformation – usually borne from within a state of friction and tension – is not a foregone, consistent, rest assured movement in the direction of 'the greater good' or 'life in abundance'. After all, the movement from a moderate drinker who enjoys a six-pack after arriving home from work to a heavy, comatose drinker – as example – who needs a double gin-and-tonic for breakfast may eventually prove destructive[46] to health and relationship. However, such may also serve as a tension-reducing mechanism[47] in the midst of a crushing experience of relational infidelity or impetus for an epic weekend out in the countryside with friends attending a music festival. One is always vulnerable to "the impossibility of forecasting how things will work out, for good or worse" – a "line of flight without destination or inclination" (Bradley, 2016, p. 80). The idea of 'transformation', in and of itself, then is not a panacea or the hallowed existential domain of a *deus ex machina* where all things are guaranteed to end in resolve; work out for the good. It involves the kind of risks that come along with polar exploration and the compromises

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[46] "To this day, I am amazed at how many of my problems – most of which had nothing to do with drinking, I believed – have become manageable or have simply disappeared since I quit drinking" (Alcoholics Anonymous, 2001, p. 416).
[47] "Always remember, Clemmie, that I have taken more out of alcohol than alcohol has taken out of me" – Winston Churchill (see Knight, 2008, p. 144).

that accompany desert survival[48]. Furthermore, as Popkewitz (2009) points out, in a manner

inspired by Derrida, all words – including those used in education contexts – contain double

gestures. A word like *transformation*, as an example, refers as much to a kind of change that is

deemed socially desirable within a particular milieu governed by "historically-formed rules and

standards that order, classify, and divide what is 'seen' and acted on" (p. 301), as to an already

assumed reprobate condition supposedly in need of total redemption and restructuring.

Transformation, then, is a rather messy affair.

I returned from the jagged, pristine hinterland of Andean Ecuador in the late summer

more than twenty pounds lighter than I am at the time of writing. Somewhere immediately prior

to the start of the new semester I developed a chronic, unrelenting cough that I can only liken to a

foreboding guttural trumpet call announcing the imminent arrival of a plague. About the matter

of engaging the plague, Doctor Rieux – in Camus' (1948) existential tour-de-force The Plague –

confides, "I have no idea what's awaiting me, or what will happen when this all ends" (p. 127),

and such words echo my own sentiment at this time of writing. Unleashed from its vial, not unlike

the approaching black cloud of a fractured jar of flies, a deep depression descended upon me.

The return of the black dog, as Churchill (see Lovell, 2011, p. 267) so aptly phrased it; a beast

with which I have been previously well acquainted yet which I was not expecting to meet again so

soon: An awakening at mourning on the shores of my poisoned Oceanic. Confined to the bunker

of an apartment kept dark with blankets draped over the blinds in a desperate attempt to keep the

world outside at bay, amorphous periods of days, weeks passed by in the low humming register of

an overtone-type drone[49]. Void of the perception of time, the boundaries between fleeting

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[48] Think, for instance, of starving Antarctic explorer Xavier Mertz who dies in 1913, not from the cold but from ingesting too much Vitamin A: a key constituent in the livers of the sled dogs that he had consumed. Or think of Aron Ralston's survival as portrayed in the biopic *127 Hours* – self-mutilation and the consumption of ones own urine as desperate final attempts at life in the face of certain death. In both these transformations – the former in which a desperate pursuit of life brings about death; the latter where the destructive enables life – the unexpected and unpredictable take flight in skies that ultimately defy to be charted. Now let's apply such insights to teaching . . .

[49] Gelug Monks: https://soundcloud.com/deathbite/gelug-monks-tibetan-throat-singing

moments of sleep – those little slices of death[50] – and sullen wakefulness spilled over into an ever-

present state of slumber punctuated only by consciousness of the surrounding cathedral towers of

bottles on the coffee table plateau, lurid and running on empty. At times, the numbness of the

drone – a numbness for which I was and remain deeply grateful – was pierced by the terrifying,

excruciatingly painful sensation of the branches of a tree tearing through me from the inside. I do

not use tree as a metaphor – I speak of a real tree. It is a dark, contorted tree, barren of leaves. It

is a haunting tree. Of its roots[51] I cannot speak save to say that they run deep through the

primordial sedimentation of ages and demonic empires that dwarf the recent emergence of

destructive Homo sapiens – a species which still bears within it dominant protean traces of its

beastly origins[52].

English writer Algernon Blackwood – quoted (The Arkham Archivist, 2014) in the

prologue to The Call of Cthulhu – writes of "a hugely remote period when . . . consciousness was

manifested . . . in shapes and forms long since withdrawn before the tide of advancing humanity"

(p. 837). From such depths the dark tree as a collaborator to crucifixion, witch burning at the

stake, and lynching arose to torment me with its branches. And then, sometimes for a number of

days, the dread and extreme sense of loneliness would ease off – that is, until the branches would

resume tearing from inside out again. At such times, every possible modicum of libidinal life-

energy I could access was spent on either maintaining outside appearances when I needed to

leave the apartment or completing graduate assistant and research tasks for which others

depended on me, and to this end the guilt that arose from the thought of failing in my

responsibilities served as source of internally-coercive motivation.

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[50] This is the first half of the prologue to Wes Craven's *Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors* (Craven, Diener, Marvin, Risher, Shaye, Talalay, Thompson & Russell, 1987), falsely attributed to Edgar Allan Poe and, later, Friedrich Nietzsche.

[51] Libido, tree roots, and captive flesh: https://www.pinterest.com/pin/571253533968912252/

[52] See http://imgur.com/gallery/t5ehx ;
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNP8YxSQntg ;
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYhyRhj4IAo ;
http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/blake-nebuchadnezzar-n05059

In late autumn an egomaniac – Rome Burning in Man Form (see Christine, 2016) – rose to a position of global power, and the start of winter was marked by a collision between the car I was driving and a deer. I held the deer, its breath wholly receding, while a feint flurry of snowflakes began descending upon a dark and lonely Fox Hollow Road. James Joyce (2001) may well have been referring to this man-deer encounter: "His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead" (p. 121). As I walked back to the idling car, the approaching seasonal cold only seemed to follow on from a winter that had been present all along.

Throughout this time of approaching and receding waves of plague – being plagued – I was also teaching a semester-long undergraduate course of which I had developed the syllabus a year before in order to meet the syllabus submission requirements of the graduate school authority at the predominantly white, public research state university where I am completing my Ph.D studies and research work. The purpose for the development of the CI/EDTHP 297 course – which was partly inspired by the approach of the Philadelphia Urban Seminar, an intensive urban education, field-experience-based course centered on working to explicitly dismantle white supremacist, patriarchal, and ableist ideologies – was threefold. First, to explicitly center race-consciousness in an *everyday* learner-centered (see Grunert, O'Brien, Mills, Cohen & Diamond, 2008) manner – a theme I felt was often either neglected or presented in abstract, decontextualized, nominalized forms within higher education contexts. Second, to connect race consciousness with awareness of its intersections (see Crenshaw, 1989) with gender and social class. Third, to collect data related to the dyadic convergence between learner and syllabus-based content so as to determine what action-oriented attitudes are generated by such encounter. The course was titled *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop, Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society*. Undoubtedly, this lengthy title needs to be unpacked.

By drawing from Hip Hop, comedy, and new media literacy resources, I intended to allow learners – whom I anticipated would likely be hesitant to freely delve into content pertaining to the excavation of race consciousness and awareness of contemporary forms of racism that often go unnoticed – the opportunity to engage in *difficult conversations* (see Stone, Patton & Heen, 2010; Patterson, Grenny, McMillan & Switzler, 2002) in a manner that was both affectively disarming and personally relatable. The extant body of literature on *intercultural competence* (Byram, 1997; Dervin, 2016) within teacher education contexts has largely focused on explicit facilitated dialog-based strategies and activities, yet very little attention has hitherto been given to the fundamental opportunity of teacher trainees' own *funds of knowledge* (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005) and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1990) as resources towards intercultural exploration and learning. In other words, in addition to the prescribed more traditional paper-based reading texts that were to be used in class[53], cultural texts that comprised the daily media consumption habits of young people were also to comprise an emergent part of the syllabus. Such an approach was undoubtedly encouraged by Freire's (1985) observation that:

> The act of reading cannot be explained as merely reading words since every act of reading words implies a previous reading of the world and a subsequent rereading of the world. There is a permanent movement back and forth between "reading" reality and reading words . . . reading is a matter of studying reality that is alive, reality that we are living inside of, reality as history being made but also making us. (p. 18)

It was this bridging between *word* and *world* that a partly emergent approach sought to accommodate, while simultaneously recognizing that there are parts of the learners *world* that are very difficult to directly engage with such as family and community members (see Bryan & Henry, 2012) – the very people with whom our learners often spend Thanksgivings and 12/25.

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[53] Examples of more traditional paper-based texts prescribed for class were, among others, Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me*, as well as portions from Michelle Alexander's (2012) *The New Jim Crow* and bell hooks' (1992) *Black Looks: Race & Representation*.

This said, and as an aside, it should be stated that the domain of classroom, often

sanitized from the grit and realities of everyday life through habitus, requires considerable effort,

stress, and even risk, on the part of the teacher in order for more authentic connections between

reading *word* through *world* to take flight. Consider, for instance, the neurotic absence of

authentic discussions of race and racism relative to the ubiquity[54] of pornography which itself is

part of a larger global and digital cultural phenomenon characterized by the rapid production,

dissemination, and consumption of information (see Peter & Valkenburg, 2016, p. 19). Such

hyper-sexualized text, while not objectionable in and of itself per se, deserves engagement

precisely because it is here that libidinal energy often comes into direct and immediate contact

with representations of the body that are not only gender-based, but racial in character, too. In

heterosexually normative porn, for instance, the bodies of the Asian and indigenous men are

erased, while the *tiny* frame of the Asian women comes to represent exotic pleasure and

submissiveness as much as the *booty* of the Latina woman comes to represent intensely energized,

spicy sexual encounter for the cock of the *white stud*. In interracial encounters, the *white slut* or

bitch transgresses the color-line taboo by *going black* on *black monster cock*, while black women

are often referred to as *ghetto* and *ho* (see DiAngelo, 2012, pp. 116-118). Considering the

potential that the practice of repetitive consumption exercises over the unconscious construction

of future racialized forms of habitus (see Badenhorst, 2015), such daily life themes need to be

explored, unpacked, and – if necessary – deconstructed through honest classroom reflection and

discussion. The need for such intervention is amplified by the fact that a term like *ebony*, for

instance, and in the USA, is the most viewed porn category throughout the Southern states

(Pornhub Insights, 2016). How, as educators, can we create opportunities for our learners to

engage more critically with those texts that comprise their daily lives?

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[54] "In 2016, the human race watched a grand total of 91,980,225,000 videos on Pornhub, clocking in 23,000,000,000 total visits to the site and 4,599,000,000 hours of porn watched, enough to last 191,625,000 days, or 5,246 centuries" (Rense, 2017, ¶1).

However, in addition to the aforementioned, through the course I also intended that learners will come to see themselves as racial texts – texts comprised of 'color, hair, and bone' (Du Bois in Foner, 1970) – that both speak and are read by others. Here, I was especially mindful of the predominantly white rural and suburban young people I was anticipating would likely comprise the overwhelming majority of the class population – a demographic for whom racial identity is often simultaneously invisible and normative. Or, as DiAngelo (2012) indicates, "The vast majority of whites cannot answer the question 'How has race shaped your life?' beyond the most superficial of platitudes" (p. 167). The same conclusion can be drawn regarding gender [where men often struggle to perceive and understand the privilege and supremacy inherent in their own gender positioning] and social class [where the empty signifier 'middleclass' comes to take the position of a default, elusive, non-descript, invisible norm lodged somewhere on a continuum between *white trash* and poor on the one side and upper class and The One Percent on the other].

This meeting of syllabus and learner was to serve as the threshing floor for what would be my thesis study. The following paragraph from my original IRB application succinctly highlights the core objective of the study:

> The goal of the study is to identify the elements of a pop-culture based framework of intercultural exploration and competence for teacher trainees and how these can aid in more dialogic forms of class discussion, and will more broadly answer the question of how to prepare teachers for increasingly diverse classrooms.

Data was to be collected on the student study participants and their perceptions and experiences of popular culture-assisted sociopolitical learning using structured and semi-structured interviews, recorded class discussions, as well as field notes taken by myself over a 16-week period. I was a researcher studying the dyadic relationship between learner and syllabus; an observer. The process should have been fail-safe. *This was the intention.* Of course, I never accounted for the

dyad-defying chaos that would simultaneously arise both from within the intimate space of the class as well as within myself, dashing my curricular planning against the rocks, and drawing me in as less of an observer and more an intimate participant alongside learner and text: the triad I had failed to consider. Here, I found myself more vulnerable – and out of my depth – than I ever have felt as a teacher; guilty, ashamed, and highly doubtful that I would satisfy learner expectations for the course. This was a feeling akin perhaps to a hunter becoming the hunted, attempting to find my way through a strange, uncharted forest where the thick canopy obscured reassuring deference to distant landmarks or starlight-coded signs in the sky with a blanket of fog as dense and heavy as Cosmic dark matter itself.

Rethinking Intentionality & Agency in the Classroom

Intention, a nominalization, however, is a *thing* intended – an evolutionary predisposition for implicit bias (see Rosset, 2008). It is a word that describes a *concept*, in the form of a noun, and not a direct action as use of an active form of the infinitive of the verb, *to intend*, would allow. In this way, the nominalized form *intention* allows for strategic subtraction of the subject – or actor – from the object or purpose intended. Personal and possessive pronouns therefore need not be used so that one can speak of *the intention* rather than *I intend* or *my intent*, hereby abstracting the subject of a degree of responsibility, or at least, creating distance between the action [through its objectification] and actor. Consequently, I wish to use some basic allegorical wordplay to deconstruct the nominalized form *intention* so as to denude its inadequacy relative to the interplay of those human practices, positionings, and performances that weave a web of complexity within the classroom:

> **intention = *intent*** [purpose] **+ *ion*** [an electrically charged atom attracted to opposite electric charges and repelled by like charges]

Intention is not the certainty of a determined course (+) towards a desired outcome (+). Instead, much like the manner in which an ion is arranged, *intent* is marked by the simultaneous

unpredictable confluence of factors of determined course (+) meets undesired outcome (-) and undetermined course (-) meets desired outcome (+): A collision of positive and negative charges. In other words, matters never turn out quite the way we intend. It's not that humans do not operate with intent – most human [and non-human] action is powered by intent. Rather, intent often disappoints our expectations in some cases or exceeds them in outcome in others since our intentions do not operate in a vacuum but are continuously colliding with other influences – both human and nonhuman – over which we often have little or no control. While this view of intentionality, in particular, holds significant implication over curriculum as it exists beyond our willing and doing (see Pinar, 2013), it also extends to how we conceive of agency. Barad (2003) formulates agency as "a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone or something has . . . Agency is not an attribute whatsoever – it is 'doing' / 'being' in its intra-activity" (pp. 826-827). Regarding this agential-realist idea of intra-activity, Barad (2003) writes:

> Intra-actions always entail particular exclusions, and exclusions foreclose any possibility of determinism, providing the condition of an open future. Therefore, intra-actions are constraining but not determining. That is, intra-activity is neither a matter of strict determinism nor unconstrained freedom. (p. 826)

Agency then is distributed among a "swarm of vitalities" (Bennett, 2010, p. 32)[55] of which intention is but one of many effects:

> To figure the generative source of effects as a swarm is to see human intentions as always in competition and confederation with many other strivings, for an intention is like a pebble thrown into a pond, or an electrical current sent through a wire or neural network: it vibrates and merges with other currents, to affect and be affected. (p. 32)

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[55] Alluding to a painting that – much like social phenomena – is an entanglement of variegated effects – Brian Massumi (2002) writes: "Everything gets tangled up in the painting, *intensities* pile up in it, beyond all intentionality" (p. 243).

Here, causality – rather than being an effect traceable along a determined, linear pathway – unfolds at the rhizomatic (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) intersection of multiple effects that confederate to constitute the process as agent relative to a constellation of prior and simultaneous processes; all of which combine to muddy those discursively imposed boundaries that often enable the all-too-easy attribution of singular blame or credit. This does not mean that subjects are free of personal responsibility – only that responsibility is more often than not distributed in degrees that range across relational processes of enabling, abetting, coercing, complying, resisting, and so forth. "An actor is what is *made* to act by many others" (Latour, 2005, p. 46), and here I add a few examples of likely suspects, both human and other-than-human[56]: unconscious human drives working across relationships, the experience of a low blood sugar level and its effects upon emotions, the howling of a pack of wolves in the distant dark, a chirping cricket outside a bedroom window three nights and counting, a stare of curiosity interpreted as personal sleight, the extinguishing of a numeric configuration of flaming birthday candles in the presence of a jovial party throng, stars that enable sailors to navigate oceans suddenly obscured by a blanket of clouds, a deer running into the path of an approaching car with its headlights turned to *bright*, an assassination borne of local ethnic resentment that serves as precursor to war on a global scale, the sudden spark of sanguine creativity brought on by deep exhale in the presence of a joint, the slight anticipatory inhale moments before lips touch. Furthermore, it is within this entanglement of matter and perception that consciousness *bursts forth*:

> If, impossible though it be, you could enter 'into' a consciousness you would be seized
> by a whirlwind and thrown back outside, in the thick of the dust near a tree, for
> consciousness has no 'inside'. (Sartre, 1970, pp. 4-5)

We are dependent upon matter for consciousness precisely because we are matter. The crucial point here then is that discussion of the notion of agency requires accounting for that complex

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[56] See Johnson's (1988) fascinating discussion around the mechanical door-closer as social agent.

entanglement of materialities of which humans comprise but one part, albeit one part from which we perceive and absorb the ongoing whispers and blows of all the matter that comprises our consciousness, and yet which we only partially, at best, are able to control.

I relate a previous experience in order to emphasize the earlier claim of agency being distributed among a "swarm of vitalities" (Bennett, 2010, p. 32), both human and other-than-human.

During a period when students in one of the classes I previously taught a number of semesters ago appeared increasingly lethargic [possibly due to the fact that the tiny classroom we met in had no windows and was illuminated by the monotonous pale of fluorescent white light] a good number of weeks into the semester, I wondered what would happen if I introduced a coffee-and-snacks potluck near the beginning of class of this particular period for the remainder of the semester. Coffee and snacks are material but they act upon in so many ways: there is the sound of the kettle boiling in the background; the aroma of the coffee itself; the mouthwatering experience of saliva at the sight of home-baked Oreo-Marshmallow Squares in a plate, as well as the kinesthetic experience of standing up, walking towards, and then huddling around a refreshment table with other bodies in communion. This was a peculiar experience for me since I came to the awareness that my suggestion had been much more than a mere 'kind' concession to the class – the coffee affectively acts upon learners in ways only hot coffee on frosty autumn mornings can. In this sense, coffee spoke (see Barad, 2012) at a point when my most well-intentioned verbal encouragement was being met with fatigue-laden stares. Coffee – the smell . . . anticipation, sound of the kettle, sight of the spoon, touch of a hot paper cup, and taste of the grounded black bean itself – energized these students, and the students, in turn, started speaking more freely to one another and myself.

This account illustrates, most importantly and for purposes relating to this paper, the irrevocable relationship between materiality and emotions in the play of consciousness – an

economy of the senses that holds profound implications for the teacher as well. For instance, how many instances that are often regarded as emotional flair-ups or behavioral transgressions within the classroom are rooted in the near neglect of the body and material aesthetics? Drab, pale walls sanitized of color, rows of hard desks regimented in camp formations, narrow windows that hint at a view of the branch but obscure the tree. Can we blame the tired, lethargic, and hungry for appearing emotionally stunted in such confines? And, if not, how can we as teachers work alongside students to add life and movement to these otherwise barren and stationary places?

Furthermore, a reading of Sara Ahmed's (2004) *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* illustrates so effectively how intentionality and agency come to take secondary positions relative to the play of dominant, recognized, and valued emotions. These are often coalesced in social formations that group-police display of emotions, so exercising profound influence over the way bodies are, in turn and in contact with other bodies, regulated, allowed freedom, shamed, celebrated, or treated with apathy. As Ahmed (2004) points out regarding their productive – albeit sometimes restrictive – capacity, "emotions operate to 'make' and 'shape' bodies as forms of action" (p. 4), adding that "emotions work by working through signs and on bodies to materialize the surfaces and boundaries that are lived as worlds" (p. 191). Emotion then is an additional powerful and productive social force field that operates on a plain beyond intentionality, and on such grounds needs to be contended with in order to further explore how learner and teacher ways of relating coalesce in unexpected ways relative to curriculum. Remarks Matias (2013) in a manner that affirms the importance of emotions relative to race, "Understanding racialized emotions is a vital source of what makes us human, and that in itself makes it noteworthy for examination" (p. 6). Simultaneously, it should be recognized that curriculum itself – its theme, content, and scope – is equally able to evoke a range of often chaotic and ambiguous emotions among both learners and teachers. Such emotions, in turn, and as previously pointed out by Ahmed (2004) go on to materialize social surfaces and boundaries – a phenomenon I refer to as

em(o)bodiment[57] – that are lived as worlds so that rifts or concords can develop among and between learners, teacher, and curriculum. These, in turn, comprise particular embodied iterations and networks of relationship. Based on such relationality, I tender that the body holds ethical significance.

The Body as Ethical Foundation of Curriculum

Against the background of such complexity and chaos, can we still speak of an ethics[58] informing curriculum? This question is framed against the necessity of a broader question, *Why teach?* (see Block, 2008). While Eisner (2006), for instance, suggests that the work of the teacher "is related to achieving the deep satisfactions of teaching" (p. 46), he describes these satisfactions in generally abstract and overly optimistic terms. For instance, Eisner tenders, "to realize a form of immortality", and to "make a difference in students' lives" (Eisner, 2006, pp. 44- 45) as two

motivators for teaching, yet neither of these engage with that inner turmoil which so often accompanies moments when we question why it is that we chose to become teachers in the first place.

Of course, education – and by extension, the act of teaching – conceived through the intellectual lens of post-Protestant Reformation, when public education started emerging as a field coupled alongside compulsory schooling beginning in Prussia, has always espoused some degree of *ethics* as informing its purposes and goals. Pestalozzi [moral regeneration of the masses], Herbart [formation of a moral character], and Froebel [the revelatory knowledge of god's unfolding order as basis for social harmony], to name but a few, were philosophers of education who stressed the role of education in the social reproduction of values deemed *good* by the dominant sectors of the societies within which they worked. It is especially with Froebel that the idea of school as a microcosm of society – and most notably so at the time, the kindergarten –

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[57] An ouroboros of *emotion + embodiment*: always recreating itself.
[58] As will be explained at a point later in the text, here 'ethics' should not be conflated with 'morality'.

gains traction, and the formation of moral nature is emphasized as a responsibility of education.

However, even with this movement of the importance of curriculum from a *psychological*

[individual] to a *sociological* [group] focus, as Monroe (1952, pp. 370-372) phrases it, such

approaches ultimately fell short on the grounds that they heavily privileged the dominant

religious and philosophical ideologies of their time in a manner that looked forward to the role of

education and curriculum in helping to usher in a golden age of unfettered social progress: utopia.

The likelihood that such a heavily idealized focus on moral development in education – as

precursor to more contemporary movements that would seek to cultivate *good* citizens "by

bringing about a better adjustment of individuals to one another" (Monroe, 1952, p. 377) – would

simultaneously work to mark dissenting differences as immoral and insidious was clearly

overlooked in the midst of this spirit of optimism. The Apartheid state apparatus, for instance,

uniformly sought to sanitize white experience from cultural influences that it deemed racially

inferior and culturally corrupting through an education system that ensured social reproduction

(Engelbrecht, 2006; Nash, 1990) of Christian Nationalist values inspired by Calvinist ideological

themes (Elphick, 2012; Korf; 2007; Abdi, 2003; Ritner, 1967). Such ideology emphasized the

election of white South Africans by God through moral covenant, and failure to comply with

state-mandated norms and values as a fully recognized white citizen of the republic, such as the

Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act [1949] and Immorality Act [1950], was interpreted as

sedition. In other words, moral prescriptions as a form of existential reductionism are prone to not

only polarize bodies but in certain unforgiving contexts to extinguish bodies altogether. It is for

this reason that I maintain it is the body, and not morality, that needs to be emphasized in

education and curriculum. Without the body consciousness – at least on Planet Earth – waxes

silent. And unlike Heidegger's (2008) *Dasein*, or being present, which never appears to hunger

(see Levinas, 1969), the body of *human being* hungers, thirsts, sweats, bleeds, ages, and carries

the weight of accumulations of words. The body is the foundation of a refractive[59] ethics of

difference. Of course, it is likely to be countered that morality, especially of an overtly religious

variety, has long since been dispensed with in mainstream public education, and especially so in

the USA. Yet, are the unspoken requirements of post-racial, colorblind ideology that lay

embedded in all spheres of civic life not themselves generally – and perhaps unconsciously –

perceived to be moral, albeit superficially so, injunctions? Be nice to everyone just like MLK told

us to be; don't use the *N*-word; don't tolerate openly racist comments on your Facebook page;

don't mention someone's race because that is racist; be open with others that you do not see color

because it's the heart that counts. The body is hardly anywhere to be found in any such

moralizing discourse. Ethics, on the other hand, and divergent from morality, is a position of

openness to both the reality of violence in its physical and epistemological forms, as well as the

possibility[60] that stems from such violence à la Levinas (1978) who writes: "At the very moment

where all is lost, everything is possible" (p. 58). Ethics resides in the "distributed representation"

circulating throughout embodied human relationships – "evolving and ever-expanding

conversations between sense-makers, the sense made, and sensorial encounters with the universe"

(Davis & Sumara, 2006, p. 34). Such conversation both extends to and intertwines itself

throughout curriculum and its related affects. In short, "Curriculum exists in our embodied

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[59] Again, refraction – as opposed to reflection that implies a *bouncing off* – involves a change in the direction of waves as they pass from one medium to another. The trajectory is not determined, but contextual; not linear but contingent upon the effects of both *passing through* and *across* different states. Therefore, the ethical requirement and its ensuing actions are determined by the context of the in situ proximity of the Other in a manner that intimately implicates me as one who possesses a vulnerable body and holds me responsible to respond responsibly to the vulnerability before me – a vulnerability I can perceptibly feel within myself (Levinas, 1998).

[60] Whereas morality is comprised of morally imperative sets of prescriptive injunction and sanction [think of ethics in a Western Kantian sense], ethics – especially in a Levinasian sense – seeks to disturb my good conscience, not reestablish it (Bernasconi, 1990, p. 6). I can never fully know what I ought to do so that I can never fully satisfy some normative universal moral totality (Levinas, 1991). Ethics then is a matter of ongoing suspicion (Bernasconi, 1990) in which each situation presents itself as a question mark with which I need to wrestle anew as to what should constitute my response for both the Other for whom I am simultaneously always responsible (see Levinas, 1998) as well as for what my course of action should be in relation to life in general.

relationships" (Davis & Sumara, 1998, p. 85), too, as much as our bodies come to coexist along with curriculum and the affect in produces in both others and ourselves.

A beautiful passage from Michael Ondaatje's (1992) novel *The English Patient* poignantly describes the residual effect of a communal cartography of embodied relationships.

> We die containing a richness of lovers and tribes, tastes we have swallowed, bodies we have plunged into and swum up as if rivers of wisdom, characters we have climbed into as if trees, fears we have hidden in as if caves. I wish for all this to be marked on by body when I am dead. I believe in such cartography – to be marked by nature . . . We are communal histories, communal books. We are not owned or monogamous in our taste or experience. (p. 261)

Ultimately, to ignore flesh and materiality which define the contours of our relationships is to weaken the possibility for engaging with a refractive ethics in education. As demonstrated by Levinas (1998), ethics is less dependent upon the political manifesto of liberal universalism as upon the a priori vulnerability of the face (Levinas, 1998, pp. 11) which is Levinasian shorthand for the vulnerability of the human body that comes to me as already vulnerable – a vulnerability that is always prior to my own existence: "matter is the very fact of the *there is*" (Levinas, 1978, p. 57); an ontological a priori.

Whereas National Socialism, as example, proved successful in chewing through and obliterating human flesh through its ideological self-worship of identity rooted above *other* identities via biological reductionism, the political thrust of liberal universalism proved largely impotent towards averting this slaughter since it had ultimately lost sight of the significance of the body (Bernasconi, 1990, p. 119). Hence, Levinas attempts to problematize the relationship between politics and ethics by drawing explicit attention to the vulnerability of the body (see Altez-Albela, 2011). For Levinas (1998), ethics is not an existential orientation that arises from a

particular politics, as has been the case with the liberal universalist project. Instead, the demands

of an ethics of face, or vulnerability, are always already prior to my existence. The face "signifies

for me an unexceptionable responsibility, preceding every free consent, every pact, every

contract" (p. 88). The face then is an ethical signification holding political implication. To this

end, Levinas proposes a fundamental *face*-ism for combating fascism. Furthermore, Levinas's

(1998) material ethics of body – "a denuding beyond the skin, to the wounds one dies from,

denuding to death, being as vulnerability" (p. 49) – is grounded in everyday sensibility (p. 15), or

capacity to be affected by material and emotional stimuli, determinate of being (p. 129) that is

open to both wounding and enjoyment (p. 90). Sensibility then arises from the imperative of an

already extant exposure and vulnerability to others (p. 54). Affirms Levinas: "Only a subject that

eats can be for-the-other" (p. 74; see p. 77). We all eat; all are vulnerable. Beasts, too, we are,

albeit beasts equally vulnerable to the fang, tooth, and claw of other beasts. Yet, our capacity for

an elevated experience of disgust (see Strohminger, 2014) – as another ambivalent emotion

capable of exercising influence over embodied action, and thereby, the contours that bodies

themselves take (see Ahmed, 2004) – also holds the potential for bringing about a reconfiguration

in the way we think about not only the potential fallout of our own vulnerability, but also the

evisceration of bodies that are different from our own in appearance [race] and action [sexual

orientation], whether through physical or epistemological forms of violence. Sparrow (2013)

summarizes the matter as follows:

> Our carnal sensibility, which meets with the face of the other in all its unfathomable
>
> complexity and its sensuous complexion, does not require the formalism of Kantian
>
> morality to find itself summoned to responsibility." (p. 101)

Contemplation upon and action inspired by the weight of such reality is ethics. Such ethics, in

turn, while relevant to all contexts in which teaching and learning occurs, is indispensible relative

to teaching and learning around the *matter* of race as an event, action, and encounter between bodies – a theme highlighted in an earlier chapter.

Additionally, assumptions that teaching is a position of superiority in an asymmetrical power relationship or otherwise detached neutrality come undone by such an ethics founded on the body. The teacher, too, in relation to mutually susceptible learners and the exposed body of curriculum, is vulnerable – to slights, stares, and rumors that tire the body, insomnia, fatigue, crying spells, moments of anxiety that leave the tongue dry and palms clammy, stress-induced headaches, high blood pressure, crippling depression, lower back strain, autoimmune diseases, and burnout (see Welsh & DeChello, 2001; Fischer, 2011; Ferguson, Frost & Hall, 2012; Matias, 2013; Education Support Partnership, 2015). In a dispensation marked by mounting disregard of not only the teaching profession and the value of teachers but – more specifically – the somatic and psychological wellbeing of teachers, greater insight into the material and emotional lives of teachers becomes indispensible, and especially so in context to the life-worlds of teachers who co-engage with their learners in vital content that simultaneously induces high levels of stress, anxiety, and consumption of energy. Race is one such essential field, albeit a field that often can come to take the form of a psycho-emotional minefield. Admittedly, as a white male educator, the psycho-emotional strain and tension I experience will be substantially less than that reported by educators of colors other than white. Matias (2013), for instance, though not in isolation, reports frequently being on the receiving end of "rituals of microaggressions" (p. 60) enacted by the white teacher candidates whom she teaches, and culminating in emotional traumas such as "waking up periodically throughout the night before class, hoping to cry myself back to sleep" (p. 57). I do not require the quintessential, energy sapping, daily-automated deployment of double consciousness as survival strategy in majority spaces dominated by whiteness (Du Bois, 2003).

And, yet, I find myself deeply wrestling with feelings of my own – emotions I often struggle to name, let alone extract from the murky swamp of my inner conflicts. Here I do not

frame myself as a *victim* of sorts – merely as one seeking to reckon with the meaning of the

ethical requirement I have previously outlined, and especially so since to be too confident of the

targets in the struggle against racial injustice and identity violence without being conscious of

and investigating the hands that hold bow and arrow obscures the profound significance of ones'

racial history, identities, aspirations, and the consequences these hold for others, especially as a

teacher. Remarks Coates, "Here is the machinery of racism – the privilege of being oblivious to

questions, of never having to grapple with what is around you" (Coates, 2014, para. 1).

> *Dear Mister Coates. I desire to question and grapple with what is around me, and attempt to do so, both feverishly and corrigibly. After all, the unexamined life is not worth living[61]. Yet, I wonder about my ability to identify my own most obscure internal blind spots – those unknown unknowns, the ones we don't know we don't know, as Donald Rumsfeld stated under rather dubious circumstances. I wonder, am I asking the right kinds of questions – am I doing the right kind of grappling? Kind regards. Pauli*

Unlike the mystical insights of *The Cloud of Unknowing*[62] (Johnston, 1996) through which we

supposedly gain a glimpse of the essence of god, and truth, by surrendering ourselves to the realm

of unknowing, the unknowns that proliferate one's racial habitus are ultimately powerful inner

workings able to reinforce the machinery of racism, albeit all too often under a veneer of

projective self-righteous innocence. In other words, as a white person, it is not enough to merely

recognize or even expose racism in the world. I need to begin by undertaking the work –

quintessential for all white educators – of excavating and renovating my own psyche. I tender this

statement for three reasons; reasons I refer to as ethical cautions for white educators engaged in

antiracism work.

First, antiracism work done by white people needs to contend with what Shannon

Sullivan (2006) calls *ontological expansiveness*, or the tendency of white people to "think as if all

spaces – whether geographical, psychical, linguistic, economic, spiritual, bodily, or otherwise –

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[61] See Section 38A of Plato's (1966) *Apology*.
[62] A late 14th Century Christian contemplative mystical text penned in the apophatic tradition of the Via
Negativa and the antecedent Neoplatonic thought of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite.

are or should be available for them to move in and out of as they wish" (p. 10). Coates (2015) alludes to his witness of white ontological expansiveness in a particular spatial-material context:

> They were utterly fearless. I did no understand it until I looked out on the street. That was where I saw white parents pushing double-wide strollers down gentrifying Harlem boulevards in T-shirts and jogging shorts. Or I saw them lost in conversation with each other, mother and father, while their sons commanded entire sidewalks with their tricycles. The galaxy belonged to them, and as terror was communicated to our children, I saw mastery communicated to theirs. (p. 89)

However, ontological expansiveness also extends to the realm of language and, more importantly, who possesses the right to represent with authority. This is not only a high profile-type matter of NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick being publically lambasted for stating that "America's never been great for people of color" (Bieler, 2016, para. 5), and a then white presidential candidate who was adversely able to build nearly his entire political platform on denigrating the USA as a not-great-anymore, weak, bullied, dwindling, unsafe dystopia replete with border crossing Mexican rapists and Muslim terrorists. The former was attributed, among others, with bringing about a rapid decline in NFL ratings and viewership (Roberts, 2016) while the latter ascended to the position of 45[63]. Rather, ontological expansiveness also occurs in everyday life when white people – myself most likely included – claim our right to insert ourselves as equals in conversations of social significance, and yet in which we enjoy positions of blind privilege and unrecognized superiority. The problem is not that we participate but rather that in participating we are able to walk – and even epistemologically piss – all over those vital concerns that affect others deep throughout their souls and into their flesh while for us, at worst, it only ever needs to be an opinion tendered to be heard. Pears and prickly pears, both named *pear*, yet our life experiences are not the same when it comes to the demands placed upon how our phenotypic

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[63] See http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2017/01/politics/trump-inauguration-gigapixel/

exteriors are diversely read and interpreted. Eventually we need to ask, how can I remain

sensitive to the emotions and defer to the voices of people of colors other than mine? – No matter

how well or good-intentioned my assumptions. After all, *the road of good intentions is paved*

with hell. In other words, a substantial portion of discussions of race around the Globe serve to

reify racism centered around the protection of white feelings supposedly founded on benevolent

intentions, or "White virtue" as (Hill, 2008, pp. 21-22) phrases such phenomenon. This is *white*

fragility (DiAngelo, 2011), and even the *best* curriculum cannot account for fully anticipating the

immediacy, power, and scope of its affect. Instead, cultivation of an uncomfortable, unsettling

form of double consciousness among white educators (see Jupp, 2013) is required – the kind that

has us working hard to anticipate and measure the consequences of our every word and action; of

living in the moment; of treading aware. Such likely involves the kind of listening – referred to by

Gadamer (2004) as "uninterrupted listening" (p. 461) – that allows one to attempt to deeply invest

oneself in the hermeneutic event; a *hermeneutics of suspicion* (Bernasconi, 1990) of the self and

one's own supposed good intentions.

Second, we need to be reminded of the words of Steve Biko (1987 [1978]) who writes,

"blacks[64] do not need a go-between in this struggle for their own emancipation" (p. 26).

Unfortunately, contemporary narratives of empathy that proliferate white savior films[65] such as

Dangerous Minds, *Freedom Writers*, and *The Blind Side* (see Vera & Gordon, 2003) do little

more than reify deep-seated, emotion-laden assumptions of deficit and pitiable helplessness.

Matias (2016), with surgical precision, dissects the matter as follows:

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[64] And, by implication, darker skinned people.

[65] Notably, on the reverse side of the coin, the tears of the white masculine saviors of white women,
especially in iconic US cinematic representations, are very rare since – save for *Brokeback Mountain* that
breaks with the Western genre narrative of the endangered white woman who needs saving and protecting
from the rapacious, marauding hordes (see Bainbridge, Din, Fon, Ludwick, et al., 2010) – cowboys don't
cry. John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Charles Bronson, Lee Marvin, James Coburn all appear riddled with
paranoia at times, yet ultimately fail to commit to that magical *watershed* moment. Such disposition,
sterilized of empathy, is itself "an impaired sense of a core self" (Thandeka, 1999, p. 127).

Through her trials and tribulations, wrought with tears and well-intentioned behavior, the

White woman's tears are deemed worthy of sympathy because of her strength to endure

people of Color. However, in the same films, the people of Color are portrayed in ways

where their emotionalities – their tears – are pitied for their weakness thus are in need of

white saviority" (p. 6).

Matias (2016) continues, "Let me be clear, the tears of White ladies are depicted as a symptom of

innate goodness which is not mutually recognized in the tears of people of Color" (p. 6). Again,

the question of why it is that I, a white person, choose to engage with the work of antiracism –

discussed in a previous chapter – requires particular excavation in order to curb the kind of ego

aggrandizement that often characterizes supposed white benevolence which is blind to the reality

that my pleasure and my sense of moral goodness could only emerge if the other is in a position

to need and so be grateful for my *gift*: "It is not the other person's need that requires our sense of

benevolent charity, as ethical treatises suggest, it is rather our sense of benevolent charity that

requires the other person's need" (Hoagland, 2007, p. 103).[66] Such insight holds potential for

deconstructing the modus operandi of assumed care that often enables white people doing

antiracism work to attitudinally distance themselves from other whites and the ongoing

repercussions of white supremacy as a social, systemic order. Additionally, the reductive

assumption that darker skinned people are broken and in desperate need of repair ignores the

crucial reality that one can "be both subordinated and resistant. One can be both silenced and

speaking" (Hoagland, 2007, p. 106). Even a cursory reading of, for instance, James Baldwin

(1985) echoes this point with the guttural power of deep, roaring thunder.

Third, antiracism perspectives have the ability to substitute one form of hatred for another.

Notably, hatred, an emotional energy emitting from the erotic aggressive drive (Freud 1961), is

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[66] Such observation aligns with Derrida's (1992) discussion of the *aporia* of the gift whereby the giving of a gift is undone at the moment of reciprocation, for instance, the instant when a *thank you* is uttered. For a gift to be a gift it needs to be given in anonymity. Anonymity authenticates the gift.

an aroused bodily state from which we are able to derive a large degree of enjoyment. This *jouissance* – or libidinal pleasure derived from the transgression of a boundary of social orthodoxy – requires that we should come to regard enjoyment as a political factor (Žižek, 2008a) that is often productive of our ideological alignments. Consider, for instance, the means whereby poor and lower class white people are often intra-racially framed as racist *white trash* (Sullivan, 2014, pp. 23-58) who belong in a "basket of deplorables" (see Montanaro, 2016). We therefore run the risk of substituting our former racist prejudices against darker skinned people with a reconditioned hatred of perceived and projected racists. In this regard, our supposed antiracism investments come to do little more than provide new impetus for our enjoyment of hatred, produce a deceptive display of "white middle-class moral goodness" (Sullivan, 2014, p. 5), while simultaneously compromising on our ability to remain focused in the work of dismantling white supremacist patriarchal systems of oppression. Lensmire (2017), for one, has previously drawn attention to the scapegoating rituals of whites against other whites as a means of securing the attacker's identity and belonging as an anti-racist. Consequently, the emotional foundations of our enjoyment – and ensuing progressive investments and identities – need to be closely scrutinized (see Thompson, 2003). Of course, such admission does not undercut my previous contention that white teacher feelings actually matter for antiracism pedagogy – only that precisely on the basis that they matter, white teacher feelings need to be interrogated relative to the co-existent feelings of learners and the corpus of curriculum. Here, antiracism work comes to be as much a work that educators perform upon themselves and within the social spaces within which they work – a synthesis of the already established practices of teacher research (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Lysaker & Thompson, 2013) and critical teacher reflection (Brookfield, 1995) with the kind of racial literacy work that Guinier (2004) describes as being contextual in focus and interactive in process. In other words, such an approach stresses "learning rather than knowing" (p. 115) in which race comes to function as a refractive tool of self-diagnosis relative to the teacher's interaction with learners and curriculum.

A Method for Researching Teacher/Learner/Curricular Triad for Antiracism Pedagogy

At the start of this section I want emphasize that my own struggles can never claim preeminence over peoples whose struggles span lifetimes and generations: those who are darker skinned, indigenous, female, non-gender conforming, or regarded by others to be disabled: Those whose time often exists outside of time. Yet, in pursuit of exponentially, hopefully, adding to the larger work of questioning and grappling (Coates, 2014, para. 1), I – a white man teacher educator who frequently engages learners with matters of race and racism relative to curriculum – tender description of my anticipated thesis research. As an aspiring educational anthropologist (see Kunda, 2013) my work employs psychoanalytic and new materialist lenses to better understand complex emotional dynamics that underlie ways of perceiving and relating to embodied differences, predominantly in context to race in higher education and broader social contexts. Emotion as utterance and expression presents a dynamic surplus that is both able to modify that to which it refers or represents and alter the state of the subject and intersubjective encounter from which it derives so that it requires attention beyond the realm of discourse and practice (see Reddy, 1997). In the ensuing data discussions I desire to concentrate my research scope on the quintessential idea that teacher, learner, and curriculum coexist as an entangled triad relative to antiracism work in the university classroom. In particular, I frame the scope of this inquiry through the following two fundamental research questions:

i) How can antiracism work in teacher education benefit from deeper engagement with the body and emotions?

ii) How can the diverse racialized experiences and affiliations of the triad of learners, teacher, and curriculum practically inform intersectional antiracism work in education?

Both these questions presuppose the importance of the teacher/researcher as an intimate partner of the aforementioned triad rather than a detached technician or observer. Whereas my initial plan

was to study the dyadic interaction between learner and curriculum in antiracism pedagogy with a focus more attuned to *best practices* in facilitating *difficult conversations*, the scope of my research has subsequently changed. Following the CI/EDTHP 297 class I taught I became significantly less preoccupied with how to better deliver knowledge-based content and more aware of how learner, curriculum, and teacher come to generate dispersed, highly contextualized, in situ, unique forms of knowledge that often lead to a reconfiguration of roles, content, and desires. For instance, at times learner becomes teacher and teacher becomes learner, a substantial portion of prescribed content is discarded in the place of grappling together with meaning that has arisen through tense classroom discussion, and expectation comes to be infused with greater empathy. Therefore, this research enterprise is more than an education-based action research (see Stringer, 1999; Baumfield, Hall & Wall, 2008) project that seeks to largely alter one's professional practices through problem solving leading to the production of guidelines for best practices (see Denscombe, 2010, p. 6). While there are substantial elements of practical and participatory practitioner inquiry evident this study, its overriding focus is more concerned with how the triad of learner, teacher, and curriculum comes to co-enact forms of antiracism pedagogy. Also, specifically accounting for the role of the teacher in this process in ways that transcend teacher as the depositor of knowledge in a unidirectional, sterile arrangement Freire (2000) frequently refers to as *banking education*. In this sense, the current research project seeks to understand the *how* of the *process*. Confronted by an abundance of vital literature that generally either advocates for white educators to do the work of antiracist pedagogy (see – for instance – Tatum, 1992) or demonstrates how many white educators frequently live in relative and willful ignorance of such endeavor (see – for instance – Picower, 2009), the work at hand instead seeks to demonstrate the fledgling emergence of both an antiracism pedagogy and pedagogue.

Drawing from data that was collected throughout the CI/EDTHP 297 class, the upcoming sections of this work will focus on analyzing the data through a re-conceptualized framework of

the importance of the teacher/researcher ~~observer~~ participant to the learner and curricular ~~dyad~~

triad in antiracism pedagogy. Here, I will draw from data collected over a 16-week period in the

autumn of 2016 through an ethnographic enquiry (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland &

Lofland, 2001; Jones, Holmes, Macrae & Maclure, 2010) – an approach that lends itself

particularly well to the research of race and racism in that its very deployment brings into focus

tensions surrounding ontology and epistemology (Nayak, 2006). My personal journal notes and

observational field notes (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011) will be analyzed alongside the content

of the course syllabus, samples of course work, as well as four semi-structured interviews of

select course and research participants who hail from radically diverse racial, cultural, and

gendered backgrounds. Data will be selected through a process of comparative coding (Saldaña,

2009). Here, the sustained practice of constant comparison among data leads to the development

of conceptually-informed categories arrived at through the establishment of patterns of

commonality. Axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, pp. 198-199) of the research *corpus*, in turn,

involves relating dominant concepts within the data to each other so as to *distill* data into thematic

categories. Throughout this coding process, note-taking in the form of memos serves as an

invaluable resource for the researcher attempting to both discern and forge meaning from raw

data, and also helps to uncover useful aspects of data that appear to contradict (see Luttrell, 2000,

pp. 9-10) or provoke deeper curiosity. Such data co-constituting the larger research-assemblage

(Fox & Alldred, 2015, p. 408) will serve to delineate triadic course interactions, while

simultaneously remaining sensitive to my own anxiety and wonder as a participant in the larger

exploration of research – a phenomenon MacLure refers to as "the entangled relation of data-and-

researcher" (2013a, p. 228).

Furthermore, I will be drawing from a new materialist approach infused with key

psychoanalytic concepts in analyzing emergent data streams. Importantly, while new materialism

– which challenges the binary privileging of mind over matter and soul over body – may seem at

profound odds with psychoanalysis, which investigates conflicts between conscious and unconscious psychic elements through an exploration of language, this surface-apparent dualism itself can be highly productive for the ethnographic enterprise as a performative research event where the personal is re-centered as wholly political (Denzin, 2003). Such an approach is evocative of Deleuze & Guattari's (1987) statement: "We invoke one dualism only to challenge another. We employ a dualism of models only in order to arrive at a process that challenges all models" (p. 20). It is also not unlike Stuart Hall's (1996) paradoxical method of accommodating the simultaneous *impossibility* and *necessity* of, for instance, racial identity. At best, rigid methodological approaches are at odds with the fluid realities of data streams when such become prescriptive models applied *over* rather than *in conjunction with* emergent data. Besides, new materialism does not discard with language – rather, it seeks to decenter language as the sole arbitrator of what is considered real (Barad, 2003, pp. 801-802) while simultaneously recognizing language as a potential component part in the broader assemblage of discursive practices as performative [re]configurations of matter in its intra-active becoming – "not a thing, but a doing, a congealing of agency" (Barad, 2003, p. 822). Language is always part of a larger, vibrant assemblage, or as highlighted by MacLure (2011; see MacLure, 2016), "the materiality inherent in language, and the affects that move in, and connect bodies" (p. 1001). In particular I am also inspired by Latour's proposed move away from battling *matters of fact* – the work of the destructive critic – towards deeper engagement with productive *matters of concern*. Writes Latour (2004):

> [H]ere is an entirely different attitude than the critical one, not a flight into the conditions of possibility of a given matter of fact, not the addition of something more human that the inhumane matters of fact would have missed, but, rather, a multifarious inquiry launched with the tools of anthropology, philosophy, metaphysics, history, sociology to detect how

many participants are gathered in a thing to make it exist and to maintain its existence

(pp. 245-246).

Feminist new materialist thought – itself predated by the pre-colonial mind and indigenous conceptions of the world (Watts, 2013; Todd, 2016) – as more recently theorized by, among others, Karen Barad (2003, 2007), Jane Bennet (2010), Rosi Braidotti (1994), and Donna Haraway (1991) presents us with a take on matter that "feels, converses, suffers, desires, yearns and remembers" (Barad, 2012, para. 23). In short, *matter speaks*, and this matters, hereby necessitating engagement with an anthropology of the senses (Howes, 1991) as significant to the way we incorporate materialist inquiry of the political alongside language. Even human languages are themselves entangled with the material that works to co-constitute language (Bennett, 2010, p. 36): Broca's Area in the brain where speech is produced, the vibrating tympanic membrane of the hearing ear, and those intricate networks of muscle that work to constitute accent and intonation. We therefore cannot afford to remain ignorant of the reality that materiality actively defines *being* as well as the possibilities of life within which humans are rooted. Materiality possesses being: a presence. Appadurai (1996), for instance, has drawn attention to the social lives of material commodities while Bennett (2010) highlights the "thing-power" (p. 20) of the electrical power grid. Johnson (1988), for his part, embarks on a study of the mechanical door-closer as social agent, while Petersen (2014) highlights the agential capacity of hand puppets. Of course, to suggest that matter *speaks* may be misconstrued as anthropomorphism. This is not the case. Matter *speaks*, and this claim holds particular implication for ethnographic research as well (see Fox & Alldred, 2015). Unfortunately, *thick description* has been drawn upon as a backdrop against which to screen the primary human subject, often either written up as an isolated, individualist or member of identity politics cohort. Yet, the human cultural subject is co-constituted by the most seemingly commonplace, agential, moment-by-

moment *acting up, out* and *upon* of matter itself that constitutes it as simultaneously *part of* and *beyond*. Consider an extract from Heath's (1983) ethnographic work, *Ways with Words*:

> In the center of the bed is a doll with a wide skirt made of facial tissues and tied with green yarn. The family Bible on the bedside table is topped by Sunday School lesson books, and crocheted bookmarks mark places in each.

Could it be that the family Bible – conspicuously present in the bedroom as a material agent – speaks certain thoughts into existence or constrains certain behaviors on occasions when alternating sets of eyes gaze upon it? What if there was a blanket of dust on its cover? In other words, on the one hand the Bible, a material agglomeration of bound paper and leather, may be an object that from the corner of the room hints at the cultural peculiarities of a given research participant, yet it is also a participant in its own right that engages encounters with humans through its very presence, and even so when it is not being read. Matter *speaks* and in speaking instigates affect.

Fig.1 *'Window'*(2007) Pauli Badenhorst

Fig.2 *'Plate'*(2007) Pauli Badenhorst

The dominant view that correlates agency with consciousness and intentionality then needs to be rethought. Through their interactions, both human and material agents – material-semiotic actors (Haraway, 1985) – come to exist as the products or effects of hybrid networks rooted in

situated processes. Knappet & Malafouris (2008) demonstrate this concept in the following

manner:

> The clay of the potter's wheel should not be construed as the external passive object of
>
> the potter's intentional states, but as a functionally co-substantial component of the
>
> intentional character of the potting experience. (p. xiv)

In this equation, agency is more a matter of *what* is happening rather than *who* is doing the action

(Law & Mol, 2008) so that all actors come to simultaneously exist as enacting and enacted forces

(Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011). Subjectivity, then, extends beyond Descartes' anthropocentric

cogito ergo sum as a co-constitution on the part of *intra-active* (Barad, 1996) discursive and

material forces that allow an "expanded relational self" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 60) to emerge.

"[A]gencies are only distinct in relation to their mutual entanglement; they don't exist as

individual elements" (Barad, 2007, p. 33). Canadian indigenous scholar, Zoe Todd (2014), for

instance, demonstrates such entanglement in her beautiful study of fish-human relations along the

waterways of Paulatuuq, Arctic Canada. In similar fashion, a study on how the triad of curriculum,

learner, and teacher works together as an entangled em(o)bodied process to co-constitute

antiracism work amidst the chaos of a university course demands recognition of the *entanglement*

(Barad, 2007) of multiple actors; a reconfiguring of our understanding of *agency*. Agency: "a

matter of intra-acting" (Barad, 2003, p. 826); an enactment rather than an attribute (Barad, 2003,

p. 827); a smorgasbord of intensities (Massumi, 2002); the dispersed distribution of a "swarm of

vitalities" (Bennett, 2010, p. 32), among both human and non-human agents, in degrees that range

across mutually constituted processes of enabling, abetting, coercing, complying, resisting, and so

forth. Remarks Latour, "An actor is what is *made* to act by many others" (2005, p. 46) – a reality

that requires us to reconsider the subject/object dichotomy in light of the broader cosmological

inter-subjectivism of which we are but co-participants. In this regard, and building off of the

groundbreaking work of Arun Saldana's (2007) new materialist exposé *Psychedelic White: Gao*

Trance and the Viscosity of Race (also see Saldanha, 2006, 2010, 2011; 2012), new materialist

insights are bound to open up uncharted possibilities in discussions of not only race and racism,

but also especially antiracism education. Such new materialist approach, in turn, will be coupled

with the related subterraneous application of a complex, non-representational Deleuzo-Guattarian

rhizomatic analysis of emergent education (see Semetsky, 2006; Reynolds & Webber, 2004;

Semetsky & Masny, 2013; Carlin & Wallin, 2015) among *a people yet to come*. Here,

connections that occur among both the most disparate and similar of objects, places, and people

come to be viewed as encounters that are productive of multiplicities and perpetual

transformations.

Admittedly, the focus here – at least in context to this study – is not about purportedly

moving *beyond* the human as post-human applications of new materialist thought often claim to

endeavor, but rather to reengage with *human* as a fractured plurality that exists in embodied forms

relative to the broader Cosmos. Here, I take seriously Zakiyyah Iman Jackson's (2015) cautionary

question: "What and crucially *whose* conception of humanity are we moving beyond?" (p. 215) as

well as her explicit recognition that, resident within the Eurocentric worldview of white as

synonymous with human[67] as existential default, is a pregnant reality that "blackness constitutes

the very nonhuman disruption and/or displacement" new materialist and posthuman scholars

invite (Jackson, 2015, p. 216). In other words, those diversities of embodied phenotypes that

manifest themselves in human encounters are themselves relevant to a new materialist deep

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[67] Such worldview which pervades the philosophical DNA of whiteness is exemplified in the foundational
writings of Hegel (1956): "In Negro life the characteristic point is that consciousness has not yet attained to
the realization of any substantial objective existence — as for example, God, or Law — in which the
interest of man's volition is involved and in which he realizes his own being. This distinction between
himself as an individual and the universality of his essential being, the African in the uniform, undeveloped
oneness of his existence has not yet attained; so that the knowledge of an absolute Being, an Other and a
Higher than his individual self, is entirely wanting. The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural
man in his completely wild and untamed state" (p. 93). In this manner, Hegel could write Africans outside
of history, de-historicizing their existence (p. 92) to the realm of *savage* and imputing to their bodies a
value lesser than the European *human* of his *Weltgeist* or world spirit. For this reason, Cooper (2017)
claims: "For if time had a race it would be white".

grappling of the interplay between human and other-than-human. Such *deep grappling*, in turn, comprises the type of intellectual guerilla warfare necessary to counter what Sylvia Wynter (1995) calls "the struggle of our new millennium" as that "ongoing imperative of securing the well-being of our present ethnoclass (i.e., Western bourgeois) conception of the human, Man, which overrepresents itself as if it were the human itself" – a "Coloniality of Being" (p. 260). Such calling, in turn, necessitates that we move beyond a passive enterprise of *tolerance* (see Žižek, 2008b) towards the active and arduous work of centering the concerns of those whose bodies are denigrated and devalued.

Therefore, throughout the ensuing data analysis and discussion I will follow on from the previous critique of white Eurocentrism by purposefully proposing a process that foregrounds both subaltern and larger Cosmological motifs relative to materiality and the body. To this end, I will begin by drawing from the work of Korean film director Kim Ki-Duk as a visual anthropology form of sensory ethnography (Nakamura, 2013). Spanning the period from 1996 to the present day, Kim's films carry within them the weight of *han* [한] – a socially distributed emotion of grief arising from a shared burden of oppression that manifests through a wearing down of the body via deeply internalized anger and resentment[68]. In a certain sense, Kim's films are characterized by the same sense of embodied longing that one finds in the haunting poems of Korean poet Ch'ŏn Sang Pyŏng (1996). While many of the *yopgi* – or bizarre, grotesque, horrific – elements in Kim's films are extremely violent ranging from murder, cannibalism, and animal cruelty to bodily mutilation, rape, and sadomasochistic sex, the "subversive power of Kim's films rests in their ability to capture, channel, and convey the raw emotions of subaltern protagonists who live on the bottom rungs of Korean society" (Chung, 2012, p. 7): the destitute, thugs,

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[68] The concept of *han* is different from Nietzsche's (1998a) *ressentiment* which is projective anger towards a severe frustration that gives rise to slave-type morality. *Han* – a root form also related to the ideas of nation, one, and god (see Badenhorst & Makoni, pending) – on the other hand, is regarded as a quintessential characteristic of Koreaness (see Park, 2004) borne from, among others, centuries of colonial domination at the hands of brutal Japanese and Chinese colonial occupations of the Korean peninsula.

prostitutes, the disabled, inmates, and so forth. In this regard his films share commonality with

the *extreme cinema* genre work of fellow Korean Park Chan-Wook and Danish director Lars Von

Trier, as well as the beautiful existential work of Japanese director Kurosawa Akira and his

Korean contemporaries Park Jung-Bum and Lee Chang-Dong. Directly tendered, Kim's films

brim over with a sense of complex, fragile humans as they struggle to exist and thrive in

imperfect interrelationships with other humans and matter: bodies, lakes, rivers, the ocean,

mountains, fish, frog, snake, the seasons, soju, cars, flesh, blades, fish hooks, guns, bird cages,

stones, temples, blood, house boats, light, the dark, etcetera (see Kim, 1996, 2011; Kim & Lee,

2001; Kim, Kim & Kim, 2004; Kim, Kim & Kim, 2013; Suzuki, Kim, Choi & Suh, 2004; Suzuki

& Kim, 2006). It is as if – through his provocative art – director Kim kidnaps those of the

mainstream into his own space, and then introduces himself to them as a human being conscious

of the lives of others rather than a "lowlife", as Chung[69] (2012, p. 22) observes. By introducing us

to spaces where people attempt to mend fragments of their broken lives into imperfect pursuits at

wholeness, Kim's worldview embodies *kintsugi* that is pertinent to how both learners and

teachers attempt to mend their damaged relations to both self and other. Furthermore, his "body

genre" (Williams, 1991) cinema is infused with a visceral presence that is rare in contemporary

cinema. Remarks director Kim:

> Once, the actress in *The Isle* asked me if the characters were actually [lower] than the dog
>
> starring in the film. I answered by saying that I see them the same as the dog, if not
>
> [lower]. In fact, to me, the boat was more important than the female character and the
>
> floating yellow house more significant than the male character. (Chung, 2012, p. 135)

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[69] While I have been deeply engaged with Kim Ki-Duk's work for a number of years – my love for his films bordering on obsession at times – I also feel greatly indebted to Dr. Hye Sung Chung [University of Colorado, Boulder] for her profound feminist discussion of the legacy of the director's work in her 2012 book *Kim Ki-duk*. Chung (2012) also finds tremendous value in director Kim's work and – in response to those who have superficially labeled his work as misogynist – declares it to be "some of the most powerfully feminist evocations of sisterly solidarity to be found in contemporary Korean cinema" (p. 72) that mirrors the reality of the society within which his sociological explorations are rooted (p. 104; see pp. 25; 74).

Additionally, the relevance of director Kim's art for this research project is accentuated by the recurring motif of silence in Kim's films that works to foreground the material world as co-participant in encounter. I am admittedly also not fluent in Korean – still being a learner of the language who feels more at ease reading text than decoding audible speech – and so engage with the visual style of Kim's films in a particularly intimate manner. Finally, I also invoke the worldview of an Asian auteur – and philosopher – in order to purposefully destabilize the black/white binary threads that have largely run throughout this work so far.

Musical interlude: My Dear Korea [2016] – *Kim Min-ki: Morning Dew* [CLICK HERE]

Fig.3 *'Bed with Clay Urn: Saraguro, Ecuador'*(2015) Pauli Badenhorst

Against this background I will draw from Kim's (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* to craft the data analysis tools for my study of how the triad of curriculum, learner, and teacher work together as an entangled emotional-embodied process to co-constitute antiracism work amidst the chaos of a university course. While greater description of said data analysis tools, how they were developed, and their utility in deployment will be provided during the write up of the data analysis – especially taking to heart MacLure's (2013b) insight that "data have their ways of making themselves intelligible to us" (p. 660) – it is important to emphasize at this point that these tools lend themselves to deeper scrutiny

of the often chaotic, messy, incomplete emotional and embodied processes that worked to co-constitute antiracism work in the class I previously taught [and within which I collected data].

Significantly, in the ensuing data analysis sections *antiracism work* will refer to the kind of anti-oppressive education that Kumashiro (2000) frames as working within the space between teaching and learning by embracing paradox and exploring the possibilities of disruptions and change that reside within the unknowable so as to "constantly become" (p. 46). Such *becoming*, in turn, implicates a multi-focused approach to antiracism work that concurrently engages with emotional, ideological, and embodied ways of being and becoming. These ways of being and becoming are made visible throughout the multiple processes that co-constitute antiracism work. Furthermore, it is these processes that need to be excavated and explored so as to begin to puzzle together a description of the kind of bridge-building practical heuristics that enables educators – especially white – to engage in the type of antiracism work that i) foregrounds the difficult material realities inherent in race and racism as opposed to the practice of theoretical abstraction, ii) incorporates intersectional concerns and complexities, iii) strives to provide all learners with a platform upon which to both corporately and individually explore race/ism-based experiences and perceptions in conversation with curricular content; and iv) takes the experiences of marginalized groups and learners seriously, and v) encourages both learner and teacher to explore and – if need be – modify certain identities and social positions through a relation-oriented approach rather than reifying and condemning existing identities etcetera. Ultimately, such heuristics is necessary in order to practically address persistent challenges to antiracism work in education such as white fragility, the general invisibility of marginalized groups in curricula, a lack of incentive for members of the dominant culture to take seriously the experiences and concerns of members of marginalized groups, an absence of awareness of self as learner [even among educators], the practice of *pacifying the other* whereby inclusion-type practices come to fulfill a token role that reifies the illusion of equality, and so forth. In direct context to whiteness, this means the

challenge as how to encourage whites "to become more positively embodied within a multipolar social landscape" (Alcoff, 2015, p. 176); to develop a *positive* white identity (Tatum, 1994). Undoubtedly, here the injunction attributed to Horace Miner, author of the famous *Body Ritual among the Nacimera* (1956), namely *to make the strange familiar and the familiar strange*, needs to serve as the backbone of antiracism work among whites: to not merely recognize difference as understand one's own being different. In terms of research design, the currently proposed study therefore simultaneously incorporates and moves beyond attending to individual conceptions of embodiment, subjectivity, and experience. Instead, assemblages of learner-teacher-curriculum as these coagulate in the affective, embodied oscillation between continuously shaping and shifting gelatinous macro- and microstructures that bubble within one another are placed under the proverbial microscope. Such *bubbling*, it is recognized, comprises a vital part of making sense of one's place – and responsibility – in the world: a world always in flux. How humans attempt to psychically navigate such chaotic flux is another matter that needs to be taken up in this study.

Moving on, psychoanalytic methods do not need to be at odds with research that factors in the primary importance of materiality and the body as demonstrated by Sue Grand (2014) in her moving piece *Skin Memories: On Race, Love and Loss*. Consequently, key psychoanalytic concepts will be utilized in order to parse those crucial elements of subliminal libidinal desire and psychic formations that interweave relational encounters among teacher, learner, and curriculum, and are themselves highly useful for ethnographic enquiry (Brody & Newman, 1981; Cargill, 2006). Notably, here libido is not sexual energy per se, as it would be within a limited Freudian Oedipal economy, but rather psychic energy in the Jungian manner further developed by Deleuze & Guattari (1983; 1987; see Holland, 2012) in their schizoanalytic call for a rupturing of emergent assemblages pregnant with new modes of analysis that uncover unforeseen propositions and representations (see Guattari, 1995) generated by desire. Additionally, it is important here to emphatically state that such an approach to the deployment of particular psychoanalytic concepts

views desire – even when it erupts in ways that harvest destruction in the present – as productive

of ongoing social rearrangements and not so much a simple response that needs to be reduced to

prior lack. For this reason questions like *What is it doing?* are of primary concern, especially in

context to the highly tactile Slinky-like ability of whiteness to contort itself, whereas questions

like *What caused it?* – while not of negligible concern – take on secondary importance. In other

words, such is an approach focused on "social production rather than social construction" by

being attentive of "how desires, feelings, and meanings also contribute to social production" (Fox

& Alldred, 2015, p. 399) – an empirical orientation that ties directly into the scope of the

previously discussed new materialist paradigm. At issue here is the reality that psychic

phenomena, including those that comprise teacher-learner-curriculum engagements, are not so

much reducible to common causal factors but instead work to generate new lines of flight that

often yield unintended consequences of broader material significance that can be strategically

drawn upon in antiracism work. To this end I will be deploying key psychoanalytic process-based

concepts (see Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973; Segal, 1973; Craib, 2001) throughout the analysis as

these become necessary. Such concepts undoubtedly will shed greater light on the highly complex,

entangled processes under study, and do not exclude integration of material co-actors in the

analysis. After all, meaning is an assemblage of material and semiotic co-actors.

The relational, process-based dynamics of transference and countertransference (see

Racker, 1982) repeatedly occur among and between variegated configurations of learner/s,

teacher, and curriculum (see Britzman, 1998; Bibby, 2011) who always coexist in a state of

dissensus (Kafala & Cary, 2006) that gives way to *curriculum drift* (Woods, 2015). In order to

provide clarity to such concepts in context to their intra- and interactive manifestations, I will

enlist the help of seasonal Cosmological actors to assist me in making better sense of the

interconnected relationships that comprise the triad. Ultimately, the complex interconnection of

teacher, learner, and curriculum can be likened to a number of cosmological phenomena of

entanglements or correlations between objects. One example hereof is the phenomenon of wormholes, or shortcuts that connect distant regions of space and time. While originally conceived within quantum mechanics and Einstein's general theory of relativity – which provides a unified description of gravity as a geometric property of space-time – as two separate concepts (see Einstein, Podolsky & Rosen, 1935; Einstein & Rosen, 1935), recent explorations indicate a equivalence between the entanglements and wormholes hinting that they may be the same phenomenon (see Maldacena & Susskind, 2013). Another Cosmological example of entanglement is seasonal flux. Without divulging into the surrounding minutiae at this point, suffice it to state that I will be drawing on seasons as metonymical devices for that interconnected contact and interaction that comes to exist both within and between learners and teacher and teacher and learners within the larger cosmic arrangement of curriculum. Certainly, in relation to the account of Ms. Baumeister and myself that was recounted near the beginning of the current chapter, I contend that the relationship between learner and teacher and teacher and learner within the larger cosmic arrangement of curriculum is one through which the former comes to leave an irrevocable impression upon the other. Whether through the desire-based inevitability of transference and countertransference, projection, expressions of resistance and the emotions these evoke, or the simultaneous co-construction of meaning and knowledge, in this case relating to a course in which the work of antiracism is as much an *inner* [personal] work as an *outer* [social] work caught up within the rhizomatic bamboo roots of multiple simultaneous emotional processes that are rooted in the material, the effects of the triad are all-encompassing. I tender such hypothesis as ongoing "thought experiment" (Murchie, 1961, pp. 477-478) embedded within my bones and muscle, albeit one that bears the cavernous echoes of poet Susan Howe's (1990) powerful, circuitous ∞ insight:

> You are of me & I of you, I cannot tell
> Where you leave off and I begin (p. 58).

Triad

I cannot tell where you leave off and I begin – *and where we meet up again even as we are* 한.

This statement holds simultaneous relevance for encounter and interrelationship among both skin colors and every other embodied form up until now framed as *different*. And herein lies the productive potential of *difference*: like the seasons, simultaneously different and interdependent. In the ensuing chapter I will elaborate on my use of Kim's (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* to construct the analytical framework to be used in my analysis and discussion of data.

Musical interlude: frikkie duvenhage [2012] – *Piet Botha, Anton Goosen – Harlekyn.mov*

[CLICK HERE]

Visual interlude: Eirik Solheim [2008] – *One year in 40 seconds*

[CLICK HERE][70]

Fig.4 *'Luminous Cosmos & Dark Matter'* (2007) Pauli Badenhorst

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[70] Also see http://www.sonyclassics.com/spring/shell.html

Chapter 4

Antiracism Work in Five Seasons

There are many lessons here for us as ethnographers if we will only pay attention to the creation around us. (González, 2000, p. 648)

Through the windshield I saw the mark of these ghettos – the abundance of beauty shops, churches, liquor stores, and crumbling housing – and I felt the old fear. Through the windshield I saw the rain coming down in sheets. (Coates, 2015, p. 152)

> *Monstrous fears rent from broken dreams*
> *Our fears feed us life*
> *Begetting identities*
> *Deeply encoded in our bodies.*
> *Bodies, our way out from nightmare.*
> *As-salāmu ʿalaykum.* (me)

Social life is not independent from the Cosmos. Human life is intricately interwoven with lunar, solar, and other cosmic and natural agents. This insight has been at the core of those variegated cosmologies that characterize the indigenous colonized as a "network of peoples" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999, p. 7) for millennia (Deloria, 1994; Todd, 2014). Such foundational insight also partly informs feminist new materialist approaches (Barad, 1996; 2003; 2007, 2012; Bennett, 2010; Højgaard & Søndergaard, 2011; Connolly, 2013, pp. 399-402) that have more recently emerged within the academy. For this reason, the following chapter will seek to expand on the ethnographic method by introducing the concept of *Cosmonography*. The word 'ethnography' (from the Greek form *ethnos*: nation) still relies on the elevated status of the centered human. *Cosmonography* (from the Greek form *cosmos*: Universe), on the other, hand draws attention to a larger material arrangement of which humans form part. The atoms that comprise the natural world and the human body are after all both identical to those found in stars and also originated from exploding stars (Schrijver & Schrijver, 2015). Besides, even in posthuman (see Braidotti, 2013) encounters between animal and robot, Langur monkeys have been found to grieve over the body of a faux-dead mechanized monkey and display profound levels of empathy not dissimilar

from those expressed by humans[71] (BBC, 2017; see Panksepp & Panksepp, 2013). We, humans, are a simultaneous manifestation of *nature* and *nurture* in the most literal of senses – interwoven with the cyclical coming and passing of tides and seasons set into motion by the gravitational force-fields of moon and sun.

Kim Ki-Duk's (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) poignant, five-seasons themed Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Hangeul: 봄 여름 가을 겨울 그리고 봄)[72] provides an ideal *cosmonographic* framework through which to arrange and explicate data. Such data was predominantly collected during an undergraduate course I both developed and taught in Fall 2016 in the form of extensive course participant guided reflections (Ash & Clayton, 2004), ethnographic observation (Jones, Holmes, Macrae & MacLure, 2010) and field notes (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011) including rough sketches (Hendrickson, 2010), and personal journal writings (see Chang, 2016). This course was titled *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop, Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society*. Select data pertaining to an intensive teacher preparation immersion experience in Ecuador was also collected from Spring 2015 through Spring 2017. This Ecuador data will prove useful towards underscoring the value of guided exposure to that which is different, unfamiliar, and plural through a process of decolonizing intercultural (see Gorski, 2008), sensory-rich education in antiracism work. It will be deployed in the final chapter, and as such will embellish the 2016-sourced course-related data. Finally, in the following five seasonal data analysis-based sub-chapters, except for the addition of italicized text to add emphasis, data will be presented unaltered relative to their original forms. Additionally, here, data and findings will be discussed through explicit theoretical and conceptual exegesis and synthesis, and arranged both within the

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[71] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vaIH5tLmC8U
[72] See http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0374546/videoplayer/vi2441412889?ref_=tt_pv_vi_aiv_1
http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0374546/

five-season analytical framework, and around the four wise aphorisms spoken by the older monk in *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*.

Admittedly, in referencing *explicit theoretical and conceptual exegesis and synthesis* I need to offer a clarifying remark or two regarding ontology since the theories we deploy in data analysis as a means towards *making sense* of phenomena are themselves rooted in a variety of ontological assumptions that often are charged to be incompatible. Hein (2016), in this vein, and as an example, reads the ontology of immanence and difference informing Deleuze's thought to be incompatible with the purported ontology of transcendence and identity that characterizes the thought of Barad. I, in turn, rather value drawing from the performative and differential ontology shared by both Barad and Deleuze whereby phenomena are analyzed relative to their latent, emergent capacities that rupture in a variety of interactional contexts as opposed to an analysis of supposed fixed properties that inhere to objects and index particular regimes of truth. Besides, I locate my own fluid approach to ontology alongside Ziegler Remme's (2016) masterful anthropological discussion of ontologies as traversable states of being that are *chronically unstable* and that require particular relational practices to become momentarily stabilized. Accordingly, even within Barad's own thinking we need to allow for the implicit possibility of both immanent and transcendent ontologies. For instance, when Barad (2007) writes, "Matter and meaning are not separate elements. They are inextricably fused together, and no event, no matter how energetic, can tear them asunder" (p. 3), how we think of *meaning* will qualify whether or not this statement is to be understood as qualifying an immanent (remaining within / fundamental unity among things) or transcendent (going beyond / fundamental separation among things) ontology. To use a personal example, while I believe that my own past experiences of mystical and occult phenomena can often be ascribed to neurochemical processes initiated by various relational forms of physical deprivation and excess (immanence), I cannot discredit other such experiences for which no reasonable explanation exists and which tender the possibility of realities beyond that of our own spatial-temporal dimension (transcendence). Here, as illustration,

and in a spirit of respect, I recall a night of horror during which a significant other and myself endured in the presence of a force I am unable to name, yet which we could not escape having being isolated within an old, dilapidated shepherd's shack in middle of the Karoo desert. The night outside was so unforgivingly dark and the terrain so rugged and populated with venomous puff adders hunting their prey that an attempt to escape would likely have proven fatal, even to an experienced desert hiker like myself. We entered a stifling, haunted force field as soon as we began our descent at sunset to the abandoned shepherd's shack below, and were only able to adequately regain control over our breathing once we fled the shack and exited the valley at the first break of the light of dawn. That night we clung to one another for dear life in the presence of a lantern that kept extinguishing itself. *Something* didn't want us there. During my years as a Pentecostal minister I had previously encountered other presences – *evil* presences in people severely disturbed – that were able to mockingly recount private, secret information that no one could possibly have known. I have no idea how to attempt to construct a degree of meaning from my own material experiences within these, and other, encounters other than to remain open to the likely possibility of transcendent realities that exist alongside those of a more common immanent kind that can be empirically validated. Suffice to say, a large degree of intellectual humility is required in the way we marry ourselves to ontological certainties bearing in mind that we are ultimately rather limited in our understanding of *being*. To quote H.P. Lovecraft in the opening lines of *The Call of Cthulhu* (2014):

> The most merciful thing in the world . . . is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. (p. 123)

Some may wonder why this brief discussion on the complexities of ontology is warranted. To this concern I respond that, among others, it would be disingenuous of me to foreground an indigenous-informed epistemology in the sections to follow without making explicit the dynamic behind traversable states of being that such an approach engenders. Beneath indigenous

epistemologies there reside chronic ontological instabilities and fluidities in which both being and becoming come to fluctuate in a constant state of ambiguity.

Such instability and fluidity manifests in the work of Korean director Kim Ki-Duk. Here, characters alternate – within themselves – between ontologies of the bestial human helplessly acting upon primordial death-drive urges and tendencies productive of profound destruction and violence, and the human as an altruistic, ethical being. In so doing director Kim is able to locate subliminal, complex psychic layers of love in acts of exploitation, and violence in caring. Even his auto-ethnographic study *Arirang* (Hangeul: 아리랑) (Kim, 2011) portrays an ontology of self that is deeply fractured and multiple. This *self* is an *assemblage* of man, shadow, and ghost engaged in troubled, isolated dialog amidst a constantly intruding silence only occasionally relieved by the sound of the bitterly cold wind howling outside the rural Gangwon-do mountain cabin in which he has locked himself in self-imposed exile following his multiple encounters with death in the preceding years. Significantly, the title of this film is drawn from the moniker of an ancient multi-regionally-derivative folk song by the same name that is still deeply revered across the divided Korean peninsula. The song refers to a mountain pass being crossed by a subject in deep travail – a subject in traversal.

While I am drawn to the entirety of auteur Kim's catalog of directorial work due to his centering of proletariat, marginalized points of view; the low budget artful manner in which he grounds material and human intersubjectivity within one another, as well as his often graphic engagement with body and psyche, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* has left a profound impression upon me. This quasi-autobiographical, spiritually-coded film features, among others, sparse dialog complimented instead by entangled human-material encounters that unfold exclusively in proximity to the small floating Buddhist temple of Jusanji. Significantly, aesthetic motifs of water and floating feature prominently in many of director Kim's films like 1996's *Crocodile* (Hangeul: 악어) and 2000's *The Isle* (Hangeul: 섬), and provide for "continuous

movement, like life itself" (Chung, 2012, p. 135). However, this *presence* of water is also particularly relevant to the feminist new materialist formulation of subjectivity that will flow throughout the ensuing discussions of how it is that humans as embodied both become and come to live as racial beings. Niemanis (2013), for instance, describes subjectivity as *watered*:

> My body like yours primarily comprises water. My existence as a body of water is a biological fact, but living my embodiment as watery embedded in a world that I share with other human, animal, vegetable, geophysical and meteorological bodies that also comprise water has other implications as well. We are all bodies of water. (p. 24)

Niemanis' (2013) theorization of subjectivity as *shared* – a transcorporeal formulation in which "bodies are neither fully autonomous nor discrete, but rather always becoming in webs of mutual implication" (p. 25) – corresponds with Barad's (2007) agential realist framing of subjectivity and agency as intra-active. The agentic contours that characterize subjectivity are fluid in that they take form in situated, intra-active encounters of *doing* among human and more-than-human material bodies, as well as in the encounter between matter and discourse. Here, the intra-active encounter is as much an identity as a ground that gives rise to identities that are always suspended in emergent states of possibility and becoming. It is such a holistic, immanent formulation of subjectivity that, in turn, allows for ongoing engagement with identity as a research concern without being tied down and restricted to the exclusive discursively defined domain of identity politics that – in the vein of Butler's (1990; 1993) discourse-first-body-second theorization of social reproduction – grant language preeminence over the material. In particular, an *encounter*-centered reformulation of subjectivity holds profound significance for discussions in which iterations of racial identity come to be generated through intra-activity among bodies characterized by material differences in immediate contexts. Here, for instance, *darker* bodies – often not considered human through their very omission from the discursive realm of history (see Wynter, 2003; Young, 1990) – maintain subjectivity and agency through their very presence,

persistence, and participation in embodied encounters. Comments Weheliye (2014), "To subsist in the force field of the flesh, then, might just be better than not existing at all" (p. 45). Alternately stated, it is through initiating heightened regard for flesh and embodiment that subjectivities – especially those often not regarded as *human* and normal or *ordinary* within the racialized hierarchies within discourse and cultural production (see Dyer, 1997) – can be foregrounded as authentic, vital agencies that exist in *watered* relation to a host of other material forces. Here, our understanding of culturally-constituted, asymmetrical relations of power can be made more complex. Feminist new materialism therefore yields significant opportunity to insert the traditional non-human [dark; woman; 'disabled' etcetera] alongside the traditional human [white; man; 'able'-bodied etcetera]. Accordingly, both are valorized with *agentic potential that comes to surface in their fluid encounters*, as well as encounters with other more-than-human agentic material forces. Agency then is loosed from its traditional *either free will or resistance* binary, and can be conceived of as a creative, relational, multi-current ocean of power in which constraints and possibilities for action are dynamically and alternately produced (see Halperin, 1995, pp. 16-17). This observation is further valorized by the contemporary ontological insights of quantum and complexity theories that bear correspondence with human social systems. In this regard, Connolly (2013) provides a particularly rich and apt description of materialist ontology:

> [W]e inhabit a cosmos composed of heterogeneous, interacting force-fields moving at different speeds . . . *Creative cosmic events often occur not within a force-field alone, but through an acceleration of reverberations back and forth between disparate, interdependent fields or between disparate elements in the same field.* This is true of moments of creativity within the human estate too. Creative human freedom is thus never simply the property of a masterful agent. Creativity flows through and between agents rather than being simply reducible to a property of them, a finding that may throw a wrench into the traditions of both negative and positive freedom. (p. 407)

Again, such an expanded view of relationality ties in well with the seasonal approach that characterizes the conceptual framework of this current research assemblage (see Fox & Alldred, 2015) since the dynamics that inform cosmology also map throughout the human social domain. It follows that such materially-grounded ontology requires a correspondent materially-informed epistemology, especially in context to the ensuing data analysis (see Pascale, 2011, p. 28).

Whereas water enabled discussion of subjectivity in the section above – a formulation of subjectivity that will remain relevant throughout the coming sections – the *five seasons*, in turn, inform the epistemological and conceptual framework that will be used to parse data in the sections that follow. Set against the sweeping, breathtaking landscape of Mt. Juwangsan National Park in Cheongsong-gun, Gyeongsangbuk-do in the Republic of Korea, we would also do well to consider the five seasons of director Kim's (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* as fluid rather bracketed vignettes that provide a cyclical rather than a linear appreciation of time in agreement with indigenous cosmologies that predate modern European sequential and chronologic perceptions of time. In other words, the seasons are not akin to Vivaldi's linear classical violin concerti representations of the *Four Seasons*[73]. Rather, the following lines from Crowded House's early-90s pop staple track, *Four Seasons in One Day*[74] (Finn & Finn, 1992), better exemplify the motley, ambiguous, unstable characters of the seasons:

Four seasons in one day
Lying in the depths of your imagination
Worlds above and worlds below
The sun shines on the black clouds hanging over the domain

Even when you're feeling warm
The temperature could drop away
Like four seasons in one day . . .

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[73] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GRxofEmo3HA
[74] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXiIU6ZcXdQ

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It doesn't pay to make predictions . . .
Finding out wherever there is comfort there is pain . . .
Like four seasons in one day

This pre-modern cosmological distinction is an important one to make since the emergence, ebb, flow, or crystallization of forms of sociopolitical consciousness development and shift (see Watts, Williams & Jagers, 2003; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015) that occur through antiracism pedagogy in education do not usually occur in a purely linear, consistent, and coherent sense. They are often circular, chaotic, and highly contingent relative to particular individual and group formations on any given day. The seasonal approach to data analysis allowed by *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* therefore should not be conflated with a Piaget-type developmental stages-based approach to racial identity development (Tatum, 1992). The actual temperature in State College, Pennsylvania on Friday 24 February 2017 was 74/52 Fahrenheit compared to the historical average of 40/23 Fahrenheit – a lovely early summer's day in late winter that jumped the scales over spring. Yet, by the Saturday it was freezing again. Likewise, people manifest unpredictable degrees of complexity and contradiction in the manners they learn and grow, both within the same *season* and across different *seasons* of life.

At its heart, the film is an account of learning that occurs in the encounter between a monk, his monk-protégé, and the formal curriculum of temple practices and informal hidden curricular experiences (see Smith Myles, Trautman & Schelvan, 2004) that occur in the lake, ponds, foothills, and expanses surrounding the temple. In this regard, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* is a productive instrument for generating understanding of contingent psycho-emotional processes that emerge in the interaction between learner, curriculum, and teacher. Additionally, while Kim Ki-Duk's (2001) earlier film *Address Unknown* (Hangeul: 수취인 불명) explicitly engages with the theme of *mixed* and *pure* racial identities and racism against the backdrop of Korea's colonial past (see Kang, 2001) in a non-romanticized, sober manner that

debunks post-racial delusions surrounding mixed race people (see Mahtani, 2015), *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* never once explicitly engages the theme of race. Instead, this film is notable for the manner in which it focuses on psychic development and attachment formations arising from embodied, material encounters in a mountainous, quasi-religious environment very different from our own, and hereby enables the kind of *defamiliarization* (Shklovsky, 1965; see Badenhorst, 2015, para. 22) necessary for in-depth exploration of phenomena outside of their *normal* contexts. To this end it is well-suited to serve as an analytical and organizational framework for this study which explores the following interrelated query stemming from the central research questions: ***How do raced subjectivities emerge, and what are their meanings for antiracism work among diverse current and future educators in higher education and society?***

Furthermore, while Mahayana and Korean Son Buddhist subtexts are interwoven throughout *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*, the film – not unlike Martin Scorcese's (De Fina & Ufland, 1988) *The Last Temptation of Christ* – is not a religious tract or treatise. As Chung (2012) points out, "Kim did not intend the film to be received as a religious text and deliberately avoided reading any books on Buddhism or soliciting the technical advice of Buddhist experts during production", going so far as to invent most of the rituals and totems portrayed in the film (p. 108). This detachment from ideological representation and constraint is ideal to the exploratory purposes of this chapter since it models a circumnavigation of problematic contemporary, oversimplified cultural representations. For instance, director Kim avoids treating Buddhism as a singular entity – a reductive framing borne from Buddhism as academic (Tischler, 2014) and Western (Coleman, 2001) construct – instead opting for an approach that at times appears more in line with the hybridity characteristic of magical realism. Of course, it may also be argued that such Western adaptations of Buddhist traditions are themselves characteristic of particular spatial-temporal encounters enabled by the material

mediations of the Spice Route, maritime travel, and more contemporary forms of globalized digital print exposure so that these are but new assemblages that reflect ongoing becoming. Besides, don't academic critiques of Western adaptations of Buddhism inadvertently reinscribe an orientalism (see Said, 1978) that assumes it is privy to what constitutes *pure* Buddhist beliefs and practices? Such being the case, director Kim only appears to broadly engage with the first two of the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha, namely that suffering exists and that suffering arises from attachments to desires (see Van Gordon, Shonin, Griffiths & Singh, 2015). Hereby director Kim creates a fresh assemblage not reliant on *believing* or *disbelieving* a particular teaching from a position of epistemic authority so much as *being* with it in a relational manner characterized by "relative untetheredness to self" (Kosofsky Sedgwick, 2003, p. 179). Significantly, desire is framed as inevitable, situated, and highly productive of learning throughout the film and so demonstrates loose correspondence with a vibrant Deleuzo-Guattarian (1983; 1987) perspective rather than a Lacanian formulation that equates desire with *manque*, or *lack* (Lacan, 1977). Significantly, however, I contend, and as will later become apparent, lack – in its myriad forms ranging from poor self-esteem to hunger – is simultaneously a highly productive personal and political force. Hereby, and as we shall encounter throughout the data that follows, even apparent lack or absence is potently productive of emergent forms of learning and becoming. Finally, throughout the film, the monk – as a type of teacher – is positioned as an active, non-detached, co-participant alongside the hidden curriculum hereby avoiding a pedantic, hierarchical top-down conception of the relationship between teaching and learning. This observation – as again will become apparent throughout the data – is significant in that it provides me with a way of making sense of my own feelings of anxiety and loss of control as both teacher and researcher throughout the class.

In the data analysis sections that follow, data-driven themes pertinent to the central research questions, and collected throughout the semester-long class, will be presented. Here, you – the

reader – and I will voyage together through the five seasons. This approach is loosely inspired by

González's (2000) indigenous epistemology-guided paper *The Four Seasons of Ethnography: A*

Creation-Centered Ontology for Ethnography (see Fox, 1991), as well as – to a greater extent –

my own attempt to develop the conceptual antecedents for *Cosmonography* as a qualitative

approach (see Dey, 1993; Given, 2008) to data collection and analysis that goes beyond linear

and mechanistic ontologies foregrounding "hierarchical relations of domination" (González,

2000, p. 625). Also, rather than relying on prior ideologies and ideas, the search for relative forms

of order that comprises analysis occurs in relation to the small details and contingencies that

characterize the immediate local context. With regards to conducting ethnographic research, Pitts

(2012) frames this process as follows: "The Four Seasons includes all phases from preparing to

enter the field [spring], to 'experiencing' data [summer], creating meaning [autumn], and finally

writing up reports [winter]" (p. 2). I – however – would like to extend a full-circle *five seasons*

approach to the particular ensuing data analysis chapter sections in order to especially center

multiple, coinciding, layered, ongoing cycles of experience; the interconnection of all

experiences; a rich description of personal and experiential contexts, as well as the psycho-

emotional and embodied dimensions of experience (see Soyini Madison, 2012, pp. 45-49).

Regarding our upcoming traversal through the seasons that materialize in the ensuing

chapter, in spring – the seeding for all that will come (González, 2000, p. 639) – we encounter

how raced subjectivities emerge through material encounters (Saldanha, 2006). In summer –

characterized by intensity, conflict, and heat (González, 2000, p. 639) – the way in which raced

subjectivities, in turn, come to be reproduced in the psychic realm will be presented. Autumn –

when there is a reaping of what was previously sowed (González, 2000, p. 639) – manifests how

raced subjectivities come to persist in iterative degrees of trusting and estranged relationality.

Winter – when hibernation occurs (González, 2000, p. 639) – calls to the fore that profound inner

work that needs to accompany our becoming new and relational racial subjectivities. Finally, the

new spring – a period of renewed sowing – speaks to the possibility of and need for the cultivation of new forms of racial subjectivity in education through guided intensive exposure to that which is different, unfamiliar, and plural via an intensive immersion abroad experience. However, before engaging with the data it is opportune at this time to present the participants – or cast of agents – who intimately contributed towards this research project. Pseudonyms are used for all human participants, except myself.

<div align="center">**Cast of Agents**</div>

Twenty, the number comprising the participants to be encountered in the ensuing data analysis and discussion:

Auburn – White young woman; Secondary Education major with a focus in English; aspiring writer; alma mater was elite preparatory all-girls Pennsylvania school; university scholarship Lacrosse player; relates to traditional white feminist values.

Azul – Black American of African descent young man; native of Landsdowne, PA; Spanish Education major with ESL certification; intends to pursue a doctoral degree; prone to bouts of depression and emotional exhaustion; shy; upright and sincere.

Cerulean – White young male; native of Philadelphia, PA; father is a detective; self-identifies as upper middle class; gay; a characteristically gregarious personality aware of the deleterious effects of whiteness; Secondary English Education major.

Clementine – White young woman; Early Childhood Education major; rural poor native of York, PA; broken-family background; works in a coffee shop; dating a Latino man; gentle and caring; loves her planner and is extremely independent.

CI / EDTHP 297 Syllabus – Course title: *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop, Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society.* An

agent [attached as addendum]; states that "students will explore several pop cultural texts including hip-hop, comedy, film, and new media artifacts . . . in order to both better understand their racial and ethnic backgrounds and identities as well as develop a deeper sensitivity and ability to respond to the racial and ethnic stories and experiences of people from different backgrounds."

Dr. Amandla – Black middle-aged woman; Endarkened feminist scholar, writer, teacher, and activist; highly focused; explicitly at war with white supremacist, patriarchal, and ableist paradigms; Ivy League schooled; a proud native of Philadelphia; wears the most beautiful weaves and beads; has shown tremendous kindness and trust towards me.

Ebony – Black young woman; raised in New Jersey; Early Childhood Education major and Education Policy minor; self-ascribed upper middle class upbringing; intends to pursue law degree and work for the US Department of Education; energetic and direct.

Emerald – Black young woman; Early Childhood Education major; passionate about teaching in urban environments and a variety of social justice projects; hometown is Richmond, VA; proud Black woman; intellectually-advanced, well-read, and critical.

Ivory – Black young woman; part Native American heritage; passionate Protestant Christian who descends from a long line of preachers; nascent artist; loves Soul Food; Communication Sciences and Disorders major; an impressionable, emotionally-expressive soul.

Jamaica – Black middle-aged woman; graduate student in field of education; researches the experiences of Black immigrant girls; from Caribbean immigrant background; works on an urban seminar program during summers; very engaged with social justice advocacy; strong leader, committed mother, and confident personality.

Pauli – White middle-aged man; native of South Africa; married to Korean spouse; part-Afrikaner heritage; studied theology; loves heavy music and cooking; passionate about Korean

rice wine in absentia; fully at peace in the desert; antiracism writer, scholar, and teacher; was once openly white supremacist; possesses low tolerance for arrogance.

Plum – A composite identity of eight young white pre-service teachers who attended a linguistic and cultural immersion abroad experience in Ecuador, 2015; this voice – deployed during the conclusion section – speaks to the value of dislocation for antiracism work.

Raven – Black young woman; double majoring in Educational Theory & Policy and African American Studies; native of Philadelphia, PA; desires to agitate for educational equity; braided hair; defiantly Black; honest and no-bullshit attitude.

Rose – White young woman; hails from diverse Union, NJ; loves Pink Floyd, heavy metal, and screamo; abhors frats; budding writer; Secondary English Education major and Psychology minor; approachable with an alternative vibe.

Rusty – Black young woman; part-time kindergarten teacher; Elementary Education major; native of Maryland; raised in a military family; staunchly independent; declares a deep distrust of men; deeply reflective, perceptive, and – at times – aloof.

Saffron – Middle-Eastern young woman; born into a tribal Saudi family; Sunni Muslim; possesses high degree of Korean language and cultural proficiency; Honor's English Literature major; intends to pursue career in teaching English; endearing.

Scarlett – White young woman; identifies as of predominantly Italian heritage; large extended and immediate family; Business major who hopes to work internationally; lives and travels between Pennsylvania and Missouri; a very chilled disposition.

Viridian – White young man; from Altoona, PA; gay; major is Childhood & Early Adolescent Education; well-read; avid photographer who hopes to eventually adopt a Siamese cat; openly committed to intersectional social justice concerns.

Xanthos – White young man; Secondary Education major with concentration in English communications; enthusiastic Catholic actively involved in church life; openly anti-abortion; loves traditional hymns; easygoing and funny – the class comedian.

365 Willard Building – Large classroom; windows at rear-end leaves it dark even during full daylight; sterile white walls and fluorescent white lighting; equipped with large blackboards and AV equipment; rear windows and third floor elevation provide view of main campus lawn and beautiful autumn foliage; large desks arranged in fixed, linear rows; occupied Tuesdays & Thursdays 4:35-5:50pm; another powerful agent; similar to a temple, reported by many course participants as a *safe-space*.

Enter spring.

Chapter 4.1

Spring – Body

Emergence of Raced Subjectivities through Material Encounters

Spring, in the Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003), introduces us – through allegory – to an important theme that is pertinent to the presentation of all themes to come: ***The emergence of raced subjectivity occurs through material encounters.*** The boy protégé-monk of the old monk leaves the floating temple to play by a pond in the neighboring woods. His play demonstrates relative unawareness of the world outside the safety of the temple that he is beginning to explore. During his play, he ties a small – albeit burdensome – stone to each of a fish, a frog, and a snake before releasing them back into their habitat. Here, it is important to note that his actions do not fall into the categories of guilt or innocence. Rather, they speak to the particular elements of a material encounter between boy, fish, frog, snake, stone, and water as means towards learning. That night, the Buddhist monk – who has observed the boy's encounters with fish, frog, and snake from afar – collects a large stone from the forest and ties it to the boy protégé's back while he is asleep. When the boy awakens the following morning and complains about the heaviness of the stone, he is reminded of his own encounter with the fish, frog, and snake. The monk instructs the boy to return to the pond and release the animals. The boy returns to the pond to find the frog still alive, but the fish and the snake dead. The boy sobs bitterly. Significantly, here, material encounter precedes the rupture of emotion. The import of the earlier words of the monk to the boy now becomes apparent: "You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life" (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003). Differently framed, in life we eventually come to carry the weight of our actions – and experiences. Rather than signifying punishment, the boy's own painful encounter with a stone – relative to his prior material encounters by the pond – speaks to the Newtonian Third Law cause-and-effect principle that action is productive of reaction. Applied to

the processes through which raced subjectivity emerges, raced material encounters are highly productive – and not merely the result – of psycho-emotional affect that only later on comes to inform ideological responses. Embodied experience is the fertile silt within which psycho-emotional formations in modes of belief, assumption, and bias come to take root. Alternately stated, our raced material encounters throughout the formative years of early childhood, youth, adolescence, and early adulthood prove to be the spring seeding for all that will follow in terms of how we come to think, relate to, and act upon the raced other, whether as actant, observer, or the recipient of action. The effects of our initiation into racial subjectivity – like the stone that settles in the heart – will persist throughout life. Significantly, this formulation suggests that the material means through which humans enter racial subjectivity precedes ideological alignment and transcends cultural background. Dominant white and human *others* materialize into racial subjectivities through affect-laden material encounters riddled with "suffering for both the tormented and the tormentor" (Collins, 2005, p. 170). Such materialization intimately informs ensuing processes of socialization and the means through which we become disparate *tribes*, "on the one hand, invented, and on the other, no less real" (Coates, 2015, p. 56) – the fluid borderland of discourse and matter.

In what follows I present a number of data-grounded examples of how iterative, emergent material encounters come to constitute racial subjectivity. In these data excerpts the unrelenting *entanglement* (Barad, 2007) of the material with discourse will become apparent. Yet, description is caveated within time, creating an illusion of finitude, completeness, and a causal point of departure. To complicate matters, Butler (2005) reminds us that the historical recognition that informs our accounts of self will themselves be partial and incomplete since we are bound to speak in a discourse that is not the same as the time of our lives (p. 35) while simultaneously using narrative structures superseded by a socially regulated structure of address (p. 38). In contrast, co-constituted subjectivity as process is a highly fluid and complex affair that occurs

across time so to speak. It is therefore necessary to recognize the act of observation – such as that

undertaken by respondents and researcher – as an apparatus of boundary making around these

fluid and complex phenomena (Barad, 2007) in order to be able to talk about them. Barad (2007)

refers to such phenomena as *agential cuts* – the means whereby localized intra-actions that create

effects become visible. Additionally, since language possesses the capacity to produce the very

thing it describes (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 220) these agential cuts demonstrate particular instances of

identity performativity (Butler, 1990) relative to the encounter with materiality.

Rusty – a young Black woman – vividly recounts a particularly painful embodied

encounter that is interspersed with material elements productive of the affect of terror.

> *Almost 2 years ago, my sophomore year at my branch campus Penn State Mont Alto, there
> was a lot of talk about the riots going on in Baltimore, Maryland. I heard it all, peers
> making statements about how either they agreed with what was going on, or statements
> about how crazy the people of Baltimore are. Within the same week, I was walking to my
> dorm which is at the border of campus, and a truck driving by, shot at me and my group of
> friends that I was with. I can never erase the sound of the gunshot that was not aimed to
> hurt any of us, but to merely shake us to our core. I cannot forget the confederate flag
> along with the American flag paired as a decoration on the truck. Or the laughter that
> rang out in the air just moments before the truck sped away. That day, I cried. I tried to
> think of a reason for why someone ever felt the need to do that, there were none.* (Rusty,
> Written Course Reflection 1)

Rusty's experience-based narrative account (see Clandinin & Connelly, 2000) both merges

her personal experience of racism with racism as macro-historical, structural reality (see

Zarowsky, 2004) as well as the world outside the class with the world of the course, and works to

demonstrate the profound need for accounting for student experiences and memories as a form of

multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) for educational anthropology (see Wolcott, 1997;

Eisenhart, 2001; Pole & Morrison, 2003). The material and sensory components that coalesce in

the first part of Rusty's account while she is acting in the most inconspicuous of embodied ways

[walking with friends by her university] are significant: gunshot; truck; confederate flag paired with US

flag; laughter; sound of tires screeching as truck speeds away. Here, as example, far from merely

being a ballistic tool used in the service of a prior social or ideological stance, the combustion and

ensuing explosion that occurs within the chamber of the gun [gunshot] generates a spontaneous on-

the-spot fight-or-flight response both across and within the body of the aggressed. Such visceral

sensation – deeply implicated in knowledge and memory and the relation of these to place (Pink,

2009, pp. 23-43) – births iterative degrees of racial subject production unmediated by traditional

discourse and occurs prior to the opportunity to formulate a rationalized ideological explanation:

prior to *making sense of the sensory*. The material elements that combine within the embodied

encounter, and that mold and fashion particular racial subjectivities, in turn, come to be

experienced – and lived – through our emotions. Rusty states feeling emotionally traumatized

both during [crying] and after the encounter [feeling shaken to the core] in a manner that will likely

persist long into her future [never being able to erase the sound of the gunshot]. She also reports being left

bewildered and disturbed within her psyche by the event [tried to think of a reason but there were none].

Significantly, the material presence of particular objects enables the intensification of particular

emotions. For instance, the active presence of a gun – an object able to brutalize the body and

extinguish life – recognized through the senses of sight and sound in Rusty's account is certain to

elevate her experience of horror and fear profoundly more than a hand gesture. Such emotions

coalesce within the body in a deeply psychic manner that often requires latter deference to prior

social explanations and ideologies through which we attempt to make sense of and justify our

emotional responses. Yet, the skin also records past impressions, past encounters with others,

whereby others persist "even in the face of their absence" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 30) – "The skin . . . a

border that feels" (p. 39).

The driver – most likely a white male – appears to be already operating from a crystalized

ideological position [confederate flag paired alongside US flag as decoration on truck] characterized by

prejudice in the form of physical intimidation [gunshot was not aimed to hurt]: *T*error (see Staples,

2016). Significantly, and in stark contrast to Rusty's experience of *T*error, the driver exhibits an

enjoyment of violence [laughter] – a pleasure in his production of macro-aggressive *T*error (see Ramírez, Bonniot-Cabanac & Cabanac, 2005). Žižek (1993) reads in racial and ethnic violence a latent psychic fear of the *theft of enjoyment* related to an imagined threat to a particular *way of life*. The irony here, according to Žižek (1993), is that we never possessed what we imagine to be under threat of *theft* in the first place (p. 203). The threat is totally imagined and constructed within the psyche. During his speech at the Montgomery State Capitol after the March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, Martin Luther King Jnr. (mipdo, 2014) alluded to the Jim Crow origins of the psychic construction of white supremacy as *way of life*[75]:

> [I]t may be said of the Reconstruction era that the southern aristocracy took the world and gave the poor white man Jim Crow . . . And when his wrinkled stomach cried out for the food that his empty pockets could not provide, he ate Jim Crow, a psychological bird that told him that no matter how bad off he was, at least he was a white man, better than the black man. And when his undernourished children cried out for the necessities that his low wages could not provide, he showed them the Jim Crow signs on the buses and in the stores, on the streets and in the public buildings. And his children, too, learned to feed upon Jim Crow, their last outpost of psychological oblivion. (mipdo, 2014, para. 5)

Hook (2017), building on Žižek in his discussion of enjoyment – or jouissance – as a political factor, identifies enjoyment as an embodied libidinal drive that is excessive and linked to the functioning of the destructive death drive. Significantly, it is also illicit, and incurred in acts that transgress laws or socially prescribed limits. At its psychic core then racism is constituted by enjoyment. Hook (2017) elaborates:

> The enjoyment involved here is to be distinguished from the everyday (banal, pleasurable) sense of enjoying; it refers, instead, to more illicit gains, to "getting off" in ways one would not readily admit to. Hence the frequent characterization of the "obscene" or

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[75] See https://soundcloud.com/mipdo/rare-mlk-jr-on-how-the-races

"perverse" quality of enjoyment that seems invariably to run counter to the prevailing

norms according to what is acceptable, permissible. (p. 607)

It is important at this time to emphasize that racist enjoyment is inseparable from embodiment

and materiality, both in terms of its violent effects as well as those object attachments that

comprise it. The significance of the confederate flag attached to the back of the truck alongside

the US flag should not elude us as the vital material co-constituents of culture (see Prown, 1982).

It is simultaneously a flaunting of racial animus and hatred (see Strother, Piston & Ogorzalek,

2017) and an attempt at generating symbolic equivalence between nation and "purely white

people" as "superior beings" to quote Benjamin Franklin (1775, p. 223). Yet, beneath all the

bravado bouffant posturing that characterizes white supremacy and it's enjoyment of violence and

hatred there lurks the ugliness of legacies of child abuse; class exploitation; poor self-esteem, and

self-contempt that Thandeka (1999) refers to as the *wages of whiteness*. It is important account

the suffering that underlies the enjoyment of racism:

Jouissance . . . is an enjoyment intermingled with suffering; it is a type of painful arousal

poised on the verge of the traumatic; an enjoyment that stretches the subject beyond the

bounds of the pleasurable. (Hook, 2017, p. 607)

In her fascinating discussion of the Cronulla race riot that occurred on a Sydney beach in

December 2005, Pardy (2011) sees within the accompanying enjoyment of racialized violence

and hatred among predominantly white males "an emotional response to disturbing, at times

unbearable feelings of anxiety and fear . . . an attempt to cover over or mitigate vulnerability,

alienation and pain" (p. 51). Of course, such observation does not excuse or justify the variety of

egregious forms of violence that emanate from white supremacy, neither does it mitigate the

responsibility of, for instance, the driver of the truck. Rather, it highlights the need to place the

proverbial horse before the cart in the manner we conceive of racialized violence in the first place.

Rather than begin with ideological deconstruction – which Critical Race Theory certainly

highlights as a necessary part of antiracism work – we would do well to start with careful

assessment of the emotional and psychic dynamics that inform racial hatred and violence in relational embodied encounters in the first place; why objects of hate are needed in the first place. Beneath mobilized modes and social practices of whiteness there is very little that is supreme or superior. Rather, we find a brood of psychic estrangement and emotional defensiveness that establishes relationships predicated on the recycling of separation and the dehumanization of Black and Brown people. Such dehumanization, the kind on display, for instance, during the 45th President of the USA's flagrant 'honoring' of aged Navajo Indian veterans directly in front of a White House portrait of Andrew 'Indian Killer' Jackson, lead signator of the Indian Removal Act of 1830, forms the kernel of white supremacy – the desire to denigrate; devalue, and dominate the other in the misguided attempt to ascribe value to oneself. An act of violent enjoyment sourced from the desire to possess and keep close what has been lost so that it can be rejected (Cheng, 2001).

Consequently, something also needs to be said regarding how the previous encounter described by Rusty brings the various agents into relationship with one another. The driver of the truck, like Rusty, is substantiated as a particular racial subjectivity by the material arrangements of the encounter itself. *No language-based communication or words are required.* Rather, those material arrangements comprising the immediate encounter come to structure raced subjectivities that are positioned in simultaneous alterity (estrangement) and proximity (relationship) to one another, hereby enacting racism not as phenomenon but as violent relational encounter. The theme of simultaneous alterity (estrangement) and proximity (relationship) forms the kernel of Levinas' (1998; see Drabinski, 2012) proto-ontological collapse of politics into an ethics of the body (Altez-Albela, 2011), and his formulation of such ethics as ultimately grounded in the vulnerability of the *face*. Of course, Levinas (1998) makes explicit that the face is not exclusively a human face leading Butler (2004) to for once engage with the body – in an uncharacteristic pre-discursive manner – as follows:

Here the term "face" operates as a catachresis: "face" describes the human back, the

craning of the neck, the raising of the shoulder blades like "springs." And these bodily

parts, in turn, are said to cry and to sob and to scream, as if they were a face or, rather, a

face with a mouth, a throat, or indeed, just a mouth and throat from which vocalizations

emerge that do not settle into words. (p. 133)

This embodied ethics is the ground of relational responsibility (see Mkhwanazi, 2013). Unlike the

attempted liberal universalist regulation of ethics through historically-contingent forms of social

contract governed by legislation requiring reciprocation among individuals regarded as free moral

agents of equal standing, Levinas (1998) roots the subject as already and always responsible for

all others. This *a priori* relational bond is therefore grounded in an embodied sensibility (p. 15)

determinate of being (p. 129) and open to both wounding and enjoyment (p. 90) – a sensibility

arising from the imperative of an already extant exposure and vulnerability to others (p. 54). The

moment of embodied encounter then – no matter how hostile – is a moment of entering into

relationship. That said, and in line with Levinas' profound catalog of grappling with the violence

and suffering (Altez, 2007) of Shoah, the extended relational significance of this prior

observation is foregrounded by Coates' (2015) disturbing account of the murder of his unarmed

friend, Prince Jones, by a police officer:

And the plunder was not just of Prince alone. Think of all the love poured into him . . .

Think of all the embraces, all the private jokes, customs, greetings, names, dreams all the

shared knowledge and capacity of a black family injected into that vessel of flesh and

bone. And think of how that vessel was taken, shattered on the concrete, and all its holy

contents, all that had gone into him, sent flowing back to the earth. (pp. 81-82)

The estrangement that exists between Rusty and the truck driver inadvertently draws both into a

relationship made real by the presence of both in the embodied encounter, albeit a relationship

that implicates a host of other bodies not present at the time. Significantly, it this relational

encounter that carves the lasting imprints of racial subjectivity into both: *You will carry the stone*

in your heart for the rest of your life, in the words of the old monk. Alternately stated, and alluding back to the scene from the film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* previously described, much as the *stone* comes to leave its weight upon fish, frog, snake, and boy, the racial encounter described in the previous narrative account casts the weight of racial subjectivity upon both Rusty – the aggressed – and the aggressor driver of the truck.

Furthermore, the material elements that constitute the embodied encounter between Rusty and the truck driver, in turn, comprise a triadic third person within the encounter that operates as an agent independent of human intentionality. Agency, then, is not merely a "socioculturally mediated capacity to act" (Ahearn, 2010, p. 28), but a broader ability to exercise *influence* within relational contexts. Here, agency should not be conflated with intentionality. Writes Coates (2015), "What any . . . agents "intend" for you is secondary. Our world is physical" (p. 33). For instance, consider the hypothetical – horrific – potential that the bullet fired from the gun of the driver-shooter had unforeseeably ricocheted off an electricity pylon, assumed an alternative trajectory, and hit Rusty or one of her friends needs to be accounted for. Racism therefore needs to be understood as the sum-total of human and material elements that comprise the encounter as assemblage. Perhaps, it was a similar insight regarding the relationship that exists between human and object, and the cognitive social perceptions to which these give rise, that prompted Auburn – a white young woman – to write in a manner open to future scrutiny:

> *I think that in part, however, the issues of racism could be somewhat simmered down and lessened if we had a cap on gun control*. (Auburn, Written Course Reflection 1)

Likewise, in an unsent email (a form of journaling) originally intended for Dr. Amandla, midway through the course, as a means towards venting my disturbed emotion, I took up the theme of the relationship that exists between human and object. Shortly after the gunning down of an unarmed Black motorist, Terence Crutcher, by police – a horrific event during which the accompanying police helicopter crew are on record as referring to Mr. Crutcher as looking like a *bad dude* – I referred to:

The cowardly bravado that comes along with wearing a uniform, brandishing a gun, and being otherwise untouchable like cheesy ol' cowboy, John Wayne. (Pauli, Email correspondence, 9/17/2016)

It is not unreasonable therefore to tender the suggestion that gun, statue, or uniform themselves – much like the flags on display upon the truck – come to be imbued with racial subjectivity within the encounter as relational assemblage, and here both agent and observer become participants. These object-agents are also able to form cyborg (see Haraway, 1985) human-machine alliances with their human counterparts. One here only needs bring to mind the enabling capacity of diffuse digital technologies in the transnational proliferation of racism and white supremacy (see Back, 2002). Interestingly, the question as to whether or not a material object – such as a flag – can be *racist* in-and-of itself is one that will likely be disputed for some time to come. The Slovenian anti-fascist, avant-garde industrial music group *Laibach* – for instance – provide an interesting example of the attempt to disrupt the material power of fascist insignia by occasionally donning Nazi uniforms during their performances[76]. Here, the uniforms come to perform a subversive political role in context to the larger reconfigured relational assemblage. Of course, it would be wholly unreasonable to fail to account for the coinciding reality that a Black family walking through Dallas city park would not be disturbed and embittered by the presence of the statue of confederate general Robert E. Lee. Again, here it is the particular relational encounter between body and matter in an immediate iteration of space-time that contours the margins of racial subjectivities.

As a means towards further highlighting the assertion that human bodies and material objects combine in agentively powerful and productive ways to fashion racial subjectivity in the moment of encounter, I recount the particular material arrangements that characterized our kitchen during my childhood. Such material arrangement brought the segregation characteristic of districts; parks and park benches; drinking fountains; public transportation and amenities, as well

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[76] See https://assets.vice.com/content-images/contentimage/no-slug/d93c2910bcf594ba767ec9b26b311740.jpg

as entire churches, schools, and hospitals into our home. And, yet, here it likely is no small matter that my recollection of a kitchen scene from my childhood stands out so vividly. The kitchen is, after all, a material place where human bodies and material objects come into daily contact; a material place associated with sustenance and nourishment of the human body.

> *When I was a boy between the ages of ten and twelve, our family had a Black woman who used to travel around 40 miles over weekdays – each way – by bus to work for us as a domestic servant. Her name was Selina, and I remember her being of very gentle and spritely disposition. I also remember, one afternoon, noticing her rugged cream-colored melamine plate, mug, and steel cutlery stowed away in the corner of a cupboard beneath the kitchen sinks. The plates my family and I ate from, in turn, were ceramic and kept in the cupboard above and adjacent to the oven on the opposite side of the kitchen near the cupboard containing our clear water glasses. The stark difference in proximity and separation that characterized the utensils we used to eat and drink from, as well as the difference in materials that comprised these, was never pointed out to me. Instead, I noticed it and somehow understood its significance even though I had never heard the meaning articulated to me. Selina was Black; I was white; Selina was not my equal. I accepted this hierarchy without question much as I accepted the boundary that existed between our bodies. Selina never touched my body, and I would never sit on her lap, even if I was glad to see her after school. That's just the way it was, and remained.* (Pauli, Personal Journal, December 8, 2016)

The racial socialization practices of early-to-late childhood occur well prior to the ability to grasp or articulate a particular ideological stance, and often so through commonplace human material encounters [Black domestic worker; white boy; cupboards; melamine plate, mug, and steel cutlery; ceramic plates and clear water glasses] not exclusively mediated by traditional discourse. I am left deeply troubled by this account, and yet equally moved by the memory of Selina. Of course, I say so now with the luxurious precision of 20/20 hindsight, and all too aware that goodwill-cloaked sentimentality has historically informed the justification of white supremacy as benevolent action that preserves white interests (Gillborn, 2006). Think, for instance, of Thomas Carlyle's (1849) *Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question* and his altruistically-framed appeal that slave masters ought to care for their supposedly otherwise helpless slaves as members of their own families. Selina's position as a *domestic servant* to a white South African family was one characterized by dehumanizing forms of prejudice evident in the disparities that marked the common, day-to-day material arrangements of our lives. Consequently, any claim to goodwill towards her within our

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family – as authentic as such claims well are – only serves to further poison the well in that it was all too convenient to care in our encounters with her. And our supposed benevolence towards Selina only blinded us more to our own culpability and participation in Apartheid as sole beneficiaries. Significantly, the disparity inherent in our relational positions of power and privilege was pointed out to me by alternate sets of plates; cups; knives, forks, and spoons, and it stands to reason why the presence of our bodies was unfit to this task? Was it perhaps because our bodies, and our faces in particular, were usually smiling at one another so that a deceptive haze of *neighborly niceliness* had obscured my grasp of reality up until that point?

In another example, Clementine – a young white woman – recounts a materially-informed school playground experience illustrative of the coming to awareness of embodied differences predicated on biologically-determined pigmented variations in skin coloration (see South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement, n.d.):

> *When I was in elementary school, I met my best friend, who is half white and half black. She had a darker complexion and I remember very specifically one day that on the playground I was with her and some kids came up to us. They asked Angel, my best friend, if she tasted like chocolate and I believe one of them tried to lick her arm. I don't think Angel was offended at the time, she was confused as to why they thought that her skin would taste any different than anyone else's. We were so young, I don't know if that experience was just exploratory or if you could consider it discrimination? I don't believe the kids that came up to us were trying to be mean, but maybe they had just never learned or experienced a race other than their own.* (Clementine, Written Course Reflection 1)

Here, coming to an awareness of the body occurs through embodied experience itself: "embodiment becomes the existential basis . . . for making knowing possible" (Jewett, 2008, p. 3). Clementine's account is valuable in that it provides the kind of description of embodied difference that colorblind ideologies – what Viridian, a young white man, refers to as *the toxicity of "color blindness"* (Written Course Reflection 3) – attempt to obscure. The phenotypic differences of *color, hair, and bone* (see Du Bois in Foner, 1970) that characterize our human bodies are a natural product of genetics and birth. Much like Jupiter-is-different-from-Saturn-is-different-from-Earth – or winter is different from summer, and autumn parades in rustic, spicy colors very different from the sweetly perfumed, starburst phantasm of spring – *our bodies look*

different; a phenomenon Saldanha (2006) refers to as "phenotype itself, unmediated, in all of its connective glory" (p. 22). And, yet, while such *a priori* occurrence of difference should by very merit of its ontological – and broader Cosmological – foundation be rather unremarkable, such is remarkable enough for Clementine to remember an encounter that destabilizes the ubiquity of embodied difference [I don't know if that experience was just exploratory or if you could consider it discrimination]. Scarlett, a young white woman, tenders a common assumption that may possibly assist our understanding of how children come to an awareness of embodied difference:

> *Children don't see color or sex, they are taught it. In order to be taught it, they copy what they see their idols doing.* (Written Course Reflection 3)

However, is it possible for children to come to awareness of embodied differences prior to sociocultural mediation and influences?

Kelly, Quinn, Slater et al. (2005) find that while newborn infants demonstrate no spontaneous preferences for faces from their own racial groups, three-month old infants externalize preferential selectivity, and that such preferences are learned during early development through repetitive exposure to own-race faces – most likely the result of evolutionary, phylogenetically ancient mechanisms that also exist in other mammals like the rhesus macaque (Mahajan, Martinez, Gutierrez, et al., 2011). Aboud (2008) also reports race awareness in infants and toddlers whose immature cognitive structural development leave them prone to transductive reasoning whereby people of a particular color are presumed to be alike in other dimensions such as ability or hygiene. Such race awareness and biases are capable of manifesting independently from parental orientation and values. Winkler (2009), in turn, references the role of the material constitution of space in the movement beyond racial awareness to deeper psychic associations and biases: "children may notice when going to the store or the doctor's office or riding the bus that height and hairstyle do not seem related to occupation or neighborhood, but skin color does" (p. 3), and such can be added to more explicit sociocultural, discursive modes through which whiteness is framed as normative and desirable (Hirschfield,

2008). The crux however is that while it is often stated that *race is a social construct*, such framing – in line with claims made in the first two chapters – is only partly on target, even in context to the complex emergence of racial awareness during early childhood (see Derman-Sparks & Ramsey, 2006; Earick, 2009; Mac Naughton & Davis, 2009, pp. 17-30). The social construction of race is itself dependent on assemblages of cultural artifacts that are themselves material: dolls and toys, books, and images of *actual* bodies on screens. Raced subjectivity takes flight through material encounters in the here-and-now that only later can be spoken of in social terms once the material arrangements that initially enabled the encounter have been scrubbed and made sense of within the psyche. Here, again, the body is central to the formulation of subjectivity: "I believed, and still do, that our bodies are our selves, that my soul is the voltage conducted through neurons and nerves, and that my spirit is my flesh", writes Coates (2015, p. 79). Likewise, embodied differences exist well before these come to be culturally categorized and referred to as a dangling, vertical, social chain arranged along the line of superior *white* and inferior *dark*. Remarks Saldanha (2010), "Racial formations are from the start phenomena of collective embodiment, not ideological structures that secondarily have corporeal effects" (p. 2410). Of course, Rusty – in the first narrative extract presented in this section – does report her experience occurring against the background of existing racial tensions that were extensively and graphically reported in the media and engaged through public discourse [a lot of talk about the riots going on in Baltimore]. Yet, it is important here to keep in mind that the material elements that combine to constitute an emotionally-charged riot – or an uprising; a rebellion – preexist the ways we later come to talk about such events: bodies; riot gear; rocks; molotov cocktails; tear gas; fire; military-grade armored personnel carriers, and blood [see Comrade's (Bay Area Intifada, 2015) music video for the song *Right Back*: Freddie Gray / Baltimore Rebellion Theme Song[77]]. Race therefore is a fully embodied phenomenon in that it is experienced through, enacted over, and

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[77] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5n3ahIJniJM

absorbed within bodies in a manner generative of emotions like enjoyment, anger, fear, and traumas of every kind that does not exclusively require grounding in traditional discourse.

The course syllabus attempted to name, from the onset, the need to account for the role of emotion in context to both prior race-based life-experiences and course-in-progress responses to class discussions and curricular content. For instance, the Week One section in the curriculum poses the following broad guiding questions:

> *What is race and phenotype? What is ethnicity? How does 'race' relate to 'racism'? Why are these concepts essential to the future wellbeing of humanity? What is the role of emotion in this course?* (Course Syllabus)

The theme of emotion was also explicitly initiated in the opening sentence of the course description:

> *Discussing matters of race and ethnicity in public is often regarded as taboo in contemporary society, and is associated with a continuum of emotional responses ranging from anger, to discomfort, to shame, to outright defensiveness.* (Course Syllabus)

It was therefore heartening, and simultaneously saddening, to behold course participants take up the theme of emotions in specific relation to the body as the course progressed:

> *I went to a party with some friends, it got a little rowdy and the cops showed up, as we were all hiding in the back of the house a guy named Tyler, someone I was supposed to be friends with made a comment along the lines of "Rusty you may want to jump out the window first, you wouldn't wanna become another statistic." I don't ever think my blood has ever boiled so quickly I wanted to strangle him.* (Rusty, Written Course Reflection 1)

In her account, after a former friend launches a piercing micro-aggressive strike at her, Rusty reports experiencing rage [I don't ever think my blood has ever boiled so quickly] and an urge to lash out [I wanted to strangle him]. Significantly, her particular description of an urge to strangle – an act reliant on instinctive use of the arms and hands – indicates an activation of the emotions of anger and fear that, in turn, have been demonstrated through somatosensory body mapping to arise as sensations within those particular topographical areas of the body (Nummenmaa, Glerean, Hari & Hietanen, 2013). Later during the course, a few days after the election of the 45th President of the United States, Rusty reflects on the result in a manner that once again foregrounds the body as the site for base, palpable embodied emotional experience:

I am legitimately sick to my stomach that someone so hateful has been elected. (Written Course Reflection 3)

Somatosensory body mapping indicates strong sensations within the area of the abdomen to signal emotions like anger and disgust (Nummenmaa, Glerean, Hari & Hietanen, 2013). Emotion – a theme that has sporadically entered into the discussion throughout this section – therefore needs to be factored in the way that bodies surface in relation to other bodies: "the role of feelings in mediating the relation between individual and collective bodies" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 39). Significantly though, as pointed out by Ahmed (2004): "Rather than emotions being understood as coming from within and moving outwards, emotions are instead assumed to *come from without and move inward*" (p. 28), and are crucial components in the emergence of racial subjectivity and becoming *of* a certain race.

Saffron – a Middle-Eastern young woman – reports emotional distress regarding the manner in which the embodied, phenotypic features of her Muslim father (see Selod & Embrick, 2013) resonate in a racial manner in the US:

> *Lately, the issue of islamophobia has been really upsetting me. Firstly, since I am Arab and Muslim, you could imagine the amount of hate and distorted media I'm exposed to about my own identity. It is something that affects me personally, and puts me in danger, but it also creates worry for me. My father has a full beard, and wears his traditional outfit (thobe) in America. So, you could imagine how worried I am for his safety since Middle Eastern men or men of olive skin colors with similar outfits and looks tend to be targeted by islamophobics. So islamophobia is creating hate to alot of brown people (indians, pakistanis, Arabs, and many more) who some are not even Muslims.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

In the final line of her paragraph [who some are not even Muslims], Saffron alludes to the post-9/11 phenomenon whereby Sikhs, members of a religious group that originated in Punjab region of northern India, have experienced discrimination based on the outward misrecognition of their apparel and phenotype as being *Muslim* (see The Sikh Coalition, n.d.). Such material profiling has coincided consistently with a steady surge in hate crimes directed against Muslims and people of Arab descent in the US (see Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism, 2016), and reflects the

non-white/black binary historical experiences of Asian Americans who were despised within mainstream white US society as a supposedly lecherous, threatening *yellow peril* (Kim, 2007): a threatening Fu Manchu collective. Clearly, emotions hold the potential to reproduce and rupture within the body in visceral ways, so reinforcing the embodied significance of racial subjectivity. Consequently, talk of race as *social construct* may possess less relevance to the actual way people experience the deleterious effects of embodied racial encounter and reflection as deep emotional lesions within the psyche. These, in turn, are both taken up by and rupture through the body. bell hooks (1995) refers to the reality of *psychic trauma* that has been inflicted upon Black and Brown people by the machinery of whiteness. Matias (2016), for her part, reflects upon her experience of racial trauma in the following way: "I posit that such a trauma is also an emotional trauma that so stabs my heart, I find myself waking up periodically throughout the night . . . hoping to cry myself back to sleep" (p. 13).

To summarize, the emergence of raced subjectivity occurs through human material encounters that are highly productive of a spectrum of emotions that in turn possess the ability to coil and settle within the body. Such materially-birthed emotional sensations are – like spring – *the seeding for all that will come*, and are the dormant impetus of the racialized values and ideologies that we later come to be seduced by, adopt, and even resist. In the following section we enter into summer – a period of immense growth. This journey will take us deeper into the realm of the psyche to a place where the effects of human material encounters of spring often grow into fully-fledged melancholic object relations that bring on the onset of racial grief. Alternately stated, here the *stone* of racial subjectivity borne of embodied and material encounter embeds itself in the psyche in a manner that allows for sustained reproduction of its effects. *You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life.*

Chapter 4.2

Summer – Psyche

Reproduction and Reification of Raced Subjectivities in the Psyche

During the previous season of spring, data demonstrated the preeminent, fundamental value of the body as foundational in the emergence of raced subjectivity. Here, the body in its encounters with other bodies and materials is the bedrock of coming to an awareness of both our being different and that such difference is meaningful in social contexts. From such awareness sprouts a range of emotions that possess the ability to coil and settle within the body. Such materially-birthed emotional sensations are – like spring – *the seeding for all that will come*, and are the dormant impetus of the racialized values and ideologies that we later come to be seduced by, adopt, and even resist. During summer, the season into which we now move, what was planted or pollinated during the spring grows. Summer, in the Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*, introduces us – through allegory – to the next important theme: ***Raced subjectivities are reproduced and reified in the realm of the psyche.*** This theme, in particular, is informed by a fundamental guiding question, namely, how do people – once they have been initiated into racial subjectivity through embodied and material encounter – become racial beings capable of reproducing and reifying racial subjectivity on a sustained, ongoing, iterative basis?

During the summer chapter in Kim's (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003; see Collins, 2005, pp. 170-171; Chung, 2012, p. 112) film, the boy – now a teenager – observes two serpents coupling in the grass near the rock where, during a spring many years prior, he had tied a stone to a snake. During the previous spring encounter, the snake died – weighed down by the burden of the stone, and most likely vulnerable to wild animals. Through this encounter the young boy entered into awareness of the life-and-death potential inherent in embodied material encounters, and the reality that embodied material encounters themselves are charged with consequences rooted in the principle of cause-and-effect. Of this reality the monk uttered the

words: *You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life.* Of course, snakes persist in the forests surrounding the small floating Buddhist temple of Jusanji, in spite of what transpired at the pond years prior, and such is evident from the two snakes coupling in the grass. Significantly, the coupling snakes, in accordance with the season of summer, herald the theme of reproduction – a theme that will deeply inform the current section. During summer the teenaged boy falls in love with an ailing high-school girl who is temporarily residing at the temple in an attempt to recover from an unnamed illness. One hot and humid summer afternoon, the boy and girl venture alone together into the forest surrounding the lake upon which the temple is anchored. At the same pond where years earlier the boy had participated in embodied encounter with the fish, frog, and snake, the teenaged boy and girl engage in sexual intimacy upon a rock. Later, upon learning of the two teens' sexual liaisons, the old monk admits the naturalness of strong desire, yet simultaneously warns his disciple: "Lust awakens the desire to possess. And possession awakens the intent to murder" (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003). The particular seasonal context of this libidinal theme introduces summer as the season of lust. Lust is a type of strong desire that informs aggression as the defining drive behind fecund modes of human aspiration, action, and socialization [discussed at length in Chapter One in context to Freud's 1961 formulation of aggression in *Civilization and its Discontents*]. Significantly, lust – libidinal life drive deployed as desire – is both highly productive and reproductive (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), and here is framed as a type of *lust for life* analogous to the Spinozan *conatus* striving (see Damasio, 2003, p. 260); an endeavor to "persevere in its own being" (Ratner, 1954, p. 215; see pp. 215-218). Admittedly, I follow a more vitalist reading of Freud's concept of libido a lá Jung as *life force* (see Ellis, Abrams, with Ellis, 2009, pp. 112, 115), although consensus regarding what constitutes the definitional parameters of Freudian libido clearly varies (see Craib, 2001, p. 19).

As an aside, it is necessary for me to briefly and preemptively engage with the proverbial elephant – or Trabuco cigar – in the room. Numerous attempts have been leveled to discredit the work of Freud in wholesale manner (see Crews, 2017). While we hardly require an Inspector Clouseau to uncover the gapping imperfections and character flaws in the man Freud, binary approaches that attempt to discredit the basic ideas he developed ignore that Freud should not be expected to provide a totalizing explanation of everything. Freud merely provides rudimentary ideas that serve as useful conceptual launch pads to think about and explore complex social phenomena. For one, Freud had a lengthy career during which time he calibrated and adjusted his model of thought numerous times. In other words, there is no single Freud much like there is no single Foucault. While there are ideas that Freud penned in the 1920s and 1930s that we now can disagree with and state to be otherwise, like his problematic tapered theorization of psychosexual stages, the same can also be said of Darwin, as example. Of course, such does not negate Darwin in his entirety. Inevitably, as time goes on, we expand on and revise the ideas of those who came before – this is a given. Consequently, we are able to discard with ideas that prove outdated and less useful, and redeploy other ideas that still maintain their plausibility towards a form of contemporary political psychoanalysis. Furthermore, the ideas Freud generates around, for instance, better making sense of complex interwoven personal and social emotional dynamics in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1961), cannot be quantified and explained through tidy numerical values, statistics, and mathematical algorithms. Complex human emotions like hatred, anger, and jealousy cannot be quantified since we are unable to study said complex human emotions like we would study nutrition; aerodynamics, or fluctuations in atmospheric pressure. Instead, Freud provides us with a very helpful foundation that uses the in-depth study of language and interpersonal dynamics to attempt to make sense of complex human emotions and the seemingly ambiguous nature whereby humans become capable of profound forms of personal and social destruction. To this end, many of Freud's foundational ideas like transference; counter-transference; repression; sublimation; displacement; projection; splitting *etcetera* are still widely

used in present-day psychology; trauma therapy, and addiction recovery treatment. Besides, the field of psychoanalytic thought has developed extensively through the work of thinkers like Melanie Klein; Donald Winnicott; Wilfred Bion; Jacques Lacan; Slavoj Žižek; Nancy Chodorow; Julia Kristeva, and Irwin Rosen so that Freud comes to assume the position of giant on whose shoulders others stand.

Significantly, and moving back to the present conversation, the vital, productive nature of Freud's (1961) theorization of libidinal desire also hosts its own striking paradox: the death drive through which desire itself manifests as self-destructive, albeit equally rooted within the release of psychic tension (Craib, 2001, p. 20). In Act IV, Scene III of Macbeth, the co-protagonist Macduff distinguishes greed from lust. Here, greed – the intense desire to possess – takes on a pernicious, intense form of primordial *id* that ultimately proves destructive:

> This avarice
> Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
> Than summer-seeming lust, and it hath been
> The sword of slain kings (Shakespeare & Howard, 1873, pp. 234-235).

Avarice [greed] – or the intense desire to possess – awakens the intent to murder. In line with Freud's theorization of the death drive, self and society commonly come to exist under perpetual threat of disintegration. Interestingly, there is striking correlation between summer and the death drive. Summer is a season characterized by heat extremes, and heat itself has been demonstrated to increase aggressive motives and behaviors (Anderson, 2001) – hence the interesting non-causal correlation between a rise in ice cream sales and a rise in the homicide rate. *I scream, you, scream, we all scream for . . . murder, bloody murder!*

As will become apparent, summertime in both the Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* and the seasonal character of this particular section holds parallels to the

song *Summertime*, previously given such moving treatment by the likes of Billie Holiday [1936];

Ella Fitzgerald [1968], and Janis Joplin with Big Brother & The Holding Company [1969]:[78]

Summertime, and the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high
Oh, your daddy's rich and your ma is good-lookin'
So hush, little baby, don't you cry

One of these mornings you're gonna rise up singing
And you'll spread your wings and you'll take to the sky
But till that morning, there ain't nothin' can harm you
With daddy and mammy standin' by

One of these mornings you're gonna rise up singing
And you'll spread your wings and you'll take to the sky
But till that morning, there ain't nothin' can harm you
With daddy and mammy standin' by

Summertime, and the livin' is easy
Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high
Oh, your daddy's rich and your ma is good-lookin'
So hush, little baby, don't you cry

The lyrics for *Summertime* [1935] – an aria originally composed by George Gershwin (see

Melnick, 1999, pp. 119-134) for his folk opera *Porgy and Bess* which provided Black opera

singers the rare opportunity to perform publically; soon also becoming a jazz standard – were

penned by author DuBose Heyward, and adapted from his novel *Porgy* (1928) and eponymous

play. Without going into lengthy description of a synopsis of *Porgy and Bess* or discussion of its

characters and plotline, I instead would like to highlight various aspects of the story as captured

in the 1959 film of the same name.

The story is set in a fictional segregated Black fishing community called Catfish Row of

Charleston, South Carolina sometime during the early 1900s. The two lead protagonists are the

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[78] See Billie Holiday: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYUqbnk7tCY
Ella Fitzgerald: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XivELBdxVRM
Janis Joplin with Big Brother & The Holding Company:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guKoNCQFAFk

Black crippled beggar Porgy and drug addicted prostitute Bess, a Black woman. Porgy, in

particular, is described as being "black with the almost purple blackness of unadulterated Congo

blood" (Heyward, 1928, p. 13). While broadly a tale of human love amidst brokenness, the

storyline of *Porgy & Bess* is filled with elements that prove racially problematic, especially in our

contemporary day: drunkenness, *happy dust* cocaine, and addiction; gambling; sexual assault;

patriarchal violence and dependence. Such representations undoubtedly feed into stereotypes of

the hyper-sexualized, violent ghetto Black and persistently broken, dysfunctional, and crime-

ridden Black community. Furthermore, as pointed out by Noonan (2012), " Heyward's fiction

ignored large swaths of African American experience: the educated middle class; job

discrimination; organized, collective resistance to white supremacy" (p. 7) – omitted features that

problematize even the most questionable claim to authenticity. So why did a white writer and

playwright, and white composer – both men and well off – feel the need to engage with a story

rooted in the portrayal of poor, marginalized Black people? Rather than ascribing to this brief

description of the aesthetic and historical antecedents of *Porgy & Bess* to the surface charge of

exploitative cultural appropriation of Blackness, I instead wish to utilize it as an anchor for the

ensuing discussion of complexities surrounding *why* raced subjectivities come to be reproduced

and reified in the realm of the psyche. *Porgy and Bess* speaks to a deeper psychic reality. Here,

Lensmire and Snaza's (2010) claim that "White attraction to, and appropriation of, Black cultural

forms has been vital to the production of White racial identity in the United States" (p. 413) is

deserving of deeper scrutiny.

    Hamilton (1999), who refers to *Porgy and Bess* as "a ritual, fabular framework through

which fears and fantasies about race might be invoked – then laid to rest" (p. 38), later writes:

> Indeed, the simple fact of the matter seems to be that Porgy and later Porgy and Bess
>
> have been a way for whites in America and in Europe to participate vicariously in
>
> fantasies of what they imagine African American life to be. (p. 50)

To this Noonan (2012) adds: "Generations of white readers and audiences who craved an authentic truth in DuBose Heyward's fiction had sought the narrow truth of his life, all the while averting their eyes from the larger truths of African American oppression, struggle, and resistance" (pp. 310-311). In this regard, racial tropes likes *Porgy and Bess* perform fantasy – an "imaginary scene in which the subject is a protagonist" (Laplanche & Pontalis, 1973, p. 314) predicated on wish-fulfillment and determinate of social relations (p. 280) – as a double-bind for white audiences. On the one hand the story is rooted in fantasy and so can attempt to sidestep politically-charged criticisms by reverting to being nothing more than fantasy. On the other hand, its fantasy can go on to perform deep, subliminal forms of psychic and emotional work that reproduce and reify melancholic raced subject formations. To quote Asian scholar of race, Anne Ahnlin Cheng (2001), from *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation, and Hidden Grief*, her masterful formulation of the complex psychic processes through which we are socialized into race, and that I will be deploying regularly throughout this data section:

> While much critical energy has been directed toward deconstructing categories such as gender and race, less attention has been given to the ways in which individuals and communities remain invested in maintaining such categories, even when such identities prove to be prohibitive or debilitating. (p. 7)

Summertime, the song, in turn, is sung as a lullaby during *Porgy and Bess* by both Clara – both during the opening scene and while she is anxiously awaiting her fisherman husband who has been caught in a hurricane – and by Bess after Clara and her husband have been killed by the hurricane, and their orphaned baby left in Bess' care. Moments later, Porgy kills Crown, the thug – another Black man. *Lust awakens the desire to possess. And possession awakens the intent to murder.* Therefore, while *Summertime*, is a lullaby, a soothing cradle song intended to put infants to sleep, it is simultaneously a song of sorrow; a deep lament; a lullaby that lulls us into a sleep of fantasy that obscures us from our grief while we partake in it. And grief there is aplenty during

the summer in *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*; grief is plentiful in the realm of the

reproduction and reification of racial subjectivity. Also, as in the ambiguity created by the

circumstances during which *Summertime* is sung in *Porgy and Bess*, racial grief is a highly

ambiguous experience characterized by a whirlwind of seemingly contradictory emotions.

Rose, a young white woman, reflects on her racial identity as follows:

> *For me I really don't think I factor race into my identity, I do more so with my ethnicity. When I watch soccer I root for Germany and I'm proud to be German, especially when Germany won the 2014 World Cup. When it's St. Patrick's Day or State Paddy's Day I feel proud to be Irish and make sure everyone knows I am Irish. I also know how to make really good Italian food. I think I am very privileged because I am white, I know I don't have to worry about police brutality or being accused of being a terrorist at an airport. I also don't believe it's important being a particular race, but I do think that white people have different problems than those of minorities, and the problems white people have are not nearly as bad. I feel very negative towards being white. In my hometown because white people were the minority, I would sometimes be the only white kid in a class and a lot of times other students would make fun of people for being white, but the jokes they said weren't really that damaging. I kind of feel bad for being white because we don't go through any hardships and it bothers me knowing that life comes so easy to me.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

Rose's reflection on her racial identity is highly ambiguous, and in this regard it is significant that

the first data excerpt in this section arises from a white person, for as Cheng (2001) reminds

contrary to assumptions that racial grief only resides within the experiential province of racial

others: "racial melancholia affects both dominant white culture and racial others" (p. xi). Cheng

(2001) goes on to define *racial melancholia* in relation to white people as follows: "On the one

side, white American identity and its authority is secured through the melancholic introjection of

racial others that it can neither fully relinquish nor accommodate and whose ghostly presence

nonetheless guarantees its centrality" (p. xi). It is significant that Rose begins by dismissing the

relevance of race to her identity [I really don't think I factor race into my identity]. She attempts to do so

by deferring to ethnic identities [German; Irish; Italian] with which she self-identifies and relates each,

in turn, to a respective material association [soccer; St. Patrick's Day; food]. Interestingly, Benjamin

Franklin (1775), among others, excluded Germans and Italians from his formulation of the white Anglo-Saxon ideal human, branding them as being of "swarthy Complexion" (para. 24). The Irish were, in like fashion, also previously regarded as non-white (see Ignatiev, 1995). Yet, it is important to note that these groups function less as distinct ethnic groups within the contemporary USA than they did prior to the start of the Twentieth Century when – in various phases – they were able to draw upon their phenotypic semblance with the Anglo-Saxon ideal and prove their white *authenticity* through assimilation (see Roediger, 1994; Ignatiev, 1995; Brodkin, 1998; Anagnostou, 2013), and often also through violence directed towards those still deemed racially other and inferior, including one other (see Gauthreaux, 2010). That said, Rose's deference to ethnicity proves only temporary, hereby marking it as a potentially elusive strategy. In the ensuing, Rose delivers a number of sudden, weighty comments [I think I am very privileged because I am white; I feel very negative towards being white; I kind of feel bad for being white] that indicate race to significantly factor with regards to her identity. Such ambiguity becomes even more pronounced when Rose cites examples of race-based violence and prejudice from which she recognizes herself as being exempt [I know I don't have to worry about police brutality or being accused of being a terrorist at an airport] before immediately dismissing the significance of racial identity [I also don't believe it's important being a particular race].

Boss (2010) has identified a particular form of complicated grief that she refers to as *ambiguous loss* and describes in the following terms: "the person is still here, but not all here. Part is gone, part remains. As a result, there is no possibility of resolution or closure" (p. 140). While Boss' theorization specifically concerns kinds of physical loss like dementia and brain injury where insurmountable loss precedes the physical death of a relationally significant other, it is relevant to the present discussion of the emotional ambiguity inherent in racial grief: *The racial other is still here, but not all here. Part is gone, part remains. As a result, there is no possibility of resolution or closure*. Such a formulation confirms Thandeka's (1999) discussion of the loss

that accompanies white racial subject formation, especially a loss of relations with racially proscribed others through the slaughter of impulses to community with persons beyond the pale (p. 24) – though, I contend, such *slaughter* is only ever partly accomplished: the racial other always comprises part of us because our own subjectivity is dependent upon the existence of the racial other. Reenter Cheng's (2001) description of white racial melancholia: "the melancholic introjection of racial others that it can neither fully relinquish nor accommodate and whose ghostly presence nonetheless guarantees its centrality" (p. xi). Juxtaposing herself to the condition of the racialized other, Rose ultimately admits *it bothers me knowing that life comes so easy to me*. Here, the *ghostly presence* of the other accompanies Rose's parting description of her experience of whiteness. *Melancholia*. Yet what exactly is racial melancholia? To answer this question I will here partly paraphrase and condense Cheng's (2001) rather profound thought as succinctly as possible.

According to Cheng (2001), we are more at ease with externalizing racial grievance, through speaking out against racial injury, than we are with racial grief and confronting racial suffering and injury. Writes Cheng (2001):

> [W]e hardly know how to confront the psychical imprints of racial grief except through either neglect or sentimentalization. Part of the problem has to do with how we understand social healing and the tendency to rely on exclusively material or quantifiable terms to articulate that injury. (p. 6)

While the previous comment may appear at odds with my contention so far that the material needs to be foregrounded in our understanding of race and racism, it need not be. As will soon be demonstrated in the discussion around epigenetics, even when engaging with race in context to the psyche, it is impossible to dispense with materiality. Cheng, instead, is referring to the means whereby, for instance, we come to judge racial progress in terms grievances that need to be tangibly addressed in, among others, courts of law; through protests, and via policy change.

While each of these is undoubtedly necessary components in the ongoing work of bringing about essential improvements in racial equity, reality also unfortunately too often demonstrates that addressing racial grievance holds the potential for backfire. Consider, for instance, the rise in white hateful opposition to the Civil Rights Movement throughout the 1960s as a direct, hostile reaction to the advances in racial inclusion made within the sphere of education through the Brown v. Board of Education ruling of 1954 (Klarman, 1994). Or recall the swathes of racist white vitriol that surrounded the election and both terms of the first Black president of the USA. The point is that external revolutions require accompanying, sustained internal revolutions (Staples, 2016; see Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, 2016) lest we revert back to old hatreds like the proverbial dog to its vomit. Cheng goes on to draw from Freud (1955) and elucidate the difference between mourning and melancholia, and here I will propose a simple analogy to illustrate the two in operation.

*Suppose a woman loses her spouse – whom she loved profoundly, as she herself was loved – to an aggressive cancer. For months after the funeral, the bereaved spouse finds it near impossible to even consider removing the dresses of her deceased lover from the bedroom closet they once before shared. However, as time passes the frequency with which she visits the gravesite decreases, and after two years she is once again dating. The dresses have since been donated to the Goodwill store, even though the longing for her soul mate still hurts, especially when the sky is Pacific blue on cold Atlantic mornings – just the way she **used to** like it.* In this account, mourning leads to resolve. The lost *object*, an attachment of the libido, has been recognized as *shattered*. Consequently, the libido has withdrawn from this object and displaced itself onto a new object with which it is able to reestablish relationship.

Now consider. *A woman loses her spouse – whom she loved profoundly, as she herself was loved – to an aggressive cancer. For years after, the bereaved spouse finds it near impossible to even consider removing the dresses of her deceased lover from the bedroom closet they once*

before shared. Daily she devotedly dusts the closet; she carefully washes the dresses once a year

on the anniversary of her spouse's death. As time passes the frequency with which she visits the

gravesite remains constant – a ritual. She has also become recluse, especially dreading days

when the sky is Pacific blue on cold Atlantic mornings – just the way **she** *used to like it.*

Here, mourning has not been resolved. Instead, **the lost object**, an attachment of the libido,

has been withdrawn into the ego to establish an identification of the ego with the lost object, even

in the lingering presence of its absence – what Cheng (2001) refers to as "a condition of endless

self-impoverishment" which is simultaneously "also nurturing" (p. 8). Hence, Freud (1955) writes:

"Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego" (p. 249) to which Cheng (2001) adds, "The

melancholic eats the lost object – feeds on it, as it were . . . the subject sustains itself through the

ghostly emptiness of a lost other" (pp. 8-9). It is important however to note that the shadow of the

object that falls on the ego also carries with it a reproach so that the melancholic's relationship to

the lost object comes to be experienced as both love and resentment; nostalgia and denigration.

Of course, there are multiple layers of denial and exclusion that the melancholic must exercise in

order to maintain the alluring presence-of-absence: *fantasy*. The melancholic must deny loss as

loss in order to maintain the fiction of possession; the melancholic must also ensure the object

never returns in order to avoid jeopardizing the cannibalistic project – "a form of possession more

intimate than any material relationship could produce" (Cheng, 2001, p. 9). Remember: *Lust*

awakens the desire to possess. And possession awakens the intent to murder. Precisely because

the melancholic object is vulnerable to extinction, we desire to possess it. Yet, by warrant of the

fact that we cannot ever fully possess the melancholic object, we desire to extinguish it. A similar

ambiguity comes to the fore, for instance, when one considers how a *white pride* movement like

Identity Evropa[79] – which regards itself a *fraternity* – comes to depend upon the very phenomena

it holds with reproach: non-whites and women. Were it to do away with the racial other, *white*

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[79] See https://www.identityevropa.com/

pride would become obsolete, hence it needs to hold onto the racial other. However, since the

racial other threatens its very premise, the racial other simultaneously needs to be dispensed. This

same ambiguous principle holds true for the relationship between *Identity Evropa*'s patriarchal

focus and its need-threat relationship with women.

Ebony – a young Black woman – in astute fashion, picks up on the complex psychic

dynamics that characterize the reproduction and reification of racism as a melancholic formation:

> *[R]acism is more than just hating someone who has a different skin color than you . . .*
> *Racism is something that runs deeper than a self or taught hate or disgust. Racism is not*
> *something that is just surface level. It is something that is deep rooted and twisted, a type*
> *of hate that isn't even truly understood by the person harboring those feelings. I feel like*
> *racism is a misunderstanding in a sense, because do those people even know why they*
> *hate us? Because we're criminals? Nah, it has to go deeper than that, it just has to be.*
> (Written Course Reflection 3)

I say *astute* since her rendering is a powerful example of students constructing curriculum *in situ*

– the kind of insightful description that articulates a pressing psychic phenomenon equal to the

quality of a book into the quantity of a single paragraph. Elements of fantasy abound in Ebony's

description of racism [something that runs deeper than a self or taught hate; deep rooted and twisted; a type of hate

that isn't even truly understood by the person harboring those feelings]. Ebony also points towards the

ultimate irrationality that underlies racism [do those people even know why they hate us? Because we're

criminals? Nah] – a point that underscores my previous assertion that racism is first-and-foremost

not ideological. Racism only crystalizes into ideology once the base emotions that comprise it

need to be justified. That said, unfortunately, it is the melancholic fantasy dynamic that empowers

racism with its most horrific and frightening reality:

> Like melancholia, racism is mostly thought of as a kind of violent rejection of the other.
>
> While racism is mostly thought of as a kind of violent rejection, racist institutions in fact
>
> often do not want to fully expel the racial other; instead, they wish to maintain that other
>
> within existing structures . . . Segregation and colonialism are internally fraught

institutions not because they have eliminated the other but because they need the very

thing they hate or fear. (Cheng, 2001, p. 12)

Such fantasy wherein we rely on the lost other to do deep emotional work within us was earlier

presented in the example of *Porgy and Bess* of which James Baldwin (1985) writes:

What has always been missing . . . is what the situation of Porgy and Bess says about the

white world . . . It assuages their guilt about Negroes and it attacks none of their fantasies

. . . Neither need they probe within their own lives to discover what the Negroes of

Catfish Row mean to them. (p. 180).

It assuages their guilt. Here then we see the fluidity between fantasy and social relations. The

psyche exists in social forms and the social often speaks as a psyche so that Cheng (2001) alludes

to the hauntedness of history as "the haunted of that history within the subject" (p. 28). Yet,

where is the body in all of this? Again, the social is rooted in embodied encounter. It could be

easy for talk of fantasy to devolve into abstraction were it not for the reality that we transport our

fantasies into embodied encounters where these spill over in the form of consequences that extend

far beyond the immediate.

Raven – a young Black woman – reflects back on a class discussion and later instructional

session we had regarding epigenetics. Dr. Amandla – a Black scholar whose work intimately

engages with emotional justice against the background of Terror/terror narratives – taught the

class session in her characteristic style of highly detailed, efficiently organized board work

(Observational Journal, Day 15). In an email to the class soon after our time together, Dr.

Amandla reiterated a helpful corrective point she had emphasized in class:

First, it is important to remember that epigenetics is not eugenics. In some circles, these
two terms are confused. Epigenetics is an established, evolving, and recognized field of
behavioral biology. Eugenics is a pseudoscience manufactured by white supremacists in
efforts to convince masses of people of the false dichotomy of superiority and inferiority

of intelligence and adaptability among members of the human race. (Email correspondence, 10/17/2016)

Raven thus articulates her thoughts:

> *Also to be noted is the small bit on epigenetics that we spoke on that really got me thinking about how we experience pain through our bodies and can physically pass it down. I do believe that in this way, the human body is the vessel for which all of our thoughts and emotions are stored and hypothetically it is almost impossible for it not to be effected physically and mentally by the topics that we discuss because they are so personal and deeply related to each of us.* (Written Course Reflection 3)

Raven's description of epigenetics is simple yet very astute [the human body is the vessel for which all of our thoughts and emotions are stored; we experience pain through our bodies and can physically pass it down]. Raven then goes on to indicate the personal relevance of this topic [they are so personal and deeply related to each of us]. Reading through Raven's description I couldn't help but be reminded of her reflection seven weeks prior:

> *As a woman of color I have experienced sooo many emotions about my body. I think that just in the visual sense the image in the mirror for so long didn't match with euro-centric standards of beauty and that is something that no one wants to live with, especially not having known what "euro-centric standards of beauty" even were or meant. I've never even thought about the way race effects my physical body and what it means when I get a knot in my stomach every time another one of my brothers is killed and their murderer walks free. Having started reading Between the World and Me, I realized that I've been protecting my physical body my whole life not only as an African American, but also as a woman and how the two have created my physical body that is visible to men of all races.* (Raven, Written Course Reflection 2)

Here, Raven immediately recalls her own emotionally painful experiences regarding her perception of her Black body [I have experienced sooo many emotions about my body; the image in the mirror for so long didn't match with euro-centric standards of beauty; something that no one wants to live with]. I recall a particular class discussion one Thursday afternoon early during the course when Raven opened up to the class in an extremely personal and vulnerable way. She spoke of the years of self-loathing she had experienced while growing up as a Black girl because she viewed herself as ugly

compared to the white supremacist blue-eye-blonde-hair beauty standards (see DiAngelo, 2012, pp. 111-112) she saw flaunted around her on a daily basis (see Badenhorst, 2017). Raven goes on to tie her experiences of her body to her very embodied sense [I get a knot in my stomach] of being disturbed when Black men – and Black women, by extension – are murdered with impunity, and often so by law enforcement. Of particular significance here is Raven's citing of Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me* as instrumental towards her realization that her Black woman body has been under intersectional threat of a male gaze (Mulvey, 1999) that transcends racial markers. Interestingly, Coates (2015) has been criticized for foregrounding the racialized experiences Black males at the expense of Black women (see Danielle, 2015), this in spite of numerous acknowledgements on the author's part that mirror his claim that "all are not equally robbed of their bodies . . . the bodies of women are set out for pillage in ways I could never truly know" (p. 65). That said, it is important to locate within Raven's words the potential foundation of a deleterious epigenetic formation through which emotions come to sediment within the body over a lifetime and accumulate across the span of generations (Grier & Cobbs, 1992; Carter, 2007; Williams, 2008; Sullivan, 2013; Salberg & Grand, 2017) in a phenomenon referred to in Korean as *Hwabyung* (Rhi, 2004). In Raven's context, such deleterious movement occurs through the colonizing influences of European standards of beauty (Hall, 1995). A matter such as the social construction of racialized perceptions of beauty (Bryant, 2013) therefore *matters*, both in the sense that it yields destructive *Hwabyung* material effects upon, within, and across bodies, as well as in the sense that precisely on such grounds it is of ethical importance. Azul – a young Black male – also relates his reading of Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me* to *matters* affecting the wellbeing of girls/women. In his case the woman is his mother:

> *This book resonates with me so much because it hits so close to home; it makes me take a step outside of myself. This book makes me want to put myself in my mother's shoes. After working a late shift, she often tells me to call her or text her when I am home safely. As most guys my age, we feel like we're being babied. However, I have realized that my mother's reality may be even more frightening than mine. I can imagine her feeling Coates described when he was holding his one month old son, and hearing news of a*

friend being murdered by the police. In light of our America's new president-elect, I can assume that this fear will grow for many parents. My heart aches for this country and it's people. My brain is tired from constant questioning and worry. This book makes me think of a conversation I may have to have with my children, if things in this country do not change. (Azul, Book Reflection)

When Azul declares *my mother's reality may be even more frightening than mine*, his words echo a larger lived reality experienced by Black and Brown people where even a common familial relation like parenthood – most commonly associated with ideas like nourishment; care, and nurturing – can come to be filled with terror and the lingering psychic debilitation of double consciousness (Du Bois, 2003). Again, the toll of accumulated psychic and emotional stress holds the potential to wreak havoc over bodies over a lifetime and across the span of generations.

To add proverbial insult to literal injury, the voiced concerns – grievances – of Black and Brown people have historically been taken up by *Butthurt White Snowflakes*[80] A.K.A *Wypipo* (Harriot, n.d.) to represent the needless complaining of a collective group of dark-skinned, cognitively deficient (see Rushton & Jensen, 2005) moochers – too weak to move on from history and too lazy to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. Consequently, as Chicago Tribune columnist Steve Chapman (2017) comments regarding the wholesale white outcry towards Black and Brown kneeling NFL protestors: "To many whites, the only good black protest is no black protest" (para. 15). Such white fragility (DiAngelo, 2011) functions as a battering ram to discipline Black and Brown bodies and crush collective political resistance through coercive silencing. Yet, the dismissive function of white fragility also needs to be thought through more deeply. Melanie Klein (Segal, 1973), for instance, provides description of a raging infant who "on being offered the breast, instead of accepting it, turns away from it and will not feed" (p. 14). Here, the fantasy – which Klein spelled *ph*antasy so as to emphasize its unconscious nature

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[80] Harriot (n.d.) dissects the white fragility of *Wypipo* with surgical precision-type wit: "But if you stop crying for a few seconds, and listen to the universe, you just might be able to hear the world's tiniest man playing an even-tinier piano. He is strumming a sad song, collectively written by the ancestors of slaves, the descendants of Jim Crow's strange fruit and the marginalized people all across America. Its low-volume wail reflects the buckets of white tears and caucasian pain felt by the aggrieved souls of whiteness everywhere" (para. 30).

ensconced within real experiences – on the part of the infant likely is one of having attacked and destroyed the breast through the act of denial. The breast, however, through psychic splitting and as defense mechanism (Segal, 1973, p. 16), is felt by the infant "to have turned bad and to be attacking in its turn" (p. 14), and now becomes distorted within the fantasy as a terrifying persecutor. Applied to the theme of melancholic formations that underlie the broader dynamics informing white fragility – and cognizant that direct analogies between psychoanalytic concepts and broader social phenomena are problematic (Bellamy, 1993, p. 36) – we may tentatively apply Klein's formulation as a springboard towards further thinking about the role between the unconscious and the racial sociopolitical. As a response to the historical colonial object relation (Lowe, 2008) raging of white society [the brutalities of slavery; Jim Crow, and egregious manifold oppressions that have followed since] through which white society has accumulated profound degrees of guilt and shame upon itself, the darker *other* offers itself in an attempt at conciliation [the pre- and post Martin Luther King Civil Rights Movements]. However, white society largely rejects the approach of attempted conciliation, and – in an attempt to defend itself from its rejection of the offer – projects its hostility on ensuing attempts at conciliation [the calls for racial conciliation by president Barrack Hussein Obama] which it frames as attacking [Tea Party accusations of onslaught against prosperity; morals, and The Constitution]. Future responses from the darker *other* now come to be distorted within the fantasy as persecution [Colin Kaepernick and fellow Black and Brown kneeling NFL protestors cast as cold-blooded traitors, insensitive towards the *troops* who died for the *flag* of freedom]. Rosen (2009) helps us distill and make better sense of this analogy:

> The more the oppressor comes to envy the incriminatory power of his victim, the more he comes to fear and hate him, and soon, in the oppressor's mind, the tables are turned, as the betrayer now comes to feel: It is not I who persecutes him, but he who torments and bedevils me . . . the Germans will never forgive the Jews for Auschwitz. (p. 416)

Yet, of course, it would be shortsighted and condescending to solely portray the darker *other* as a *victim* who demonstrates perennial altruistic generosity. Emerald – a young Black woman – reflects on a larger social suspicion of and antagonism on the part of Black – and Brown, by implication – people towards white people?

> *In the Black community, there is a lot of hatred towards white people that goes unspoken.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

"Hate", as Coates (2015) reminds us, "gives identity" (p. 60). Identity, in turn, and here I mean *racial identity*, needs to be thought of as a product of racial subjectivity borne of embodied encounter once melancholic object relations come to reproduce and reify in the psyche while simultaneously rupturing through the body. As we shall come to see in the section to follow, racial identity is at its strongest in movements of intra-racial solidarity.

During the current summer section we have encountered how racial subjectivity that was created within the spring realm of the material comes to be absorbed into the psyche where it is reproduced and reified as a complex melancholic formation "that unsettles the simplistic division between power and powerlessness" (Cheng, 2001, p. xi). As we now make our way from summer into fall – the next season-based section in which raced subjectivities come to persist in iterative degrees of trust and estranged relationality that give rise to conspicuous racial identities – it is sufficient to state that educators attempting to effectively engage with antiracism work in education need to be aware of the embodied and emotional complexities inherent in the emergence and crystallization of racial subjectivity. To merely engage with the ideological symptoms of racial subjectification – such as racism as social and structural construct – would be to ignore the reality that the learners with whom we work are, like ourselves, complex assemblages of embodied experiences and psychic processes that are themselves extraordinarily relevant to the instructional context. In other words, in dealing with *race* and *racism* we are engaging not so much with political and ideological concepts but rather with people who

themselves, like us, are raced and vulnerable to embodied encounters that hold profound psychic consequences – people who often have already taken hurt to heart. Antiracism work in education then, again, is as much about advocating for and integrating holistic soul justice – or emotional justice – work alongside the larger enterprise of social justice work (see Staples, 2016). At this point it is also necessary to declare the imperative responsibility upon educational researchers (see Yon, 2003) to engage with the "hidden ethnography" (Blackman, 2007) of the racially controversial reflexive, emotional life-worlds of young people. While posing the undeniable conflictive potential for "researcher intrusion" (Blackman, 2007, pp. 711-712), such ethical conflict can often be mitigated through researchers interrogating their own emotional experiences and investments throughout the research endeavor. Here, researcher joins the ranks of researched as form of vulnerable ethnography (Behar, 1996).

As fall now descends upon us I would like to continue – within the section to follow – locating and expanding upon the experience of that "inarticulable loss that comes to inform the individual's sense of his or her own subjectivity" (Cheng, 2001, p. xi) by drawing attention to another deep reality noted by Cheng (2001): "Racial ideals continue to drive those most oppressed by it" (p. 6). In particular, here, highly charged emotional complexities surrounding trust and solidarity in antiracism work will be engaged. This section will also ask if there is refuge to be found in interracial engagements for people attempting to engage with antiracism work – which is often further complicated by intersectional concerns – in embodied social domains like education.

Chapter 4.3

Fall – Identity

Persistence of racial subjectivity in iterative degrees of trust and estrangement

Fall introduces us to the important theme of identity – ***the persistence of racial subjectivity in iterative degrees of trust and estranged relationality.*** Yet, what has previously transpired? During the previous season of summer, data demonstrated how racial subjectivity that was created within the spring realm of embodied encounter comes to be absorbed into the psyche where it is reproduced and reified in the form of complex melancholic formations. Here, emotions come to settle and accumulate within the body, and race – in turn – is often used to do emotional work. Such emotional work, while deeply personal, holds profound consequences for both locally embodied and socially corporeal wellbeing. In the present fall section, into which we now move, race persists in iterative degrees of trust and estranged relationality. In other words, coherent racial identities take flight through social configurations of relation and dissociation relative to the perception of shared embodied and emotional make-up and experiences. Autumn is, after all, the season of harvest so that we come to reap what was sown during the spring and nurtured, no matter how unconsciously, throughout the summer. Consequently, in fall we behold a climax. Embodied encounters, and emotions arising from these, that produce emergent forms of racial subjectivity [spring] have been taken up and internalized within the psyche in a dynamic manner characteristic of reification and reproduction [summer], and now come to bear a harvest that manifests through identity [fall] – a way of seeing and orienting oneself in relation to others and things. Racial being therefore comes to be constructed beginning with matter and embodied encounter; moving throughout the psyche, and structuring social relations through identity, and not the other way around as claimed by ardent social constructionists. The body is always prior to identity. However, as will also be demonstrated, the body is also crucial to identity, and especially so racial – and gendered – identities predicated on the politics of survival.

During the fall in the Korean film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003), among others, we meet the former protégé-monk once again, now a man in his thirties and a fugitive after having murdered his unfaithful wife to whom he had devoted his life. Lust has awoken the desire to possess and such possession has awoken, in turn, awoken the melancholically-fuelled intent to murder. The former protégé, who has returned to the temple to hide, has clearly become a being marked by *ressentiment* – the most common psychic characteristic embodied by director Kim's characters. Chung (2012; see Collins, 2005, pp. 171-174) introduces us to the former monk as current fugitive:

> The protagonist's previously mild expressions of his childhood and adolescence are
> nowhere to be seen, for the young man is now full of bitterness and enmity . . . He spews
> his rage in the form of curses, shouts, wild gesticulations, and the masochistic roping of
> his body. (p. 112)

Riou and Gallagher (2016) frame ressentiment as follows:

> Ressentiment involves, above all, hatred and criticism of that which is desired or envied,
> but out of reach. Ressentiment is a reactive emotional response which undermines the
> value of that which, although desired, cannot be attained. (p. 1)

Meltzer and Musolf (2002) for their part define ressentiment as "a chronic feeling of affront linked with vengeful desires that cannot be readily consumed", and so differentiate it from the more common phenomenon of *resentment* which is "a short-term reaction to affronts of the self" (p. 251). In its most basic sense, however, the Kierkegaardian-Nietzschean concept of ressentiment refers to a sense of hostility directed at that which one identifies as the cause of one's vexation. Brown (1993) explicates the psychic topography of ressentiment as follows:

> Ressentiment . . . is a triple achievement: it produces an affect (rage, righteousness) that
> overwhelms the hurt, it produces a culprit responsible for the hurt, and it produces a site

of revenge to displace the hurt (a place to inflict hurt as the sufferer has been hurt). Together these operations both ameliorate (in Nietzsche's terms, "anaesthetize") and externalize what is otherwise "unendurable." (p. 401)

Notably, the *production of a culprit* referred to by Brown (1993) should also be read as analogous to identifying or recognizing an original culprit responsible for the hurt. This said, ressentiment is not only a psychic phenomenon affecting the individual body, but is also a constitutive element of all identity politics, saturated with *wounded attachments* (Brown, 1993), that connects bodies in various relational configurations of solidarity and estrangement. The crucial characteristic of identity grounded in ressentiment, according to Brown (1993), is one of mutual reinforcement:

The will that "took to hurting" in its own impotence against its past becomes . . . a will that makes not only a psychological but a political practice of revenge, a practice that reiterates the existence of an identity whose present past is one of insistently unredeemable injury. This past cannot be redeemed *unless* the identity ceases to be invested in it, and it cannot cease to be invested in it without giving up its identity as such, thus giving up its economy of avenging and at the same time perpetuating its hurt – "when he then stills the pain of the wound, he at the same time reinfects the wound." (pp. 405-406)

Consequently, there is a certain dynamic of inescapability operating throughout the identities of those who have suffered historical injury and whose identity, in turn, comes to be rooted in the experience of wounding. As illustration hereof, at one point during the autumn of the film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*, the tormented young former protégé-monk attempts suicide through self-immolation. Significantly, here, the desperate and wounded former monk covers all of his sense organs with pieces of rice paper on which the Chinese character 閉 –*pye* meaning *closed* or *shut* – has been written. However, his attempt is interrupted and thwarted by the older monk who speaks the following words to him: *Though you can kill so easily, you yourself cannot*

be so easily killed. In other words, beyond the agent of affliction [for instance, the white; the racist; the man; the misogynist] that motivates an identity politics of wounding – a persistent threat that has to be done away with and defeated – there resides a political subject that cannot eradicate itself since to do so would be to deny an identity that has made a particular *being* and profound forms of relationality possible; an identity that strives for *being* beyond the wounding while still being wounded itself. Here, I wish to connect the *identity* behind identity politics to the broader concept of social identity of which Ochs (1996) tenders the following definition: "Social identity encompasses participant roles, positions, relationships, reputations, and other dimensions of social personae which are conventionally linked to epistemic and affective stances" (p. 424). A major constitutive element, however, that I find to be absent from this definition is the foundational element of the body, and especially so in context to racial and gendered identities. In other words, in context to racial and gendered identities, the right – for instance – to lay claim to a certain identity is often determined by the phenotypic and physical features of the body itself: participation in being a particular type of body. For this reason, as example, the authenticity of Rachel Dolezal's claim to being *Black* has been ferociously contested (see Houston, 2015), as has Caitlyn Jenner's claim to being a *woman* (see Abeni, 2015). Likewise, as I learned not too long ago, it is understandable that a white male serving as editorial assistant for a special issue of an academic journal on Black and Brown women and girls' experiences of micro-aggressive terrors would instigate a perceptive degree of ire among some, alongside equally meaningful gestures of temporary acceptance within this hallowed space. The body is indispensable with regards to politics grounded in identity. The body demarcates the relation between individual and collective bodies (Ahmed, 2004), and the history of the body – in its different forms – grounds identities in iterative forms of estrangement and solidarity in the here-and-now. Significantly, and as will be demonstrated in the ensuing section, the intersection of particular forms of embodiment that have consistently existed under historical threat and marginalization – for instance, being Black and a woman – often correlate with strong identity affiliations. Here, the onus of responsibility is placed

upon white, including white male, educators to recognize and respect the need for not merely working with *individuals* – as the liberal mantra goes – but with identities founded on the body in particular. Significantly, such responsibility also extends to accepting that on the grounds that race-charged forms of identity politics are often rooted in an enjoyment of *being* part of a particular exclusive, historically-and-presently marginalized racial culture, such as Blackness, not being included in said identity is more likely a given certainty that will endure indefinitely. Racialized solidarity also holds the potential for manifesting a fear of the theft of ones psychic and embodied enjoyment (see Žižek, 1993), so that racialized solidarities aligned with centuries-old practices of resistance to the coerced imposition of a raced category (think *slave*) come to reproduce raced categories themselves on such very grounds (think *Blackness*). There is therefore an organic attempt, or yearning, of race – by race – to preserve and reproduce itself (think *Public Enemy* or *Nina Simone*). Resistance to an imposed racial identity of *lack* ultimately reproduces its reverse: a vital identity productive of an *essence* that works to preserve itself as a racial mode of being. For this reason *we* cannot be post-racial at present.

Ultimately, and drawing from the analogy of the former monk in *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring*, it is unreasonable to expect one to *close* or *shut* oneself off from those identities that have made one possible in the first place. Therefore, I purposefully wish to steer clear of naïve, utopian philosophical arguments (see Newman, 2005, pp. 139-142; Dragonowl, 2015) that seek to *do away with* identity and identity politics. Identity is, after all, what connects us to others through shared approximations of difference. Simultaneously, I recognize that identity and identity politics as relational impetus is always highly volatile, unstable, and incomplete. For this reason, Stuart Hall (1996) refers to identity as both *impossibility* [in that it is always unfinished and under constant contest from multiple directions] and *necessity* [in that it enables relationality, solidarity, and social survival, and especially so among marginalized peoples for whom the belonging provided by identity provides a degree of existential grounding

amidst ongoing forms of marginalization]. Marginalization is a powerful cohesive agent of social belonging, and especially so in context to the powerful emotions it evokes within and across bodies (see Ahmed, 2007). In this regard, I propose that racial identity needs to be theorized relative to both the de rigueur constrictive and oft-overlooked productive potentials of ressentiment. Brown (1993), for instance, recognizes a potent liberatory political force resident in the aspirational yearnings of "wanting to be" and "wanting to have" (p. 407) that underlie an identity politics of ressentiment. Dolgert (2016), in turn, states: "rather than demonizing ressentiment as a toxin to politics . . . we must accept that ressentiment is for many inseparable from their conception of their own freedom" (p. 368). In the following data section I wish to engage with the potent liberatory political force resident in the aspirational yearnings that characterize racial and gendered identity politics grounded in degrees of ressentiment, and especially so as these become visible through forms of solidarity and estrangement.

A poem by Audre Lorde (1997) that we read together in class early during the autumn of 2016 while discussing intersectionality (see Crenshaw, 1991) – or multiple identities such as race; gender, and sexual orientation intersecting as complex, compounded human experiences of life and oppression – provides astute description of the coexistence of solidarity and estrangement in particular identities. In this poem, *Who Said It Was Simple*, Lorde both vividly and beautifully describes the intersectional perspective of an identity that is both *Black* and *woman*:

> There are so many roots to the tree of anger
> that sometimes the branches shatter
> before they bear.
> Sitting in Nedicks
> the women rally before they march
> discussing the problematic girls
> they hire to make them free.
> An almost white counterman passes

a waiting brother to serve them first

and the ladies neither notice nor reject

the slighter pleasures of their slavery.

But I who am bound by my mirror

as well as my bed

see causes in colour

as well as sex.

and sit here wondering

which me will survive

all these liberations. (p. 92)

In like manner, the predominantly Black and Brown women extracts to follow speak powerfully of Black and Brown women's shared experience and identity along both raced and gendered lines. Emerald – a young Black woman reflects upon being a Black woman as follows:

> *To recognize my blackness, on a daily basis, is to recognize the weight of that blackness. It is to remember that I must be better than my white counterparts, speak up more, defy stereotypes, learn about my history, while also maintaining a sense of calm to avoid being labeled as the "Angry Black Woman" (even though I got a lot of shit to be angry about). I don't always want to deal with this. Sometimes, I want to just be human. To be able to just deal with personal issues, without having to also carry the burden of systematic oppression. I want to be able to live my life with few cares, without feeling like I have abandoned my people if I do not advocate for social justice. To recognize my blackness, is to understand that I don't have this choice. That I can pretend to be clueless and go through life as if the color of my skin means nothing. But would be lying to myself. I know that my body means something. I know the color of my skin means something. That my existence represents centuries of trauma and that it conjures up feelings of anger, misunderstanding, and judgment for others that I must learn how to deal. It's a huge weight to carry.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Emerald deploys multiple terms and phrases that index ressentiment [the weight of that blackness; I got a lot of shit to be angry about; the burden of systematic oppression; I don't have this choice; my existence represents centuries of trauma . . . it conjures up feelings of anger, misunderstanding, and judgment for others]. Emerald's report also bears witness, once again, to the debilitating presence of double consciousness (Du

Bois, 2003) [I must be better than my white counterparts, speak up more, defy stereotypes, learn about my history, while also maintaining a sense of calm to avoid being labeled as the "Angry Black Woman"], and brings to mind Coates' (2015) pointed description: "All my life I'd heard people tell their black boys and black girls to 'be twice as good,' which is to say 'accept half as much'" (pp. 90-91). Yet, beneath the layers of psychically exhausting double consciousness there is an even more pernicious layer of "a fractured doubling of self", or psychic splitting, to which Marriott (1998) draws our attention when asking how Black – and by extension, Brown – identity should be understood when, "through an act of mimetic desire, this identity already gets constructed as white" (p. 418). Here, the violence "of being intruded upon, displaced, and fixated by an imaginary double . . . of having a phantom unconscious that appears to hate you, because it undermines your psychic well-being" (Marroitt, 1998, p. 418) needs to be declared. Yet, later in the same passage, Emerald introduces a profound addition to her thinking that troubles a totalizing representation of the Black lived experience as being characterized by perpetual brokenness and gloom and as exemplified, perhaps, by Marriott's (1998) description of "the legacy of which blacks will never be able to throw off – they cannot love themselves as black but are made to hate themselves as white" (p. 423). Writes Emerald in manner that foregrounds both vitality and the foundations of solidarity rooted in Black pride:

> *Still, I do feel this overwhelming feeling of pride in this body. I would not want to be anywhere else. Though my body carries a lot of trauma, there is something kind of beautiful about the fact that I, and many others, are still here, despite the pain we carry.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Emerald's description also troubles statements like that tendered by Rasmussen & Salhani (2010) that "race has no ontological (natural or objective) status. The differentiation of the human family into categories ranked by forms of superior or inferior phenotypical characteristics is false; there are no such distinctions in reality." (p. 493). What *reality* is here being spoken of, I ask? Can half a millennium of ongoing racial traumatization – persistent for at least fifteen generations (see

Devine, 2016) – [the pain we carry] not sufficiently be regarded as reality, and therefore of

ontological significance within itself? I offer this question in the knowledge, among others, that

the sedimentation of persistent trauma is able to bring about profound physiological and

psychological shifts (see Grier & Cobbs, 1992; Carter, 2007; Williams, 2008; Sullivan, 2013;

Salberg & Grand, 2017) in the courses of the lives of racial beings and groups – humans born into

a prior ubiquitous order of "categories ranked by forms of superior or inferior phenotypical

characteristics" (Rasmussen & Salhani, 2010, p. 493). And while the *human family* referred to by

Rasmussen & Salhani (2010, p. 493) draws attention to the common DNA we share, it ignores the

reality that the embodied, phenotypic manifestations of the particularities of said DNA are often

both experienced and lived in plural; disparate, and estranged modes. The *human family* is a

broken family. Then there is the matter of the existential investment in and enjoyment of that

which has been handed down upon one and over which one has little control – ones birth and

entrance into the prior order of the broken human family. Here, take – as example of such

existential investment in and enjoyment of the experience of marginalization – aspects of Paul

Willis' (1977) landmark ethnographic study of the rich counter school subculture and solidarity

among poor British working class youth, *Learning to Labour*. Beneath the layers of thick

description of urban, working class boys' cultures of struggle and resistance also resides the

presence of enjoyment and camaraderie. Likewise, Emerald's description of her Blackness in

terms of *pride* and *beauty* certainly draws attention to a type of *essence* that characterizes

Blackness, hereby further troubling the claim that race has no ontological status. In turn, Azul – a

young Black man – highlights particular cultural features that constitute his Black identity; an

identity that, for Azul, is experienced along the ethnic and cultural grounds that accompany his

sharing in darker skin color:

> *If someone were to ask me what my race vs. my ethnicity is my answer would be Black*
> *either way. However there is a difference in my head when I say Black. My Blackness in*
> *terms race merely refers to the color of my skin. However, my Blackness in terms of*
> *ethnicity refers to me being a Black-American and the culture that comes with it;*

including Hip-Hop, Soul Food, and other forms of culture the African/Black Americans share. (Written Course Reflection 1)

Of course, while it may be argued that people of darker phenotype are socialized into Blackness, the reality remains that there is a prior condition into which they are socialized, and for which they qualify based upon the shared appearance of their bodies. Of course, in the rapacious shadows of National Socialist pseudoscience; the British Empire and associate Colonial plunders, as well as an ensuing Global hyper-Capitalist cabal that essentializes race as commoditized identity, fear of thinking of races in terms of essences is understandable, and likely even plausible.

However, the aforementioned forms of violence have also ultimately contributed towards producing distinct races of the human that we can now think of as different in enchanting iterations of essence. And we can recognize these *essences* through the differently raced cultural ambassadors of essences: Toni Morrison; Carlos Santana; Yumnah Najah; Ikue Asazaki; Jordan Peele; Ravi Shankar; Park Jung-Bum, and Pamela Jones to name a few. There is an essence to the *other*. I, for one, have encountered essence in my Korean wife – a product of the beautiful essence of *han*. Han is as much exemplified by the deeply fragile, human poetry of the urban Korean peasant, Chon Sang Byeon as by the ironclad willingness of an entire people to voluntarily donate over 226 metric tons of gold [to the value of $2.2 billion] in the form of personal jewelry and heirlooms for the common good of the people and the down payment of a crippling IMF loan following the collapse of Asian financial markets in 1997 – a loan which was repaid three years ahead of schedule. Han as an essence was also evident throughout the winter of 2017 when millions of Koreans united for months-long dusk to dawn candlelight protests and song, eventually ousting the highly corrupt, conservative Park Geun-Hye government. As Park (2003) ever so poignantly frames this ontological concept in a beautiful light, *han* has been:

[I]nternalized and inbred in the nature of Koreans through the tens of thousands of years of the pilgrimage in search of a new life as they advanced from the cold and gloomy mountains in Central Asia to the East, the place of sunrise, in the hopes of settling down on a bright, warm land for a bright, warm life. (p. 525; see Badenhorst & Makoni, 2017)

As an aside, Park's (2006) ontogenetic description of migration from Central Asia to the Korean Peninsula coincides with the macro-Altaic view that sees the origins of Korean culture and language as having taken root in the Altai mountains that run through present-day Mongolia and southern Siberia. Essence is often borne through the travails that necessitate or ensue from migration. Conversely, the experience of numerous unrelenting and often brutal oppressions at the hands of especially Japanese invading occupiers further sedimented a sense of Korean essence that we can refer to as profoundly unique – *han*. Racial and ethnic essences – and the ensuing racialized cultures that emit from these – are most carved out upon the glaciers of time through pain. The Boers – previously a heterogeneous mix of white Dutch; French, and other European settlers in the southwestern Cape of Southern Africa – became the Boers through the trials of the Great Trek; Anglo-Boer War, and ensuing deathly internment in British concentration camps prior to a prolonged period of British occupation: their relation to one another as a people rooted in a shared identity of melancholic loss and attachment. Likewise, multiple other examples exist of the complex role of suffering and pain in communal racial and ethnic melancholic identity formation and essence. Consider the Burakumin, an outcaste people who exist at the outermost fringes of Japanese social order where they were relegated to live in isolation and perform trades associated with death: butchers; tanners; executioners; morticians and undertakers. Still stigmatized and viewed as a separate defiled racial group in the present day and age (see Gordon, 2006; Brown, 2013), Burakumin often hide their identities in the attempt to avoid prejudicial treatment by blending in with the mainstream. The distinction between the categories of race and ethnicity blurs when blood [for instance, one-drop rules] trumps phenotype so that even people

who share similar phenotypic features to that of the dominant group come to be relegated to the social status of an inferior other. Yet, in the midst of exclusion; violence, and humiliation, vibrant forms of culture also often take root. Again, enter Emerald – a young Black woman:

> I could not avoid the fact that my upbringing was highly influenced by Black people and Black culture. The food I enjoy. The music I enjoy. The way I speak. These are all things that are apart of who I am and are influenced, in some way, by my race. I personally love being Black. I love my culture and the people within that culture. I love the solidarity amongst Black people and our history. We are a resilient group of people and that inspires me. I do feel that we are, in many ways, broken and in need of healing. I do believe we can be very competitive and jealous. Still, there is a lot of beauty in blackness. (Written Course Reflection 1)

Emerald discerns particular aesthetic and existential value in Blackness as shared cultural solidarity among Black people – *there is a lot of beauty in blackness.*

Essences – the ontologies that we live and exude. Bainbridge & Maiorana (Bainbridge, Fon, Halbritter, Holtzberg, et al., 2017), for instance, in their absorbing biopic study of the origins of the cultural eruptions of Blues, Folk, Country, Jazz, Lullaby, Rock n' Roll and Rock find a very distinct Indigenous 'Native American' essence that was later distilled through the influence of The Tribes upon the Blackness consumed by white audiences. Blackness, for its own part, has exerted a profound influence upon those essences, for instance, consumed by white audiences. It is within Eminem, as example, that we find the rhythmic, chanted rap pulse of The Tribes as it came to us through Black culture before being rhymed through the mouth of a white man who himself was inspired by the Black culture of Detroit's urban Eight Mile Road district where he was raised throughout his adolescence. Yet, while essence can be deployed through language it always escapes the clutches of the control of language. This is why racial and cultural appropriation is faulty – it assumes that the signs of another's essence, mere signs, can be reproduced as authentic. In so doing racial and cultural appropriation misquotes and misrepresents the signs of the other: Sometimes out of naïve good intent [claims of Blackness à la Rachel Dolazel], and at times to exploit economic profit [the early-90s suburban *white boy rap* of

Vanilla Ice]. To quote Walter Benjamin: "The presence of the original is the prerequisite of authenticity" (1935, p. 3). *Presence.* And, yet, at times essence flows over in the creative, cascading forms of racial and cultural syncretism – Afrikaans; Cajun; Creole: Pidgin; the *banjar* – or banjo – of Country & Western brought over by West African slaves during the Middle Passage (see Dubois, 2016). We cannot help but distill into essences, while also recognizing essences in others – both deeply enmeshed with the personal and social desires that drive us. Or, as Coates (2015) phrases the matter: "a tribe – on one hand, invented, and on the other, no less real" (p. 56). Essence therefore needs to be repatriated from the sole domain of domination and exploitation, and reconsidered as also comprising *those* racial and cultural identities that emanate from others and flourish in spite of domination and exploitation. To illustrate this point I draw on an analogy from theology. According to German theologian Jurgen Moltmann (1981), we would do well to not abandon the word *God*. For while some may protest that the idea bears the stillbirth catastrophe of centuries of hatred and bloodshed, it is precisely on the grounds that the idea encapsulates our most terrifying human experiences that it needs to be preserved. Hegelian-type teleological questions aside, for Moltmann (1981), the word *God* bears too much suffering to discard. *God* bears the weight of history. Subsequent theologies that have sought to underscore the *death of God* – or the contemporary cultural irrelevance of *God* to human existence (see Fiddes, 1988, pp. 174-206) – have neglected to contend with the degree to which the idea of *God* is profoundly intertwined with human history and experience. I also see in this rhetorical approach a deeper value that flows into the Hebrew idea of *Shoah* – or the remembrance of catastrophe. Applied to race, *race* – as a deeply constitutive phenomenon of human experience for more than half a millennium – needs to be preserved, not done away with and discarded. Our essences bear both the fragrant and pungent ethers of our heritage; our history – and our hopes and dreams. Furthermore, our essences emerge through our bodies. Humans originated as distinct races of phenotype through the effects of migration. Our evolutionary aggressive drives, in turn, later propelled us through centuries of brutality; domination, and suffering towards distinct

cultural forms of being and becoming – essence. We have been performed through repeated iterations of language (Butler, 1990) and embodied practices (Jewett, 2008; see Powell, 2010), and have, in turn, become racial beings – still equally Homo Sapiens, yet radically different in both those variegated cultural representations arising from our bodies as well as our bodies as the constitutive site of culture itself. As Black African feminist Oyèrónké Oyēwùmi (1997) – who has provided sobering indictment of Western post-structural and feminist tendencies for largely describing difference as a social construct that erases real-life forms of agency connected to the body and embodied practices of women in non-Western contexts – describes in her "upshot" defense of biological differences: "Essentialism makes it impossible to confine biology to one realm. The social world, therefore, cannot truly be socially constructed . . . certain differences are more fundamental than others" (p. 35). Observed differences then are not exclusively social fabrications, and in this regard the post-structural habit of deconstructing embodied differences as cultural representations largely fails to contend with the adjacent reality that bodies are simultaneously constitutive of culture on the very basis that they are different. In line with the central thrust of my work then, racism must be eradicated but race as the cradle of particular forms of human essence predicated on iterative forms of embodied difference needs to be preserved. The weight of history harkens such an existential orientation. *You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life.* Implicated in this orientation is also the need to face up to the material pains that color our respective essences. Here, it should also be noted that poststructuralist requirements of and claims to anti-essentialism often largely collapse into the very essentialist claims they disavow. All coherent mental structures require a measure of ontology, and such ontology is always both essence and essential.

Black womanhood certainly insists on the recognition of an essence. Ivory – a young black woman – continues from where Emerald earlier left off in her reflection, albeit in in a highly

optimistic manner that connects the pride she feels regarding her Black culture to pride in her

Black woman body:

> *For as long as I can remember, I've been a black girl with pretty hair, high cheek bones, chinky eyes, and a pretty smile. Honestly . . . It's so important to be African-American to me because I get to knock stereotypes down and prove doubters wrong, and hopefully open their eyes and minds, let them know that black people can do just as well if not better than other races. I feel that my race is awesome, it's a beautiful race and culture to be apart of - a race that helps, loves, and nurtures everyone. We are a race that, nowadays, everyone wants our features and our genes. They want our hair and our bodies. Black people are the backbone. They carry the weight of the world on their shoulders with grace and elegance. They defy odds all of the time. They are sun-kissed, golden skinned, beautiful brown royalty - I am so proud of being black!* (Written Course Reflection 1)

To be honest, I still feel unsure how to interpret Ivory's striking endorsement of her Black

identity. My initial kneejerk reaction was to ponder whether there are traces of denial within her

report, especially in context to other statements made by Ivory with regards to her racial and

gendered phenotype. Below I present two examples:

> *Even though race is not a negative or defining thing, I often associate it with pain and a struggle to belong.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

> *I am unsure about how I feel about my body as a black female. I feel that I am much more aware of my physical blackness than I have ever been before. I feel that I am much more concerned about other people's reactions to my black skin and how my skin has the ability to be dehumanized by people who do not even know me. I feel very nervous meeting adults of other races because I feel that prejudice is still very alive and hard to break. These interactions make me anxious because I feel that I am constantly on the defensive and on high alert for any racial subtexts or "insults" that may be directed at me . . . I feel that my black body is constantly in imminent danger.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Yet, I soon realized that I likely was importing a subconscious expectation that Blackness, and

especially Black Womanhood, should consistently bear evidence of brokenness bearing in mind

the manifold forms of monstrous violence committed against Black and Brown women bodies

and minds throughout preceding centuries, as well as in our present day-and-age. Such an

expectation is certainly not unwarranted when taking into account Audre Lorde's (2007) claim of

ressentiment that: "EVERY BLACK WOMAN in America lives her life somewhere along a wide curve of ancient and unexpressed anger" (p. 145). I have since resided myself to accepting Ivory's words in her first extract as reflecting her mood and mindset within the particular moment of her writing, and in accordance with Butler's (2005) reasoning that the historical recognition that informs our accounts of self are bound to remain partial and incomplete since we are bound to speak in a discourse that is not the same as the time of our lives (p. 35) while simultaneously using a narrative structures superseded by socially regulated structures of address (p. 38). I also see Ivory's words as emblematic of the aspirational quality of her proud Black woman identity, and demonstrative of the reality that subjugated peoples often experience their racial and ethnic identities in ways that foreground flourishing and vitality. Yet, such in spite of my concern relating to the psychic and emotional energy youthful Ivory undoubtedly is needing to expend in order to *knock stereotypes down and prove doubters wrong*. Again, Audre Lorde (2007) enters in a vain indicative of deep ressentiment: "My Black woman's anger is a molten pond at the core of me, my most fiercely guarded secret . . . How to train that anger with accuracy rather than deny it has been one of the major tasks of my life" (p. 145). Such ressentiment and its accompanying tax on psychic energy again became profoundly evident in the type of in-class experience which white men are generally ill-prepared to face.

Among others, six Black and Brown young women enrolled and participated in the course: one third of the class – a higher than average ratio for the predominantly white institution where I both the class was being taught. I recall a particular class discussion one Thursday afternoon – the content of which I do not recall lightly or flippantly. Raven – a young Black woman – opened up to the class in an extremely personal and vulnerable way. She tearfully and in tones of breaking voice shared of the years of self-loathing she had experienced while growing up as a Black girl because she viewed herself as ugly compared to the white supremacist blue-eye-blonde-hair beauty standards (see DiAngelo, 2012, pp. 111-112) she saw flaunted around her on a daily basis.

Such standards also extend across Black and Brown skin in a manner whereby lighter gradations of Black and Brown skin often come to be valued above darker shades in a global phenomenon know as *colorism* (Nakano Glenn, 2009). Sadly, the effects hereof seep deep into the fabric of *other* racial identities through physically deleterious practices like skin bleaching (Pierre, 2008, 2012). Raven's experience, of course, is not isolated. In Toni Morrison's (2007 [1970]) *The Bluest Eye*, fiction testifies to the nonfiction of real-life, and we are introduced to eleven-year-old Pecola Breedlove, a Black girl who – in the midst of a society fixated on a fair, white Shirley Temple – comes to loathe her body and her culture. As the story progresses we increasingly learn about the painful inner torment and trauma experienced by Pecola in her desire to be considered *beautiful*. The tears of Raven mirrored Pecola's torment and trauma and bear witness to the reality that Black and Brown girls and women experience everyday forms of identity violence in direct relation to the *double whammy* (Williams, 2008, p. 33) of their embodiment as being both of a particular *race* and *gender*. Of course, here we would also do well to consider the lived-experiences of non-cisgender conforming Black girls and women (see National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2011, p. 22) who are especially susceptible to violent, hateful transgressions against their bodies. As Viridian – a young white non-cisgender conforming class participant – reminds:

> *I also think a lot about the amount of Black Trans women that have been killed in this year alone and the intersectionality of their gender identity and race that makes their lives so much more difficult. It's extremely discouraging.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

Returning to our discussion, certainly Ivory and Raven's expenditure of psychic and emotional energy – which is related to the demands placed upon them due to their darker and gendered phenotype – is rather significant when their former accounts are read alongside that of Xanthos, a young white male, as example:

> *I have to say that I feel indifferent about my race. I mean, it is not that I do not like being white, but I do not feel "proud" or anything like that. I just do not consider race an all-important factor in my identity.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

While DiAngelo (2012) refers to the phenomenon of ignorance on the part of most white people regarding their racial makeup as an unbounded *psychic freedom*, I wonder if such theorization can be made somewhat more complex? What if we were to admit the unabashed privileges inherent in the ability of white people to move around both physical space and psychic space relatively unfettered, yet also see such privileges as coming at a cost? As Thandeka (1999) reminds us, the coercive policing of white children throughout their socialization by parents and peers leads to an unspoken – and often unrecognized – reality whereby white people come to be subjected to class exploitation under the guise of *white-skin privilege*; mask their own racialized feelings of shame, and then erupt their self-contempt on the darker other from whom they are estranged. Whatever the case, the very fact that Xanthos' does not need to figure his race as an important factor in his identity demonstrates the normativity of white phenotype and its power as a *framing position* – a dominant and normative embodied space against which difference is measured (Dyer, 1997). Such normativity, in turn, doubles up as a kind of absence (Garner, 2007, pp. 42-46), at times invisible to itself, and at other times wholly indifferent to its own difference and concurrent melancholic dependence upon the non-white racial *other*.

However, other white students demonstrated more explicit, albeit polar, degrees of awareness regarding being white:

> *I guess because I'm white, I've never had any negative reactions to my skin tone. It's really upsetting to me that others don't have a positive view on their body. I mean it's much easier said than done when I have characteristics that are seen has appropriate or beautiful. It just really sucks that others have to experience this. I think I've experienced the body shape unhappiness or negativity, but never my skin tone. I don't think I've ever felt a certain way because I was white. Maybe that is one of the reasons why it's hard for white people to understand where people of color are coming from when they say "disembodiment." It's not something white people feel very often, whereas for people of color it is much more common (unfortunately).* (Clementine, Written Course Reflection 2)

Here, as exemplar, Clementine briefly refers to her experience of her body shape [I've experienced the body shape unhappiness or negativity] – a fairly common phenomenon among white women who are

more susceptible to thin body ideals than Black women who are markedly more protected from

media ideals that promote a slender female body type by aspects of Black culture (Chithambo &

Huey, 2013). However, rather than center her own experience of her body, Clementine instead

focuses on her awareness that she has never experienced adverse discrimination based on her

lighter skin tone [I've never had any negative reactions to my skin tone] which has historically been

privileged as the global standard of beauty (Bryant, 2013). The term, *disembodiment*, sensitively

deployed by Clementine, in turn, refers to an idea tendered by Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015) in

Between the World and Me – one of the central course readings – as a "a kind of terrorism" (p.

114). Writes Coates (2015), "the larger culture's erasure of black beauty was intimately

connected to the destruction of black bodies" (p. 44). As Clementine points out, most white

people are unable to grasp the reality of disembodiment which harkens back to the concepts of

double consciousness (Du Bois, 2003) and *fractured doubling of self* (national coalition of anti-

violence programs 2011, 1998) previously discussed. Bennett (2015) frames disembodiment as

such: "Even if your body is not stolen from you, the fear of losing your body steals your energy,

your time, and your freedom" (para. 6). Yet, are all white woman students as understanding as

Clementine?

Early on, Auburn, a young white woman and self-ascribed feminist, harbors a very

different perspective regarding her being white – a sentiment not marked at face value by the

sensitivity of Clementine who recognized in her whiteness the source of asymmetrical power

relations grounded in racialized projections upon and experiences of the body:

> *I do remember in high school we had a "Black Student Union" club. Yes, this club was*
> *for anyone to join, yet there were no white people in the club. I don't exactly know why*
> *there were only colored people in the club, however I always was wondering why we*
> *couldn't have a white student union club. And some could laugh at this thought, yet I*
> *think that instances like the Black Student Union club only separates people more. I think*
> *in order to overcome the issues of race we all need to come together as a community and*
> *learn about each others different cultures no matter the race . . . The other night I was*
> *watching the Video Music Awards on MTV. Kanye West came on stage to talk and*
> *present his new video. Kanye is a very controversial artist and his video bothered me.*

Not just race wise as Kanye only gave shout outs to African Americans. (Written Course Reflection 1)

Auburn's words betray an unconscious dependence upon the racialized *other*. Auburn reports experiencing a type of sense of exclusion emanating from being white and not participating in the racial cultures of Black and Brown people [Kanye only gave shout outs to African Americans], even though the opportunity was available to her [this club was for anyone to join, yet there were no white people in the club]. Among others, Auburn defers to post-racial rhetoric when she states that clubs like the Black Student Union only cause further division. Her proposed solution is for *issues of race* [which I take to mean *racism*] to be *overcome* through coming together as a *community* [note the use of the illusory singular form] so as to learn about one another's cultures void of race. I wonder what of significance would be left to learn if we dispensed with race as a profound, weighty co-constituting variable of culture? Ultimately, Auburn's accompanying reasoning for a white student union club holds direct implication for the previous assertion that racial essences need to be preserved, and beckons the question *What about white racial identity – should it be preserved?* Here, I would like to tender a number of rudimentary thoughts while remaining cognizant that any ideas expressed in this regard are certain to remain highly contestable.

As Lensmire (2014) points out, white people are not a monolith, yet we often fail to see ourselves as multiple. The landmark video chronicle of World War II – a brutal catastrophe that raged globally from 1939-1945 and laid Europe to waste – *The World at War*, narrated by Laurence Olivier, provides graphic and articulate historical witness to the violent, and often brutal, ethnic and national divisions that have characterized white Europeans, even within the last eight decades. Other historical examples of existential heterogeneity among white people include a host of pre-colonial wars among European powers such as the Hundred Years' War [1337-1453]; The Great War [1914-1918] near the beginning of the Twentieth Century, as well as a variety of pervasive socio-economic class striations that persist to the present day. Of such Martin Luther King Jnr. (mipdo, 2014) remarked that poor whites share more in common with the

economic aspirations of Black and Brown people compared to the wealthy white upperclassmen. Significantly, even within the realm of phenotype, pale skin has not consistently throughout history ensured recognition as *being* white. Take purported *Founding Father* Benjamin Franklin's (1775) words in his essay *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, etc.* as example. Here, Franklin (1775) promotes a mythical Anglo-Saxon ideal as the exclusive standard for being considered "purely white" (p. 223). Franklin (1775) goes on to exclude "Spaniards, Italians, French, Russians and Swedes" – in addition to the Irish who were not considered *white* at such time (Ignatiev, 1995; Smedley, 2007) – as being of "a swarthy complexion; as are the Germans also" before asking rhetorically in reference to *America*: "why should we in the sight of superior beings, darken its people?" (p. 223). It was only through manifold forms of violence – both physical and cultural – over nearly two centuries that "the process of washing the disparate tribes white" (Coates, 2015, p. 8) occurred through assimilation of paler minority groups into a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ideal (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 176-178): the original foundation of whiteness. In this regard, whiteness both was and continues to function as a colonizing force – the supposed pinnacle of human beauty; intelligence, and aspiration: in short, fully human *being*. A coalesced sense of pride in one's white identity – an identity that exists as a globally hegemonic force – therefore represents solidarity with the ongoing colonial force of brute domination. Whiteness exists as a totalizing and territorialing (Deleauze & Guattari, 1987) force. *These are the kinds of conversations I endeavor to have with my students.*

Groups and individuals that often stress the profound imagined accomplishments of the *white race* generally do so in a manner indicative of participation in an imagined-type community (see Anderson, 1983) whereby the accomplishments of a few are vicariously participated in by the unrelated many. Of course, we can fairly easily debunk and dispense with vicarious *white* racial pride by applying US comedian Joe Rogan's blunt question: "If I left you alone in the

woods with a hatchet, how long before you can send me an email?" (Tyler Piercy, 2011). Besides, pride in the supposed accomplishments of the *white race* remains conspicuously ignorant that European societies inherited a great deal of knowledge from non-European, non-white societies such as sophisticated systems of civil rule; jurisprudence; mathematics; and architecture originally developed across the Middle East; North Africa, and Asia. Of course, while Auburn's preceding comments are not explicitly indicative of *white pride* per se, they nonetheless demonstrate fragility at the heart of whiteness – a heart that is simultaneously dismissive of and incensed by Black and Brown peoples' claims at inclusion and equity, yet also deeply insecure when it is not accommodated or, at least, acquiesced: a totalizing black hole. And here Mr. Lacan (1977) demonstrates particular relevance for application. While entrance into language is simultaneously entrance into social consciousness, for Lacan, said entrance exposes us to a world of lack and the frustration of our desires to be nurtured as we were during our infancy when self-other relation comprised the harmony of all else to self – the Oceanic. In turn, we attempt to compensate for the ensuing existential lack through participation in ever-problematic practices of semiotic exchange. And since we cannot attain the Oceanic in this lifespan, other than – potentially – through attempted mystical approaches that work to foreground embodied consciousness beyond language[81] (see Voaden, 2014), for Lacan, we come to crave the repression of our desires as the very means towards sustaining desire as a life force *sine qua non*. We therefore reproduce our lack. Applied to whiteness and its emergence through embodied experiences, white people are generally only partially socialized in ways that allow for full entrance into social consciousness and the resultant pursuit of language that enables us to break with the singular self-object (Thandeka, 1999). On the one hand we manifest profound lack of social consciousness for the Black and Brown *other* accumulated through manifold experiences of being accommodated [blind privilege] so that full entrance into the kind of language that

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[81] My honors degree research and thesis work engaged with a historical study of embodiment and death in mystical religious traditions – most notably in the Medieval Latin Christian texts of the *Ars Moriendi* [1415; 1450] or *'Art of Dying'* and the spiritual practices of *Memento Mori* or *'Remembering Death'*.

makes us vulnerable to reciprocating the needs of the other is not necessitated. Yet, we are also partially aware of just enough language, so as to ensure that we maintain the semblance of a coherent social identity predicated on a sufficient amount of lack. Such lack reproduces itself as a desire-fueled means towards the *jouissance* enjoyment (see Žižek, 1993; Hook, 2017) of the pain of a supreme sense of self divorced from the other as projected as *abject* utility (Kristeva, 1982) [white supremacy]. Notably, in Lacan, the *jouisance* of enjoyment is always an enjoyment of pain – the pain of always being partial; psychically and relationally fractured. Jouisance is, among others, the enjoyment of the pain of ones exclusion in the pursuit of that in which one is ultimately unable to share [think racial appropriation]. The other therefore comprises our racial sense of lack, and upon the Black and Brown other we come to chart our very dependency. Think here for a moment of cultural forms of appropriation and the way in which we – white people – often attempt to momentarily hold close the racial other that we otherwise exclude in the melancholic (Cheng, 2001) ritual of holding on to a desire that exists only for itself and its own preservation. Yet, such reproduction of lack as a means towards sustaining a powerful type of the desire extends beyond culture, and has been carved incessantly with whips upon the backs of slaves and within the urban gridlocks of frisk-and-search-at-gunpoint policing. For such reason we would do well to disrupt and dismantle whiteness as an all-consuming iteration of identity essence. There is a discernable essence to whiteness – culturally (see Lander, 2008); ideologically (Guess, 2006), and embodied (Coates, 2015) – yet it is often parasitic in the most melancholic of ways. Here, whiteness should not be confused with those heritages and ethnicities that may comprise the identities of pale-skinned people: Scottish; German; Polish; Afrikaner, and Ukrainian to mention but a few. Rather, whiteness should be understood as that usurping cultural force that either coopts the shallower aspects of ethnicities as a simulacrum of flags; foods, and festivals or else congeals ethnicities into a dominant, centered norm through coercive assimilation.

Yet, in Auburn (class interpretive fieldnotes) I also behold the inadequacy of the distance Lacan in willing to embark on in his thinking. Lack is also able to transcend dominant psychic foreclosures in a manner productive (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1983; 1987) of the virgin desire for expanded racial consciousness. We are always able to transcend our lack in the coming to awareness that our lack can only partially and indefinitely sustain us. Like an alcoholic coming to their senses, as the course progressed, Auburn exuded an explicit desire to face up to the recognition of a racialized self dependent upon the Black and Brown other. In short, Auburn continued to enthusiastically explore the unfamiliar terrain of a self inextricably interconnected with a much larger social world that is both imperfect and threatening, yet more securely embedded in relationality. *Aha! I am a racial being dependent on and standing in relation to other racial beings.* Stated in astutely psychoanalytic vernacular, Auburn was beginning to recognize the inadequacy of the *split* self (Segal, 1973) that comprised her fractured racial being, and contemplating new avenues of expanded racial-relational becoming. For instance, midway through the course Auburn writes:

> *I have indeed left class with lingering thoughts on our discussions. I think that what gives rise to these thoughts are how I relate them to my own life. Sometimes in class we will speak about experiences that I have personally never experienced because of my race. It is interesting to have my eyes even more opened to these experiences due to the stories and experiences of my classmates.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Auburn credits her increased racial awareness to the *stories and experiences* of others – her peers in class – and appears to demonstrate a marked openness in her racial posturing compared to the defensiveness that characterized her thinking just over a month earlier.

Significantly, however, it should be noted that the range between Clementine and Auburn's orientations demonstrates that white students participating in antiracism education contexts enter in variegated forms of race consciousness, some more aware than others of the precarious conditions that racial others endure. Not all white students therefore exhibit the kind of race conscious deficit that is often addressed in education-focused race awareness advocacy literature,

and ultimately all white students enter the class racial beings, albeit some more aware of their racial constitution relative to others.

Conversely, it is inaccurate to assume that all Black and Brown students naturally possess critical and equal consciousness and awareness of the psychic components that comprise their racial experiences and ensuing identities. This reality was highlighted to me by Dr. Amandla during an email conversation we shared just prior to the commencement of the *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop, Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society* course. Seeking counsel, I emailed Dr. Amandla shortly after studying the student profiles on the online platform page of the course that was soon to commence:

> *I am really excited for the class, but also feeling anxious. It turns out that the enrollment of "students of color" is significantly higher than the enrollment of white students. While I am delighted about this shift (the classes I have taught have traditionally been overwhelmingly white), my entire approach until now has relied on me sharpening my craft in order to begin the work of deconstructing white supremacist patriarchy among white students. This new situation is . . . a challenging prospect (in the sense that I don't presume that I can teach "students of color" about racism - they already get it).* (Email correspondence, excerpt, 8/17/2016)

Dr. Amandla responded soon hereafter in the wise, encouraging manner for which she is known:

> *I wouldn't say that you don't have anything to say to a racially and gender diverse group. Not at all. I think you're just the person to take on the task, actually . . . And, just because Black and Brown students experience racism doesn't mean they have the conceptual, ideological, perceptual frames and narrative structures to name the systems that challenge, provoke, and diminish them. Again, not at all. They don't know it all just because of their race. That's like saying women understand how to identify and name sexism because of their gender. Nope. Many of the oppressed live under duress without being able to see their chains at all.* (Email correspondence, excerpt, 8/17/2016)

Later in the course, Emerald – a young Black woman – confirmed the veracity of Dr. Amandla's advice to me when she reflects upon the personal significance of the course upon her expanded understanding of and coming to greater terms with her race and gender and the manner in which these two historically subjugated identities intersect:

I find that I have embraced my blackness more than I ever have before. I find myself coming more into seeing myself as a Black woman. I obviously have always known and has identified as Black. Still, I'm finding that before, I mentally dissociated myself from race. I think I may have been a bit colorblind of myself in a way. I think it was a coping mechanism for me to educate myself on issues of race without feeling personally attacked. It is difficult to attach yourself to something that is so "fake" and also so "real". We all know that race is just a social construct and still, it is something that has such a large influence on who we are and how we relate to the world. I am slowly, but surely, starting to understand my blackness and how I relate to the world as a Black woman . . . I seriously never quite understood "Intersectionality" until this class. I find myself thinking more about how complex our identities are. How we are truly complex beings and it is extremely difficult to place us into boxes. (Written Course Reflection 3)

The theme of *learning* in antiracism work and anti-oppressive pedagogy will, among others, be engaged more in-depth in the forthcoming Spring season that follows the next section, Winter – a time of productive contemplation relative to the expansion of racial consciousness. Suffice to say, as the next immediate section will make apparent, I – teacher – underwent a profound amount of *learning* and coming to awareness both throughout and following the course.

This section has sought to underscore the significance of melancholic attachments in emergent and contested forms of racial identity: a melancholic interplay of loss and compensation by which the racial other is at once rejected and retained in order to delineate the margins of our own racial identity and belonging. In this regard it corresponds with the Japanese aesthetic wabi-sabi practice of kintsugi – or mending and revalorization of broken pottery – whereby beauty can be coaxed out of brokenness (Koren, 1994, pp. 51-52). Alternately stated, from the ashes of centuries of racial injury has simultaneously arisen winsome and alluring forms of culture cemented through a sense of belonging predicated on shared racialized experiences. It is to this end that Cheng (2001) describes racial grief as a foundation for enduring racial identity – an insight that is crucial towards a productive reimagining of progressive politics. Koren (1994) goes on to describe the "sad-beautiful feeling" that infuses wabi-sabi and the practice of kintsugi through allusion to sound: "The mournful quarks and caws of seagulls and crows. The forlorn bellowing of foghorns. The wails of ambulance sirens echoing through canyons of big city

buildings" (p. 57). Sad beauty is also an aesthetic and emotive characteristic of autumn – the season into which we entered at the start of this walk and from which we are now passing into winter: season of contemplation.

Chapter 4.4

Winter – Self

Antiracism Work as Decolonizing Psychic and Identity Excavation

Fall – a season of harvest in which we reap racial identities borne of psychic tensions germinating from embodied encounters – has passed. In our journey through the seasons so far we have learned that race is organic – it possesses a vital capacity to both affect violence and produce life. In this regard, race as an organic, dynamic relational capacity corresponds with highly ambivalent phenomena we encounter in the natural world. To this end, the lines from the famous Christian hymn *All things bright and beautiful* continues *All creatures great and small / All things wise and wonderful / The Lord God made them all*, and appears to betray a lack of awareness that the natural world of organisms consists of both the majestic Indo-Pacific humpbacked dolphin as well as the fearsome Cymothoa exigua – a parasite that enters fish through the gill; severs the blood vessels in the fish's tongue causing the tongue to fall off, and then attaches itself inside the hosts mouth by anchoring its barb-like spears into the soft tissue of the fish's mouth. In the process Cymothoa exigua becomes the fish's new tongue, and sustains itself as a legitimate organism and life form. We are able to witness the same phenomenon in the Ichneumonoidea, or parasitoid wasp, of which over one hundred thousand species exist. The wasp bores and lays its eggs inside the flesh of a host, and later the hatchling larvae feed off of their living insect host from the inside, consuming flesh first and leaving vital organs such as the heart untouched until these are the only organs left to devour. As Jacques Perrin and Jacques Cluzaud (2015) so powerfully illustrate in their epic, breathtaking documentary *Les Saisons*, the natural world manifests a simultaneous, unrelenting interplay between beauty and brutality. Likewise, race is simultaneously the poignance; grace, and bulwark-type strength of Black woman Ieshia Evans during a #BlackLivesMatter protest in reaction to the murder of Black man, Alton Sterling, by policemen in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, as well as the imposing physical enroachment of law

en*force*ment in riot gear attempting to cuff her[82]. Race is both the power and human aspiration put to paper by Nikki Giovanni (2003) in her poetry and prose, as well as the virulent, raging antisemitism of Protestant reformer Martin Luther in *On the Jews and their Lies* published in 1543 (see Trachtenberg, 1943). In this regard, race is a productive capacity to *do* both good and evil: a verb.

Race – like both dependable dolphin and pernicious parasite – then possesses the ability to enable and constrain life and human relationships, oscillating between the beautiful and the brutal. Simultaneously, such capacities also reside within the psyches of the learners who attend our classes, and I add, within the psyches of teachers, too. Hence, the particular need for classroom engagements that value the already intact racial subjectivities of our students and teacherly selves is here underscored. Here, the iterative racialized subjectivities of both our students and selves are potentially both *fiends* and *funds of knowledge* (see González, Moll & Amanti, 2005) that nevertheless are relevant to antiracism work. In particular, in the following section, I would like to lay the foundation for later engaging the idea and practice of curriculum as a relational assemblage. I witnessed the values of such relational assemblage in the creative, cooperative, and collaborative form the class took where students became walking curricula, the curriculum morphed into student, and teacher navigated the liminal space between pedagogue and learner (see Tanner, 2015). Especially this latter observation signifies a profound change that I experienced as both teacher and ethnographer of the *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop, Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society* class in the autumn of 2016. I came to illuminating awareness that antiracism work is first-and-foremost a therapeutic internal work; less so a position of *being* and more so a movement of emergent *doing* – and even *dying to self.* And while I actively sought out times in class to engage explicit instruction, I also felt myself deeply drawn into the dialogic educational encounter as a

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[82] See http://time.com/4403440/baton-rouge-protest-photo-ieshia-evans/

co-participant crossing both the literal and metaphoric threshold from fall into winter in terms of an experience of expanded racial consciousness. I, teacher, felt myself increasingly drawn in across the threshold that separates racial brokenness and mending – albeit a partial mending and process that unfolds itself gradually over a period of time. As will become apparent, I especially tender such insight relative to the dislocation of my own racial identity as a white South African male – an identity borne from the particular assemblage of those psychic tensions arising from embodied encounters that in many ways still suspend me as one "no longer European, not yet African" (Coetzee, 1988, p.11). Leander & Boldt (2013) describe *assemblage* as:

> [T]he collection of things that happen to be present in any given context. These things have no necessary relation to one another, and they lack organization, yet their happenstance coming together in the assemblage produces any number of possible effects on the elements in the assemblage. (p. 25)

How is it possible for me – as an assemblage of white phenotype, heterosexual masculinity, a South African passport, and the accusation of originating as the offspring of colonizers on colonized land – to truly *do* intersectional antiracism work? More precisely, what is the threshold I need to cross in order to pass from racist and colonizer to a teacher, scholar, and human recognized as antiracism and post-colonial in identity? Is *doing* enough or will the *being* of my roots always cast its shadows over my labor? Such questions are, in turn, especially pertinent to Holland, Lachicotte Jnr., Skinner and Cain's (1998) discussion of the value of those cultural – and I add *embodied* – resources that come to comprise the *figured worlds* of social agents. According to Holland, Lachicotte Jnr., Skinner and Cain (1998) a *figured world* is:

> [A] socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others. (p. 52)

What is the threshold I need to cross in order to no longer be recognized as a racial threat, and is such distance of movement even possible? Such reflective personal questioning is warranted by the very figured world I exist in as a white racial, male gendered being attempting to work among students from multiple racial origins and backgrounds. Remarks Ebony – a young Black woman student – of white males who exhibit those core features like white, masculine, straight cisgender conforming, and Christian that have historically qualified as the dominant, and dominating, norms within multiple local and global social contexts:

[A] "core" white male . . . Those type of people feed off fear. It's horrifying. (Interview 2)

The aforementioned concerns are complicated by my awareness that approach towards any threshold is likely to require as much a simultaneous internal movement as an external one.

On this contemplative winter's eve, Austrian poet Georg Trakl (2007, p. 118; see Maynard & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2010) [1887-1914] – who died of a cocaine overdose at the age of 27 [83] – writes, powerfully encapsulating the idea of crossing a threshold during winter in the second version of his poem, *A Winter's Evening*:

> When snow falls on the window,
> Long sounds the evening bell,
> For many the table is prepared
> And the house is well provided.
>
> Some who wander
> On dark paths come to the door.
> Golden blooms the tree of grace
> Out of the earth's cool sap.
>
> Wanderer, enter quietly;
> *Pain turned the threshold to stone.*
> Glistening there in pure brightness
> On the table *bread* and wine.   *[emphasis mine]*

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[83] See https://www.rollingstone.com/music/pictures/a-brief-history-of-the-27-club-20131112/dave-alexander-20160621

Renowned philosopher of hermeneutics, Martin Heidegger (2001) – his dubious associations with National Socialism (see Trawny, 2015) notwithstanding – provides helpful interpretation of the *threshold* referred to in the third-last line of the poem:

> The threshold is the ground-beam that bears the doorway as a whole. It sustains the middle in which the two, the outside and the inside, penetrate each other. The threshold bears the between. What goes out and goes in, in the between, is joined in the between's dependability . . . The threshold, as the settlement of the between, is hard because pain has petrified it . . . But what is pain? Pain rends. It is the rift. But it does not tear apart into dispersive fragments. Pain indeed tears asunder, it separates, yet so that at the same time it draws everything to itself, gathers it to itself. Its rending, as a separating that gathers, is at the same time that drawing which, like the pen-drawing of a plan or sketch, draws and joins together what is held apart in separation. Pain is the joining agent in the rending that divides and gathers. Pain is the joining of the rift. The joining is the threshold. It settles the between, the middle of the two that are separated in it. Pain joins the rift of the difference. Pain is the dif-ference itself. (pp. 201-202)

Heidegger's (2001) description of threshold – or boundary – is rich with metaphor and terms that draw attention to the *third space* and *in-between*: doorway, middle, rift, outside and inside penetrating each other. These are all very material metaphors that Heidegger regularly used by locating being in the mountain, river, body, stone, with language being a consciousness of being by being itself. Yet, the *third space* and *in-between* nature [ontology] of the threshold can also be framed akin to Bakhtin's (1992) idea of the *dialogic* – that a work of literature maintains constant dialog with other works of literature; all thought exists in response to prior thought and in anticipation of future thought. Writes Bakhtin (1992): "The word lives, as it were, on the boundary between its own context and another, alien, context" (p. 284), adding that:

There is neither a first nor a last word and there are no limits to the dialogic context (it

extends into the boundless past and boundless future). Even past meanings, that is those

born in the dialogue of past centuries, can never be stable (finalized, ended once and for

all) – they will always change (be renewed) in the process of subsequent, future

development of the dialogue. At any moment in the development of the dialogue there

are immense, boundless masses of forgotten contextual meanings, but at certain moments

of the dialogue's subsequent development along the way they are recalled and invigorated

in renewed form (in a new context). (p.170)

The threshold then is not a static, stable point of entry. The threshold of new relational becoming

is unstable and relentlessly uncertain. In this regard, the threshold whereby one gradually and

with exertion moves, for instance, as a white male from a position of white supremacist

exclusivity to racial equity and justice in one's consciousness, disposition, and actions is not a

dialectic shift holding the promise of resolution or fulfillment. It is instead a movement towards

pain – the very pain that is ironically also able to provide an approximate point of reference for

relationally-conscious antiracism work. The dialogic is a place of pain – of connection. *Pain*

turned the threshold to stone.

Winter now beckons and calls through the banshee wailing of the cold sobering wind.

Winter – the season of contemplation; strenuous internal work. In many ways, winter is the most

personal of seasons in that it marks transcending the threshold between the old and the new –

between that which has passed and that which is to come: Saturnalia. Winter therefore holds

profound autobiographical significance, and such theme is clearly conveyed in the wintertide

chapter of the Korean film, *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Baumgartner, Chung,

Goebel et al., 2003). Here, director Kim himself plays the by-now older adult monk. Following

years of incarceration and arriving back at the monastery, the by-now older, formerly murderous

adult monk returns to the abandoned temple and finds it in a derelict state of suspension. The

temple on the water is a distant reminder of the monk's past, yet is now static and surrounded on all sides by a threshold of frozen water. The monk crosses the ice and reconnects with his origins. The monk assumes responsibility for the temple, and – mindful of his troubled, murderous past – spends his days meditatively training his body in martial arts. As pointed out by Collins (2005), "As the Master's dharma heir, the Adult Monk accepts the responsibility in crisp, business-like fashion, getting to work on his own enlightenment because with transmission the spiritual work has only just begun" (pp. 174-175). Chung (2012), in turn, describes penitence as a crucial theme that unfolds later during the chapter:

> [T]he monk embarks on a self-punitive trek up the mountain, carrying a large stone grinder roped to his waist and a bronze Buddha statue in his arms. The character/director slides, falls down, drops the statue, and struggles to climb a steep slope with the heavy stone weighing him down. Kim uses montage during this sequence and inserts close-up shots of the tortured fish, frog, and snake from the "Spring" chapter—images that are intercut with his own images of self-inflicted physical hardship. Kim's monk reaches the summit with difficulty and from it commands a view of the monastery far below in the valley. Following the direction of his gaze, the camera pans left to provide a point-of-view overhead shot of the temple, which fills the screen . . . The camera cuts back to the monk / Kim, who sits next to the Buddha statue, praying piously, and then to a panoramic view of the temple . . . held for nine seconds. (pp. 113-114)

In fact, in reality director Kim – playing the monk – both carried the heavy bronze Buddha statue while dragging the burdensome grindstone up the three-thousand-six-hundred foot neighboring Chuhwang Mountain with rope around waste and exposed torso in temperatures as low as twenty-two below Fahrenheit. Remember these words: *You will carry the stone in your heart for the rest of your life.* Here, it is director Kim himself who undergoes the brutal, perilous trek up the mountain as a form of performance art that simultaneously is a journey in pursuit of atonement

relative to his own melancholic grief and stifled desire (see Kim, 2012). Collins (2005) sees this Sisyphus-like work and struggle on the part of director Kim as a direct application of the Buddhist noble eightfold path characterized by right understanding; right thought; right speech; right action; right livelihood; right effort; right mindfulness, and right concentration (p. 174). This is ethics – the attempt to better understand how we should live relative to our mutual existence deep inside the womb of a predominantly dark; chaotic, ever-expanding Cosmos; an eco-sociopolitical and entangled personal coming to awareness. Strikingly, most of the winter chapter in the film is void of dialog, instead finding the monk / director Kim in a deeply contemplative state, and closes with, among others, a shot of the monk meditating alongside the *Avalokiteshvara: bodhisattva of compassion* and Buddha of *wisdom that goes beyond* (Collins, 2005, pp. 175-176) atop the mountain. The Buddha statue's panoramic; unbroken, and persistent gaze upon the temple, in turn, marks a significant turning point in the film in that the temple; the lake, and accompanying surrounds – scenes for the previous entrance into subjectivity through embodied experience and ensuing ways of being sprouting from melancholic formations within the psyche – are now transformed into a site of renewed consciousness and coming-to-awareness of new things.

Admittedly, transformation – or movement from one form into another – is often a painful, vexing experience, and especially so in context to the strain and breaking point it may place upon identity and its concomitant affiliations. As much as identity enables solidarity among people who co-participate in a particular body, it is worth considering the broader effects of identity, especially across bodies that are conspicuously different from one another relative to *color, hair, and bone* (see Du Bois in Foner, 1970). To what extent does laying claim to a body of particular phenotype constrain what can be uttered in social contexts – inhibit the right to deploy the kind of language necessary to identify? Such exploration is necessary for embarking on discussion of, among others, how white males in educational spaces can possibly engage in the volatile practice

of antiracism work where multiple embodied and psychically-charged identities are often brought into proximity – identities complicated by the variable degrees embodied socialization into race takes among various races. Such complexity was demonstrated to me by Emerald – a young Black woman student – who said the following words to me late one afternoon when I interviewed her four months after the course class sessions had ended (see Cannell, Miller & Oksenberg, 1981; Briggs, 1986; 2007; Gubrium & Holstein, 2003; Brenner, 2006; Seidman, 2006; Skinner, 2012; Edwards & Holland, 2013). Our conversation at one point moved on to a particular class session the previous semester during which I had opened up to the class regarding my own socialization into whiteness and history as an unabashed white supremacist. While it was not my intention to *confess* to my past – since confession is all too often motivated by a personal gratification of absolution while leaving persistent public transgressions silent and unchallenged (see Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire & Davis, 2013) – I instead wished to use myself as an example of how hatred and other complex emotions, including racism, often come to take root within the *soulful* [emotional] realm prior to erupting in the *social* [interpersonal] dimension. I remember agonizing over whether I should open myself up to my students in such a vulnerable manner for days beforehand, and just moments prior to eventually opening myself up to the class on the afternoon concerned I remember seeing the paper containing keywords for thoughts I wished to engage fluttering anxiously in my hand. Azul, a young Black man student, seated at the front of the class remarked to me after the session that he had noticed my anxious demeanor (Ethnographic Field Notes, Day 14). Of course, I ultimately had no way to guarantee that my intention would be recognized, and so was interested to hear how Emerald – our most racially-literate and articulate course participant – experienced my comments, albeit after some time had passed and as a form of ethnographic member checking (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Interestingly, I had noted in my ethnographic field notes (see Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011) jotted down soon after class that, "Emerald came and gave me a hug and said, Thank You!" (Ethnographic Field Notes, Day 14). Now, many weeks later, in

conversation, Emerald – having percolated this experience – reflects on her experience and accompanying thoughts as follows:

> **Pauli:** *That day when I spoke . . . I think inside of myself I was nervous because part of me felt incredibly ashamed, but apart from that . . . I also had to before the time contend with the fact that there's a big chance that some students may actually walk out . . .*

> **Emerald:** *Huh, huh [laughing], that would have been funny. Wow.*

> **Pauli:** *But, on the other hand I felt that it was just something that needed to be done . . . like just be upfront . . . you know? What was your impression of that entire . . . thing over there?*

> **Emerald:** *Um, you know, it kind of reminds me, you know, you're South African; you know about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission . . . I just think of like how people would, you know, say what they've done . . . but I know that some Black people forgave people who did really horrible things to their families, their sons, their children, and I think that is something that I've seen commonly throughout Black communities where people . . . who have hurt and have confessed to having hurt . . . it's easy for us to forgive. And I don't know what that is, but . . . a part of me was like, Thank you for sharing. Okay. You know, I accept that; I appreciate your honesty. Another part of me was like, Wow! That was easy for you . . . to do that, you know? And so I also question like, why was that so easy? A person just said they hated Black people. You're Black, you know? Like, how that doesn't leave resentment inside of you . . . what about us, what types of coping mechanisms have we created to the point where forgiveness is easy in this way? And is it genuine forgiveness, or . . . ?* (Follow-up Interview, 4/5/2017)

From the onset it is important to reframe this ethnographic interview as *intraview* (Kuntz & Presnall, 2012) – "a wholly engaged encounter, a means for making accessible the multiple

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intersections of material contexts that collude in productive formations of meaning" (p.733). This reformulation adds a perceptively material semiotic layer to the linguistic turn in ethnography or "the emphasis on language to create culture as well as to understand culture, to guide inquiry, and to express discoveries" (Clair, 2012, p. 13). Seated by a table in the piercing sunlight outside a small on-campus franchise restaurant named Au Bon Pain due to a lack of space inside, I had previously remarked to Emerald that we would be meeting at *Oh My Pain* – a reference I often jokingly invoke regarding the establishment and its slightly overpriced fair which I always have considered somewhat punitive relative to the budgets of students who often already have accumulated substantial student loan debt. Of course, I had no idea that Emerald would steer our conversation very determinately towards her experience of racialized pain: literal pain. Furthermore, my own confession of the psychic experience of feeling ashamed appeared to parallel the presence of the stinging rays of sunlight – an intense light that exposes and judges, reminiscent in many ways of the Bible verse that heeds: "their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work" [1 Corinthians 3:13, NKJV].

Initially, my on-the-spot, unspoken, internal, kneejerk reaction to Emerald's words *That was easy for you* was a feeling of confusion, and I distinctly remember thinking to myself of myself, *Damned if you don't, damned if you do!* In this regard, I apparently demonstrated quantum physicist Niels Bohr's profound scientific dictum as it pertains to researchers as co-participants in the research enterprise: *we are part of that nature that we seek to understand* (see Barad, 2007, p. 26). However, as I replayed and attentively listened to Emerald's words – spoken in the calming timbre of her beautiful, lush voice – I realized that Emerald wasn't only informing me about myself – Emerald was sharing something about herself, her experiences, and perceptions as a young Black woman. Here, Emerald – the traditional *subject* of ethnographic research – is implicated in the expansion my own sociopolitical consciousness and human

transformation (see Valente, 2014b, p. 116). Emerald was utilizing my white male identity to carve out a space upon which to stand and be recognized at a depth deeper than her words uttered at that moment. To paraphrase informally as I have come to understand her words: *I am a young Black woman – one of a Black tribe of painfully affected – who has been denied understanding on the part of my race in the past. Our pain is ignored while we are simultaneously expected to forgive. Yet, when will your putting an end to this hurt gain priority over your desire to be accommodated with forgiveness for the hurt you continue to impart?* The response of my silence as signal of deference and acceptance, in conjunction with Emerald's heartfelt admission, in turn heralded our intraview encounter as a form of communion (Ezzy, 2010) in which the binary distinction and associate power hierarchy between researched and researcher came to be blurred (see Yost & Chmielewski, 2012, pp. 245-247). Significantly, while speaking her heartfelt thoughts and feelings, Emerald kept shading her eyes from the sun – *helios* as another intra-active agent co-constitutive of the interview encounter (see Stender Petersen, 2014) – in an attempt to make contact with my eyes that were also located within the arc of piercing light (ethnographic field notes). I see in this embodied action her attempt to maintain personable face-to-face interaction, an ongoing invitation to dialog, whereby "(m)eaning, or 'knowing,' is generated not through representationalism, but occurs within such events by the coming together of multiple forces in momentary alignment" (Kuntz & Presnall, 2012, p. 740). In other words, in line with Burns' (2003) claim that bodies are simultaneously material and textual, Emerald's body spoke in conjunction with her words that required "whole-body *listening*" (Kuntz & Presnall, 2012, p. 740) and sensory awareness (Harris & Guillemin, 2012) as explicit forms of reflexivity (Davies, 1999; Watt, 2007; Hsiung, 2008) on my part throughout and following the interview.

Furthermore, in this encounter, the relational dynamics of Emerald's transference of expectation that I – researcher – should understand her hitherto unspoken inner thoughts and feelings (see Song & Parker, 1995), as well as my initial resistant countertransference of the

desire that my *good* intentions be likewise recognized presented the very real chance for conflict borne of a misalignment of desires (see Britzman, 1998, pp. 23-48). However, when such misalignment is accepted as the inevitable consequence of the encounter between two beings as radically different as a Black young woman and a white man and not subjected to the forced expectation of resolve, such unresolved, inconsolable quality to the relational encounter can serve to energize productive awareness of the reality that learning the *other* is largely an open-ended lifelong endeavor that negates closure. This insight of open-endedness holds profound value for interracial ethnographic encounters (see Gibson & Abrams, 2003) that hold the potential "to invoke neglected human potentials and to expand the limits of understanding and imagination" – anthropology of becoming (Biehl & Locke, 2010, p. 317). As Craib (2001) frames the matter in context to the desire-leaden psychic dynamics of transference and transference without which "no relationship is possible" (p. 193): "The frustration of desires provokes thought" (p. 195). Emerald's voice washes through me like the crispest December gust and bears witness to her embodied and identity experiences that are very different from my own. And it is precisely here, at the threshold that separates our radically different figured worlds – the place of pain where our differences meet – that the dialogic becomes both visible and possible on the grounds that learning the *other* is a limitless ocean filled with an infinite supply of unknowns. It is all too easy for well-meaning white people to shut ourselves off and take offence when Black and Brown others implicate us as racial co-participants in their broken stories and experiences, not realizing that such disclosures are themselves a sign of vulnerability and the dialogic platform upon which degrees of relationship – and small incremental opportunities to learn the *other* – can potentially be established. In this regard, we would do well to build on Nietzsche's (1998b) individualist truism in German *Was mich nicht umbringt, macht mich stärker* or *That which does not kill me makes me stronger* by instead substituting the plural personal pronoun form to both clauses: *Was uns nicht umbringt, macht uns stärker* or *That which does not kill us makes us stronger*. Such is the philosophy of Kintsugi that underlies the current work – an approach that foregrounds the

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profound value of productive damage for antiracism work. As the artistic, aesthetic orientation of

Kintsugi postulates, many fragments and pieces are required to rejoin a broken plate that then,

later once it has been remolded, comes to gain priceless value. Pain is not only the undoing of

fragments of the plate, but also the means through which the plate can be put together again. For

this reason it is essential that antiracism work begin at the *doorway, middle, rift, outside and*

inside penetrating each other – pain. Our emotional and embodied pains are our gateways to

relational, dialogic antiracism work that also allows for entrance of multiple identity intersections.

This is the foundation of psychoanalysis.

Yet, what about the fractures and tensions I experience as a white male attempting to do

relational antiracism work? To what extent does possessing a body marked by a particular pale

phenotype constrain what can be uttered by me in social contexts; inhibit the right to deploy the

kind of language necessary to identify with Black and Brown racial others? How is my white

body simultaneously coded in a manner that excludes me from wholly and totally passing across

the racial divide? After all, all *good intentions* aside, as examples such as the attempted *white*

Indian Grey Owl (see Erickson, 2013) and, more recently, Rachel Dolazel demonstrate, the

racially-charged identity politics of ressentiment regulates and largely constrains the degree to

which one can transcend the figured world value that white skin conjures in Black and Brown

raced others. Here, in an attempt to reckon with the constraining quality of identity and identity

politics grounded in ressentiment, I tender a personal account that I've hitherto wrestled with

regarding whether or not it should be engaged in this writing. Such tension and inner fracture has

arisen within myself in the knowledge that it is very easy to be interpreted as a moping,

complaining white male who views himself as being discriminated against or under threat. For

this reason I have become hyper-conscious of the way I both speak and posture myself in the

presence of Black and Brown people. Here, Jupp's (2013a, pp. 55-77) discussion of the

contradictory nature of white double-consciousness, as an extension of Du Bois' (2003) original

concept, is important towards recognizing the means through which white people themselves experience racialization: "White double-consciousness in which White identities emerge, not as universal individuals, but as historically and socially White racialized beings understood through the gaze of people of color" (p. 72). In other words, it is misleading to assume that all whites are race-evasive and operative from a point of blind privilege and self-imagined superiority. While immense structural injustices persist, structural injustices that charge interracial relational encounters, the reality is that white people do not exclusively occupy one-sided, asymmetrical positions of power in their face-to-face relations with Black and Brown people. As a white man attempting to enter the treacherous domain of antiracism work I can attest that there is much power in the reversed gaze of the Black and Brown colleagues and students with whom I work – a gaze that is often interpreted by myself as cautiously biding; a gaze not free from unspoken suspicion, yet persisting in the kind of hope I dare not disappoint. Suffice to say, in the ensuing personal essay, which digresses slightly from the format used in the previous sections, I will attempt my best to avoid giving rise to the perception of white *mopiness*, while also working to use my personal experiences towards social criticism that is politically vulnerable on the very grounds that it risks angering some readers (Denzin, 2000, p. 403). Simultaneously I will work to highlight the kind of identity and relational complexities, tensions, and fractures that underlie interracial engagements in antiracism work conducted – refracted (see Barad, 2012) – *through* a white male educator such as myself.

Sometime around ten o'clock one summer morning in 2017 while participating in a staff meeting for an urban seminar program, I was engaged in conversation with Dr. Amandla, our Black woman urban seminar cohort leader, as well as both Jamaica and Ava – my two esteemed Black and Brown women graduate assistant colleagues. It was the clearest of Philadelphia mornings, and the day was cohabited with promise as wafts of fresh forest air from the adjacent Wister Woods Park perfumed our campus surrounds. Somewhere early on during our cheerful

conversation the topic suddenly shifted to the idea of taking white agricultural land by force as means towards a restorative justice-focused redress of racially-charged historical, colonial transgressions and exploitations. Jamaica cited Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe as prime example of the effectiveness and benefit of forced removal of land from white farmers by landless Blacks. I briefly mentioned the direct correlation between the forced land grabs in Zimbabwe instigated by its totalitarian leader, Robert Mugabe, and the rapid collapse of its economy in the years after, only to be told that I had been influenced by the corrupt Capitalist Western media. I felt a stony lump settle in my throat around the very moment that a persistent thump in the temples of my head signaled a marked increase in blood pressure. *I swallowed the lump.* A noxious cauldron of emotions was bubbling inside of me – its ingredients infused with the racial ressentiment of my own roots. I felt myself unable to speak anymore. As a white male in the presence of Black and Brown women I felt myself to be on risky terrain: my reasoning – however informed – carried along with it the legacy of my white skin. *How could I speak?*

Up until three and four generations ago, the paternal lines that run through both my parents extend back to poor, rural farmers. For instance, up until my grandfather Badenhorst, the family of whom I bear the name Badenhorst worked as horse-tamers and small-scale sheep farmers, plying their skills in the harsh semi-arid scrublands outside the small towns of Strydenburg, Hopetown, and Kimberley in the Karoo Desert of the Northern Cape. They were Afrikaners – interned by the British in concentration camps during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902 (see Hobhouse, 2017) when the British attempted to annex the two Boer republics once gold and diamonds were discovered. Throughout the war Afrikaner property and farms were often burned to the ground in a campaign known as Lord Kitchener's Scorched Earth Policy. In fact, until 1961 when British governance of South Africa ended, the British largely looked down upon Afrikaners, regarding them as boorish, inferior whites (see Okoth, 2006, p. 155). I come to this work then as not only a white male-type generic, but as a particular person whose embodied

subjectivity has been crafted by the land, sea, and air of Africa, and whose identity has been weathered by an Afrikaner cultural heritage. A deep sense of connection to the land from which I was born pervades my consciousness of self and the world.

Farming is deeply rooted in the land. Farming across Southern Africa as a whole is a rather precarious affair due to the region's proclivity for severe droughts and the highly unpredictable nature of the seasonal rainfall. For this reason, farming is a laborious, highly-skilled profession – skills often passed down from parents to young children – that simultaneously requires the ability to live both industriously and frugally. One cannot merely take land and begin farming. Most farmers save the seasonal profits they may make in one year to carry them through years of uncertainty and scarcity that follow, and – apart from exceptional cases – it is not a line of work associated with large profit margins as many farmers work to pay off substantial bank loans often incurred during times of drought and scarcity. Such was the situation in Zimbabwe too prior to the start of the forced and often violent takeover of white-owned farmland beginning with its *Fast Track Land Reform Programme* introduced in in 2000. While this initiative and its consequences is controversial and complex (see Scoones, Marongwe, Mavedzenge, Mahenehene, Murimbarimba & Sukume, 2010), possessing no single story, it also unfortunately resulted – among others – in severe food shortages accompanied by an unforgiving drought with up to three-point-four million desperate Black Zimbabwean economic refugees eventually fleeing across the border into South Africa (see Idemudia, Williams & Wyatt, 2013). Within the Southern African region – now in turmoil – violence ensued; many died and scores more were displaced (Kwinika, 2010). In November 2008, hyperinflation in Zimbabwe reached 89,700,000,000,000,000,000,000% – or 89.7 sextillion percent (see Buckle, 2001; Parker & Whaples, 2013; Hanke, 2016). The Central Bank of Zimbabwe proceeded to print One Hundred Trillion Z$ banknotes that could only cover the price of two loaves of bread (see Mushakavanhu, 2015). Zimbabwe's once thriving agriculture and tourism industries had collapsed while the

grand architect of this colossal mess, President Robert Mugabe, who reportedly owns twenty-one farms (Staff Reporter, 2018), along with his wife, cabal of ministers, and military generals, continued to live in extraordinary opulence and wealth. An increasingly desperate population resorted to stripping once productive farms of their irrigation piping, which along with shed sheet iron and farming equipment was regularly sold as scrap metal (see Fletcher, 2017). Ironically, thousands of highly-skilled, permanent Black farm workers were chased off the land leading to an even greater spike in unemployment. Agricultural production suffered an unprecedented and immense negative decline leading to a situation where staple grains had to be imported for the first time in Zimbabwe's history (see Sihlobo, 2017). This situation that has only recently begun to show encouraging signs of recovery spurred on primarily by favorable rainfall and significant restructuring of the original land reform program (see Hanlon, 2017; Scoones, 2017). That said, it is not difficult to recognize an element of psychic enjoyment in the denial of pleasures and retaliatory exclusions that characterize the forcible confiscation of white-owned land by the Black landless, and especially so in the case of Zimbabwe where the original colonial allocation and apportionment of land was conducted along highly-disparate means of institutional racism (see Palmer, 1977) that expressly favored whites. Consequently, the dire necessity for comprehensive land reform across Southern Africa is not here being contested – only those oversimplified, idealistic accounts that occlude accounting for the practical complexities that surround effective land reform.

Of course, I have engaged in numerous conversations with starry-eyed Marxists over the years – each citing Zimbabwe as a landmark example of the success of the forced removal of land from white *colonizers* – and it has been notable that not a single proponent has been aware of the sobering accompanying complexities surrounding land seizure and occupation in Zimbabwe. In fact, during conversations said utopian idealists would usually demonstrate a notable lack of knowledge pertaining to even the most basic aspects of Southern African history, and in context

to Zimbabwe would be unable to name – for instance – its capital city, the Zanu-PF ruling party

in Zimbabwe, or the Movement for Democratic Change opposition party who has systematically

been suppressed since its founding in 1999 (see Political Abductions in Zimbabwe, 2016) by a

group of civic organizers and trade unionists. Of course, such information – including the account

I have thus far tendered – is readily available (see Buckle, 2001; Madhuku, 2004; Hammar &

Raftopoulos, 2008), yet it is apparent that most armchair anti-colonialists prefer to use Zimbabwe

as an empty signifier in which to import whatever flashy progressive point they are attempting to

make at the time. I have also encountered a similar phenomenon in the manner many Europeans

and North Americans would glibly speak of South Africa in a manner that glosses over the

profound complexities that mark both its painful history and the contemporary challenges it faces,

making any chance for meaningful, informed dialog near impossible. My accompanying feelings

of indignation sprout from this perception: that it has always been all-too-convenient to use

Southern Africa as a cheap prop for whatever political point one is attempting to make. Here, I

purposefully deploy the regional moniker Southern Africa since there exists a simultaneous

essence that binds our respective peoples in all their splendid diversity. The contours of our

shared cultures span across colonially imposed national borders. For instance, the South African

dish known as *chakalaka* – a spicy vegetable relish that accompanies *pap* or rough cornmeal –

was originally introduced by migrant Mozambican mineworkers who would cook it in the hostels

of the Transvaal goldmines after completing their lengthy, often dangerous shifts. Additionally,

Afrikaans – a thoroughly African language (see Badenhorst & Makoni, 2017) used as a first

language by peoples from multiple races that unfortunately was also deployed as the lingua franca

of the Apartheid state apparatus – is spoken by numerous peoples throughout South Africa,

Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe (see Willemse, 2017). Southern African nations also served

as refuges and bases for anti-Apartheid activists throughout the Freedom Struggle. In much the

same vein, it has also regularly struck me as ironic, and still does, how people would so easily

name South Africa, along with its painful racial history of violence, segregation, and white

supremacy, stumbling over multiple pronunciations of the word *Apartheid*, yet blind to iterations

and forms of violence, segregation, and white supremacy marking their own societies. It is not a

stretch to claim that Apartheid-era South Africa, the pariah, in many regards served as an all too

convenient scapegoat – a screen against which white societies across the Globe could project and

compare themselves to the illusion of being relatively free from the transgressions of racism.

Moving on, at the moment that Jamaica offered Zimbabwe as a motivating example for

land reform – her intentions undoubtedly sincere and reflective of a larger perception that she

herself didn't author – I felt myself at extreme odds regarding how to respond . . . or not respond

at all. It is all too easy for whites speaking about Africa and instances of failure on the part of

Black African nations and leaders to come off as culturally-prescriptive and racially

condescending. I waited until Jamaica, Ava, and I were alone, and the tension had subsided. I

attempted to explain to them that Zimbabwe is usually the go-to example white supremacists use

when attempting to argue for the inferiority and incapacity of Black Africans to lead and govern

themselves, and that in order to counter such white supremacist arguments I have found it

necessary to admit to failures of the leadership of Zimbabwe while simultaneously also pointing

to the independent vision and industrious successes of several other Black African nations [think

of Burkina Faso's revolutionary Thomas Sankara prior to his assassination in 1987 (see Sankar,

2007)] alongside the failures of numerous white European societies and governments [consider

the numerous European borne –*isms* such as National Socialism and Communism that instigated

Global conflict, decimated entire populations, and led to the deaths of more than eighty million

people] throughout history. My words appeared to be lost in translation, so to speak.

The truth is that the white colonial claim to land throughout Southern Africa has resulted in

large racial disparities and inequalities so that calls for comprehensive land reform are of utmost

necessity. Add to this the reality that Black and Brown farm laborers are often grossly

undercompensated, many still working for less than $5 a day. A highly controversial South

African example of such frustration is the Cape Town-based hip hop crew Dookoom's angry song

Larney Jou Poes [*Boss, You Cunt* implying *Fuck Off White Man*][84] that seeks to draw attention,

through the use of an expletive colloquial language form of the *Cape colored*, to the racially-

charged injustices endured by Black and Brown farm laborers at the hands of their white

employers. Prior to angrily decrying the colonial origins of contemporary farming practices, it's

opening lines chant:

> *Farmer Abrahams had many farms*
> *And many farms had Farmer Abrahams*
> *I work one of them and so would you*
> *So let's go burn 'em down* (Label I.O.T Records, 2014)

Racism and egregious forms of violence have often mired the legacy of farming across Southern

Africa. Take the example of the *dop* system whereby – until when it was outlawed and enforced

in 2003 – Black and Brown viticulture farm laborers in the Western Cape region of South Africa

were paid a substantial percentage of their wages in cheap wine leading to the highest incidence

of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in the world (see Rendall-Mkosi, London & Adnams, Morojele, and

McLoughlin & Goldstone, 2008; Jacobs & Jacobs, 2013). This deleterious racialized practice has,

in turn and among others, brought on the disintegration of familial structures and severe obstacles

to school academic achievement among Brown and Black children born to racially-produced

alcoholic mothers (see Lubbe, Walbeek & Vellios, 2017). Hence, contrary to Gilley's (2017)

recent paper titled the *Case for Colonialism* – a work rife with distortions, selective biases, and

cherry-picked examples that led to the majority of the journal Third World Quarterly's board

members to tender their resignation – the legacy of colonialism is rife with genocide, racism, and

exploitation. We can go on to recount, for instance, the brutal extermination campaigns of the

Black indigenous Herero peoples of the Namib Desert (see Sarkin, 2011) by white colonizing

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[84] See a) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmgpDostEqk
      b) https://noisey.vice.com/en_us/article/6a54e6/dookoom-interview-2014-larney-jou-poes-57a2069bc69805dee41efd2a
      c) http://www.thejournalist.org.za/art/dookoom-stir-larney-jou-poes

Germans who would poison their wells and drinking holes with the dead, decaying corpses of horses and cyanide. Of course, multiple other grim examples abound.

Yet, I was also born on African soil where my family has resided since 1696 when Caspar Heinrich Batenhorst – a soldier from the northwestern German town of Wiedenbrück near Hanover – arrived in the Cape Colony. He was white – like me. And by the time of his death in 1741 he had acquired two farms, *Klipheiwel* and *Patrys Vallei* (see Badenhorst & Badenhorst, 1991) – a very handsome leap in upward mobility through the opportunities afforded by colonial frontier expansion. Ever since, the Badenhorst family has laid its roots as Afrikaners – or those *of Africa* – in the fertile, petrichor soil of Southern Africa. It is against this background that the deep psychic attachments that underlie lesser apparent aspects of my identity surface. I admit to feeling particularly emotionally disturbed by the gruesome murders of white South African farmers – a group of people very distant and different from me in terms of worldviews and values: often conservative; Calvinist Christian, and culturally exclusive; yet people in whom I also perceive shared roots now laid bear and vulnerable. I spent lengthy periods of time throughout the summer and winter breaks during my undergraduate studies overseeing farms while the farmers and their families were away, and can attest to the profound paranoia and anxiety that accompanies living on a remote, isolated piece of land that carries with it the very real risk of being attacked and brutally murdered. Every small noise in the pitch black early hours of morning evokes a terror and visceral awareness that makes sustained sleep near impossible – two-way radio, rifle, and Kevlar vest kept within arms' reach next to the nightstand by the bed. Farm murders and attacks in South Africa – again another highly contentious phenomenon (see 'More black farm workers are killed than white farm workers' – Johan Burger, 2017; Wilkinson, 2017a, 2017b) – are often extremely brutal, involving excessive violence and torture that includes practices like the rape of elderly women, mutilation by electric iron, and being dragged behind a car down a gravel road (see Van Zyl & Hermann, 2011). Unfortunately, farm murders in South Africa are exploited by

white supremacist rightwing reactionaries, and largely ignored by the ruling leftwing political establishment. Yet, my emotional reactions as signifiers of my psychic attachments extend beyond the brutal to include the everyday and mundane. I remember my defiant and very vocal emotional protest when a Korean once insinuated that the South African braai is a cultural fabrication of the US barbecue. The South African *braai* – Afrikaans for *grill* – is a cultural right of passage that is characterized by a lengthy process of preparation; particular traditional fireside rules and etiquette, and an overabundant spread of perfectly seasoned meats that often include lamb, game, and regionally-specific fish like *snoek*. I grew up in a home environment where weekly braais would be accompanied by the polka-like tempo of Afrikaner *boeremusiek*[85]: an instrumental style of traditional music comprising, among others, concertina, accordion, and banjo, and dating back to the Voortrekker-era when the Boer peoples moved further into the plateau of Southern Africa in order to escape continued British encroachment. Significantly, to this day I am still honestly able to state that I despise the idea of the British crown and English royalty, and I delight whenever their cricket and rugby teams are handed a *royal* clobbering. Beneath my generalalized white veneer then there is a cultural identity that comprises particular yearnings, allegiances, and forms of pride.

Of course, my white phenotype still exists as a significant point of contestation regarding whether or not I can lay claim to being a native of Africa where I was born. Simultaneously, my white phenotype inevitably carries along with it the association of racism, domination, and violence. For this reason it is common to hear white South Africans, not unlike many white United Statesians, bemoan the melancholic burden of being perceived as *de facto* racial aggressors. In the United States the association of perpetual racial aggression predicated by pale phenotype is often expressed through bumper stickers that, for instance, read *Columbus Didn't Discover America… He Invaded It!* In South Africa, on the other hand, whites are often labeled as

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[85] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ws-nkTerZFY

settlers, hence the Black freedom struggle chant *One Settler, One Bullet* that is still used to the present day, and often accompanies the Nguni struggle song *Umshini Wami*, or *Bring Me My Machine [Gun]*. These eruptions of racial tension again speak to the deeper melancholic roots that run through racialized identities.

Such tension was once more demonstrated to me one Tuesday evening in late November 2016, shortly after returning home from the CI/EDTHP297 class I was teaching. I had commented on an interview posted on Youtube (original video now deleted; see Martin, 2016) in which prominent alt-right white supremacist, Richard Spencer, claimed that Egyptians are white people and posed a rhetorical question meant to be understood as a negation: *Are white South Africans African?* My comment was a critique of both Richard Spencer speaking on my behalf by insisting that I was European rather than African as well as his attempt to denigrate Africa as backward on account that white people are not originally from said continent. I hastily wrote:

> *I am white. I am from South Africa. While my history and the histories of those like me are riddled with brutality and injustice towards darker people, the reality stands, I am African. Consider the meanings of the following identity-based terms often associated with the pale-skinned inhabitants of the southern tip of Africa: Afrikaans meaning "from Africa" and Afrikaner meaning "African". At best, white supremacist pseudo-science and Aryan metaphysics demonstrate that there is absolutely nothing superior about white people who attempt to argue their superiority.* (Youtube comment, November 22, 2016 / video now deleted)

What ensued was a proverbial shit storm of replies in which both explicit white supremacists and Black African purists seemed to stand in ironic, uncanny agreement with one another – you Pauli are European; not African – and here I tender a few unredacted examples*:*

Pauli Badenhorst you are not indigenous to the land.. Y'all force y'all self around looking for place to call home.. Ya race go back like 6000 yrs. your born yesterday. (Ra Shaka, Black, Youtube comment, November 22, 2016)

Pauli Badenhorst no, you are either a suspected or admitted white supremacist. (Nicole Smith, Black, Youtube comment, November 22, 2016)

You're a fucking fool Pauli. A mindless puppet. Have you ever heard of the syndrome of stockholm ? You are completely stuck into that mindset. First of all, you are not "African", you are European and you will always be European as long as your roots come from Europe primarly. The country you live in is fucked because of the ANC, I've speaked with Afrikaaners who have fled from their nightmare as former south africans... Anyway, there's far more important than some dutch people getting genocided in south africa, like saving Europe for instance as if that happens we will never have any land for white europeans anywhere on the planet. (Kastell, white, Youtube comment, November 23, 2016)

Pauli Badenhorst no you're a European in Africa. (terrinyc29, white, Youtube comment, November 23, 2016)

Of course, while an analysis of my genetic makeup has indicated shared DNA with the various peoples of Europe to the ninety-third percentile, my forbearers have been rooted in Africa for over three centuries. Such tension necessitates a particular question: Do whites have a right to claim Africa as a place of historic origin bearing in mind the usurpative and violent colonial means through which they settled there? This question has perturbed me for quite some time, especially bearing in mind that the Black Bantu peoples of Southern Africa were themselves originally not indigenous to the region. Archeological and genetic evidence has demonstrated that the Black Bantu tribes themselves migrated and expanded southward from north of the equator (see Li, Schlebusch & Jakobsson, 2014), in the process displacing and killing off the indigenous San – or Bushmen – and Khoikhoi communities they encountered; pushing the San from the fertile mountain pastures of the Drakensberg in the east to the dry desert plains of the Karoo in the west (see Schlebusch, Prins, Lombard, Jakobsson & Soodyall, 2016). The question of what constitutes indigeneity, and whether whites can lay claim to native *Africaness* is further complicated by the reality that *Africa* – as a supposedly homogenous, continental landmass – is itself a colonial invention (see Mudimbe, 1994; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 2012, pp. 211-262) whose pre-colonial inhabitants certainly never thought of themselves as African. In this regard, Pan-

Africanism is a recent phenomenon necessitated only by the ravages of European colonialism itself. And, yet, Africa is a place – a sacred, physical place – from which millions of people were abducted, transported across the Atlantic Ocean, and sold into slavery. The term *African-American* hearkens back to this point of origin and the shared ressentiment that continues to fuel forms of race-based essence and cultural identity that enable survival amidst the assimilationist predation of white supremacist normativity and domination.

To what extent can I authentically then claim to be *post-colonial* in my antiracism work as a white male teacher, scholar, and activist when my very existence and being is rooted in and dependent upon a colonial legacy that precedes me and from which I have undoubtedly drawn profound albeit banal benefit? Alternately, to what extent can I claim to be *post-colonial* when my psychic attachments are still partially rooted in the inevitable effects of colonizing practices and colonial legacies? Such questions are significant since all antiracism work, by nature, toils to undo the lingering rapacious consequences of colonial domination. Or is to position myself relative to *post-colonial* perhaps unrealistic? After all, do we ever reach the point of *post-anything* bearing in mind that, relative to the Indo-Greek metaphysical theory of the *eternal return* later adopted by Nietzsche (2009), the Cosmos and all material and psychic existence and energy has been recurring, and will continue to persist, in a self-similar form an infinite number of times across infinite time and space. The very nature of infinity implies that repetition is inevitable, hereby precluding finality or closure. Likely, the *deus ex machina* means of circumnavigating my post-colonial quandary resides in reframing the post-colonial as an active work of decolonizing (see Grosfoguel, 2011) that is conducted *in situ*, breaking with history as a total determinate of being, and regarding history and the past – with all its pain and ugliness – as the *locus classicus* for the active undoing and deconstruction of the past in the present. African Cameroonian philosopher Achille Mbembe (n.d.) interprets Frantz Fanon's (2005) thinking on decolonizing practices and frames such in a manner that foregrounds decolonizing as a creative

work, first and foremost, that begins with the *self*, hereby corresponding with what Kenyan novelist and theorist Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) terms *decolonizing the mind*:

> [S]truggles for decolonization are first and foremost about self-ownership . . . self-ownership is a precondition, a necessary step towards the creation of new forms of life that could genuinely be characterized as fully human. Becoming human does not only happen "in" time, but through, by means of, almost by virtue of time. And time, properly speaking, is creation and self-creation – the creation of new forms of life . . . Decolonization is not about design, tinkering with the margins. It was about reshaping, turning human beings once again into craftsmen and craftswomen who, in reshaping matters and forms, needed not to look at the pre-existing models and needed not use them as paradigms . . . of "imitation" and "mimicry". (pp. 12-13)

Since colonialism and its ensuing racisms dehumanizes both colonized and colonizer[86] – Black-Brown and white – in iterative forms and degrees, it follows that the work of *rehumanizing*, which falls within the central purview of decolonizing practices, is a personal work that needs to be undertaken by all. Such *soulful* justice – a corollary of Armah's (2016) idea of emotional justice – is the foundation of all ensuing social justice work. For white men attempting to responsibly engage with antiracism work (see Jupp, 2013b; see Lensmire, 2017) this call for commissioning and undertaking deep psychic excavation and renovation is especially pertinent. And for a white South African man, like myself, attempting to engage antiracism work, the interstitial space *no longer European, not yet African* alluded to by white South African anti-apartheid activist and Nobel laureate J.M. Coetzee (1988, p.11) provides the simultaneous threshold opportunity to engage in antiracism work as a deeply aspirational endeavor towards ongoing racial metamorphosis and new becoming. To this end, Jupp (2013a) refers to the

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[86] Here it is again helpful to remember Moltmann's (1979) cautionary observation that: "Oppression destroys humanity on both sides but in different ways: on the one side through evil, on the other through suffering" (p. 24).

admittedly contradictory movement towards a white progressive masculinity that is "simultaneously subject-strong yet relationally feminine in political alliances" (p. 101). Of course, like the monk in the film *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) – recently returned from the bondage of imprisonment – such endeavor requires focused exercise and exertion. Yet, such preparation ultimately enables the opportunity to scale the heights of existential liberation through, among others, renewed racial consciousness and reappraisal of difference and life.

As this current, difficult, and largely unfinished winter contemplation draws us closer to the threshold where the melancholic pains and tensions of racial identity are laid bare, it is perhaps wise to return once more to the contents of Trakl's (2007) wintertime poem:

> Some who wander
> On dark paths come to the door . . .
> Wanderer, enter quietly;
> *Pain turned the threshold to stone.*
> Glistening there in pure brightness
> On the table *bread* and wine. (Trakl, 2007, p. 118)

A former white supremacist, I approach the door – the threshold – from the dark, shadowy path of past hatred and malevolence, attempting to enter quietly: with due reverence and respect. Perhaps, this is the only way I can speak. On the table before me, the promise of bread:

3 cups unbleached all purpose flour
1 3/4 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon yeast
1 1/2 cups water
1 to 1 ½ cups cheddar cheese

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, cheese, salt, and yeast. Add water and mix until a shaggy mixture forms. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and set aside for 12 - 18 hours. Overnight works great. Heat oven to 450 degrees. When the oven has reached 450 degrees place a cast iron pot with a lid in the oven and heat the pot for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, pour dough onto a heavily floured surface and shape into a ball. Cover with plastic wrap and let set while the pot is heating. Remove hot pot from the oven and drop in the dough. Cover and return to oven for 30 minutes. After 30 minutes remove the lid and bake an additional 15 minutes. Remove bread from oven and place on a cooling rack to

cool. (Recipe for home baked bread enjoyed together in class and disseminated among CI/EDTHP297 students)

Bread – the relational signifier shared among us all in class near the dialogic point of the threshold that is *pain*: the respective entry points of our variegated racial experiences and identities.

Soon this cold and the contemplation of winter will pass and we will enter spring – season of the hope of renewed material encounter. For now let us contemplate the significance of bread. Bread is relational; it is broken and shared around a table, in mutual trust, with others who themselves have been attempting to enter greater wholeness and heal from the racial divide. Such theme will comprise the following, final data section: antiracism work in education as relational, embodied, and affirmative of life in its manifold, beautiful forms.

Chapter 4.5

Spring: Body *Redux*

The Value of Emotion and Embodiment for Relational Antiracism Work

We have moved from winter – the season of deep internal labor and contemplation in antiracism work – into a spring period of renewed sowing, and so have come full circle, passing into the beginning of a fresh cycle: *a flesh cycle*. Once again, the central theme introduced during the former spring season comes to prominence: ***The emergence of raced subjectivity occurs through material encounters.*** However, in the spring section to come, the particular value of embodied encounters for the emergence of raced subjectivity characterized by antiracism awareness; associations, and attachments will be demonstrated.

The final seasonal chapter of *Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter… and Spring* (Baumgartner, Chung, Goebel et al., 2003) – a silent scene that only lasts around one-and-a-half minutes on film – begins as the large wooden gates on the shore of the lake once again open to expose the floating temple across the water. Here, the threshold invites traversal from many directions. Yet, bearing in mind the oft-tragic events of the previous four seasons, this opening of the gates does not signify foreboding or doom. These are not, for instance, the gates of William Blake's graphite, ink, and watercolor depiction of Dante's *Divine Comedy [Hell, Canto 3]* through which the two protagonists enter beneath the foreboding banner *Leave every Hope you who in Enter*. Therefore, in this regard I somewhat disagree with Chung (2012) who frames the ending tone of the film as follows:

> It is as if the auteur has given up his fight to change society and forsaken the will to communicate with others. Ultimately, there is no lesson (as there was in the original "Spring"), no passion (as in "Summer"), no ressentiment (as in "Fall"), and no

transcendence (as in "Winter"). There is only repetition and a sense of resignation at the

end. (p. 116)

While Hye Seung Chung in her analysis appears to be working from an original, slightly extended

theatre copy of the film that is at least four minutes longer than the *Sony Pictures Classics* copy I

have thus far employed throughout my analysis, I do not read the same sense of *resignation* in the

ending as she does. For while a new protégé boy-monk rows out to shore, repeating actions taken

by the former boy monk in the initial spring chapter, the final spring chapter needs to be viewed

as an *agential cut* (Barad, 2007) in its own right that – while simultaneously remaining entangled

with the other chapters and flow across seasons – should be allowed the potential opportunity for

the unpredictable to emerge. The film leaves us with open-ended possibility and so does not sink

into fatalism or determinism. Spring is primarily the season of both foundational and renewed

forms of material encounter, and is not a prophetic determination of the kinds of psychic and

identity formations, and actions, that will follow. Instead, when the protégé boy-monk of the now

middle-aged monk, who formerly himself was a boy during the previous spring chapter, leaves

the floating temple to play by a pond in the neighboring woods as his master did many years

prior, the outcome of his experience is left wide open, and open to question, since the

circumstances that co-configure the event as assemblage are bound to be different in many

regards. And while the overriding principle that in life we eventually come to carry the weight of

our actions through psychic object attachments and ensuing identity associations is still in

operation, we would do well to bear in mind that material encounters are highly productive – and

not merely the result – of psycho-emotional alignment. Embodied experience is the fertile silt of

possibility within which new psycho-emotional formations in modes of belief, assumption, and

bias can come to take root. Alternately stated, raced material encounters that we undergo later in

life can prove to be the fresh spring seeding for changes in how we come to think, relate to, and

act upon the raced other, whether as actant, observer, or the recipient of action. Indeed, while the

effects of our initiation into racial subjectivity – like the calcified stone that settles in the heart –

will persist throughout life, such are also able to loosen and partly dissolve. Significantly, this

formulation suggests that the material means through which humans enter racial subjectivity also

exceeds ideological alignment and transcends cultural conditioning.

In particular, in what follows I present two data-grounded discussions of how iterative,

emergent emotional and material encounters in the unfamiliar triadic space of antiracism

curriculum, instruction, and learning often come to constitute new, liberatory forms of racial

consciousness rooted in intersubjectivity. In discussing these data excerpts – drawn from research

collected throughout a course titled *Reading Self and Others as Text: Exploring Hip Hop,*

Comedy, and New Media to Talk about Race, Class & Gender in Schools and Society – the value

of the *entanglement* (Barad, 2007) of materiality with discourse will become apparent. The

central focus of the CI/EDTHP297 course that I included in the course description of the syllabus

(see addendum) sought to consciously contend with numerous vital considerations:

> *We learn most about our selves and others when we embark on journeys of discovery into*
> *the unknown. Openly discussing matters of race and ethnicity in public is one such*
> *unknown since racial and ethnic identity means something very different in 2016 than it did*
> *in generations past. This situation necessitates that we reexamine the significance of*
> *phenotype and identity and especially so relative to the rapidly changing demographic*
> *profile of communities and societies in the USA – including schools and classrooms. Young*
> *up-and-coming professionals need to be familiar with crucial perspectives on diversity and*
> *inclusion, and more confident in participating in difficult conversations. To this end, this*
> *course intends to provide the opportunity for students to reflect upon, discuss, and*
> *collaborate around the personal, social, historical, and institutional meanings of race and*
> *ethnicity as these intersect with class and gender in 2016 so as to develop a more*
> *professional repertoire of intercultural competence. In the process, we will explore several*
> *pop cultural texts including hip-hop, comedy, film, and new media artifacts – among others*
> *– in order to both better understand their racial and ethnic backgrounds and identities as*
> *well as develop a deeper sensitivity and ability to respond to the racial and ethnic stories*
> *and experiences of people from different backgrounds. In short, this course promises to be*
> *a super exciting, interesting, and enriching experience!* (Course Description)

Among others, the course endeavored to make explicit the value of new media resources for

providing a platform for initiating and participating in *difficult conversations*. Yet, whereas

mainstream resources for engaging difficult conversations around issues of race and ethnicity

tend to promote discussion starters, conversational prompts, and questions for reflection (see

Stone, Patton, Heen & Fisher, 2010), such resources largely prove insufficient towards, for

instance, incorporating the multimodal *world* digital literacy practices of young people in relation

to the proposed *word*-based literacy device of the course syllabus (see Freire, 2000). Numerous

course participants reported on such digital practices – that themselves are pregnant with material

ethnographic significance (see Hedenus, 2016) – as component of their everyday lives. For

instance, Xanthos – a young white man student – reports on the digital literacy platforms that he

draws from in order to stay abreast of current news:

> *I get my news information mostly from social media sites such as Facebook. I rarely watch the TV news, so Facebook remains my top news source.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

Likewise, Saffron – a young Muslim woman student – states:

> *I mostly get my news through Facebook or Instagram. I don't really watch the news, or browse on news-related websites unless I search for the incident/event/topic to gain more information about it.* (Written Course Reflection 1)

Of course, news sourced from social media sites can be critiqued on the grounds that such

material is aggregated relative to content largely shared by those who comprise one's digital

social network. While such digital affiliations lead to said material generally being perceived as

more trustworthy compared to traditional news sources (Turcotte, York, Irving, Scholl & Pingree,

2015; see Gee, 2015), they also limit access to a wide array of alternative information and

perspectives regarding contemporary newsworthy events, hereby locking media consumers into

patterned discourse communities of *friends* with whom they share personal affinities and *likes*.

That said, social media platforms as news resources are a contemporary reality that

simultaneously provide educators with the opportunity to access to multimodal resources and

engage learners with critical media practices that uncover single stories, embedded biases, and

power imbalances (see Janks, 2010). Furthermore, the course sought to incorporate and build on

the relevant contemporary literacy practices of learners by incorporating hip-hop, comedy, and other new media texts as relevant resources towards antiracism work, hereby breaking with the analog practice of only having learners engage with traditional print texts. Jupp (2013a) refers to such pedagogical orientation as *synthetic teaching* – the practice of "explicitly considering students' cultures and background knowledges when designing lessons and assignments" (p. 24). A simultaneous advantage of such practice was that it allowed me – a white man teacher highly literate in he global cultures of heavy metal, yet substantially less literate in hip hop and R&B – the opportunity to further study the variegated cultures of my students and in the process to further develop and expand my race-visible professional identifications: "professional identifications developed over time that recognize race and other identities in ways that inform teaching and learning in classrooms across borders of difference" (Jupp, 2013a, p. 20; see pp. 31-53). Where print texts were deployed such would strategically center the embodied nature and affects of phenotype and identity, eventually leading to Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me* being selected as the central course reading. Overall, the course endeavored to locate incentive for participation in the professional development of future educators who require the ability to display intercultural competence in professional instructional and relational contexts increasingly characterized by diversity, yet often lacking in non-coerced modes of inclusion (see Boldt & Valente, 2016), equity, and social justice. Taken as a whole, I had planned the prescribed course syllabus and content to be as rigorous and comprehensive as possible, and I spent the better part of a year collecting an archive of over a hundred of the most appropriate online media resources that included comedy clips from stand-up and talk show performances, songs, research papers, and ideas for course reading books. However, as valuable as all my preparation had been, I – teacher – found myself traversing radically unfamiliar terrain at the onset of the course when the class of predominantly white learners I was anticipating turned out instead to include seven Black and Brown students, over forty percent of course participants; most seated near the front of the class. How was I, a white male teacher, to speak of racism to a substantial number of people

whose experiences of embodiment and phenotype were very different from my own? Would I be

found out to be insufficient to the task at hand bearing in mind that I had hitherto only

accumulated experience working with overwhelmingly homogenous Korean and white racial

groups of teacher trainees in the respective contexts of the Republic of Korea and the USA? In

addition to racial variability, the learners also proved to be particularly diverse in context to

gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion, and prior knowledge of antiracism perspectives.

Early on in the semester I came to the realization that such variability necessitated that I enter the

course focusing on the diversities of the learners as well as the ensuing unstable relational

positioning of learners to one another – and not the prescribed syllabus – as a productive set of

resources and means through which the curriculum could be contextualized as an agent in its own

capacity. Such an approach highlighted the need for unrelenting, daily negotiation among teacher,

learners, and curriculum: a pedagogy of collaboration.

In the data-driven subsections to follow, three examples of practical collaboration among

the relational triad of learner, teacher, and curriculum will be demonstrated. Of course, such

praxis put to paper should be read more as examples in line with the productive claim – in a

previous section – that *agentic potential comes to surface in fluid encounter*, rather than a

dogmatic prescription for how antiracism work ought to be conducted. In this sense, antiracism

work in education contexts is more a foundational openness toward constant disruption – the kind

of disruption in which different and often contesting forms of knowledge are allowed to enter into

dialog with one another in situ and relative to the ever-fluctuating context of the assemblage of

learners, teacher, and curriculum as thoroughly racialized beings already possessing variegated

embodied experiences, melancholic psychic attachments, and identities rooted in race. As such,

then, I will be drawing extensively on learner reflections of the experience and ensuing meaning

of the course so as to describe vital aspects of the course as a mode of practice predicated on

iterations of emergence that transcended the original syllabus. Here, the value of curricular

variability and flexibility will be underscored.

i) The paradox of vulnerability as safe space:

Azul, a young Black man, comments on the significance of discussion representative of diverse

racial, gender, and sexual orientation class perspectives as generative of meaningful emotional

experience when he comments:

> *I feel these emotions because we are able to discuss such issues in our class with people from many different backgrounds.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Azul's comment – one of many similar insights tendered in the data – demonstrates that classes in

which intersectional antiracism work is engaged stand to benefit immensely from encouraging

enrollment and participation from among students embodying a wide range of differences.

However, here it is important to note that the mere simultaneous presence of multiple differences

– in the vein of multicultural diversity and inclusion initiatives – is not in itself sufficient towards

enabling the kinds of multi-perspectival exchange referred to by Azul. Instead, such

intersubjective, co-constructed meaning within the class space can only arise when explicit

inclusion strategies centered on "engagement, compassion, community, and love" (Valente &

Boldt, 2015, p. 569) accompany approaches to inclusion. In other words, we require "a relational

understanding of inclusive classroom pedagogy" (Valente, 2015, p. 15) founded on the

recognition that "[i]f the problem has relational dimensions, then so should the solutions"

(Minow, 1990, p. 90 cited in Valente, 2015, p. 26). Valente goes on to describe one practical

manner through which he works to ground the class in such relational practice – an approach that

mirrors the discussion-centered avenue I encouraged throughout the semester-long class under

consideration:

> I organize the class so that the students are constantly engaging one another and are
>
> responsible to one another for their individual and collective learning. Rather than

lecturing, I set up the expectation that their group work will be driving their learning. I

move around the room to engage the small groups in discussions of course content to

establish and maintain rapport. (Valente, 2015, p. 27)

Here, group work and discussion holds the potential for the deployment of multiple formats and

strategies (see Gonzalez, 2015; Backer, 2016) that are able to mine the distributed intelligence

inherent in learner communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). Group work also helps to keep the

white man teacher in check in that it disrupts the inclination to "speak on every subject . . . not

ask questions . . . say things that evince a blind privilege" (Backer, 2016, p. 47) – all symptoms of

dysconscious habits of mind that reify instructional racism (Larke, Webb-Johnson, Rochon &

Anderson, 1999).

Of course, the risk for *groupthink* (Janis, 1991) to assert itself within group discussions

presents an ongoing challenge. One strategy I regularly employ in the attempt to unsettle

groupthink stasis is to circulate among groups, in a manner similar to that described above by

Valente, and tender provocative counterarguments and questions – often assuming the role of

devil's advocate (see Davis, 2013) and Agitator Identity (see Staples, 2010) – once groups appear

to have reached consensus. In this regard, as much as the spirit of discussion may be dialogic, the

means through which "complicated conversation" (Pinar, 2004, p. xiii) is encouraged and

facilitated often requires adjusted, open-ended dialectic strategies that instigate engagement with

difficult knowledge (Britzman, 1998, p. 133) lest we fall into a state of epistemic passivity that

Britzman (1998) refers to as a "woeful disregard of the work of conflict in learning" (p. 24). It is

important to bear in mind that beneath every form of consensus and agreement there potentially

lays a narcissism of minor differences (Freud, 1961), or "the problem of how individuals imagine

themselves as members of a particular collectivity" (Britzman, 1998, p. 98). As Britzman (1998)

highlights: "The tension is not so much that people join together as it is what must be done in the

name of the group distinction" (p. 97). Agreement and consensus then, apart from regularly

enacting a variety of in-group silences and occlusions, often also reify the exclusion, demonization, and oversimplification of alternative modes of thought, identity, and being.

Rusty, a young Black woman student, in turn, refers to the classroom in which we met twice a week as a personal *safe space*:

> *Out of my nearing 4 years of college I have never felt so close to a group of students in such a short period of time than in your class. I viewed that room as my safe space. Most days that I read or saw something that bothered me regarding race my instant reaction would be to want to talk about it . . . It was one of the most diverse classes I've been in regarding race and sexual orientation. I do feel as if that is why it was so easy to open up to. Everyone was vulnerable in some way.* (Written Course Reflection 3)

The idea of a class or classroom as *safe space* has been criticized as of late on the grounds that, among others, it both insulates students from learning to contend with real-life experiences and reifies new forms of multicultural prescription and censure (see Barrett, 2010; Pujol, 2016). Such perspectives tie in with the previous criticism of tolerance as often productive of regimes of oppression through the very demand for tolerance (Marcuse, 1965), as well as the idea of a *tyranny of the majority* whereby voices that dissent from dominant consensus come to be excluded and oppressed (Mill, 2002). Yet, I view such critiques of *safe space*, especially those tendered within the field of education, as being criticisms of misconceptions and misappropriations of the idea of *safe space*, rather than of the utility of *safe space* in and of itself. It is significant that Rusty – who in another chapter had witnessed to the personal experience of interracial violence – ties the idea of safe space to the highly diverse composition of the class: a factor that enabled a spirit of vulnerability accessible to all participants, and ultimately productive of shared intimacy within the class. In such an economy of vulnerability, the physical space of the classroom gains an anthropomorphic quality, as evidenced from Rusty's description, whereby the characteristics of human interaction are transferred upon the room itself as a material *safe space*. However, it is also important to note here that in the triadic economy of learner-teacher-curriculum, disperses the need for vulnerability across teacher and curriculum, too. The following

in-class exchange – in which young Black students Rusty and Azul participated – demonstrates

an instance of vulnerability on the part of the teacher. Here I briefly share around the significance

of painful life-experiences from childhood for better understanding the link between internalized

rage and the kinds of scapegoating practices (see Allport, 1958, pp. 330-333) that often underlie

racism:

> Pauli: *[Y]ou go to school, there's bullying and violence, you go home there's bullying and violence. And this is as a kid just growing up, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve years. And as a child it's possible to build up a lot of rage, a lot of resentment, a lot of anger but that rage has to go somewhere. And as we said, the other day, depression is what? Rage turned...?*
>
> Azul: *Inward.*
>
> Pauli: *Inward. And so, you can only sustain yourself so long by having the rage turned inward until it literally starts erupting. So, what do people usually do when it gets too much, when the rage inward gets too much?*
> Rusty: *Scapegoat.*
>
> Pauli: *Scapegoat, right. We externalize, we externalize the rage, we take it and we project it onto other people. And so, the only way I can make sense of my kind of descent into the abyss of bullshit is to say that I had actually gone and I had projected that rage, I had projected that onto a scapegoat . . . James Baldwin writes and I'm just going to paraphrase this, you've probably seen this at the end of my email, but he basically says that people cling to their hates quite stubbornly so that they don't have to deal with their pain.*
> (Recorded Classroom Session, Day 13)

Admittedly, I have always experienced anxiety when sharing personal anecdotes about myself

with the classes I teach. After all, there is always the risk that one's vulnerability as a teacher can

be ignored or misinterpreted. Vulnerability is "dependent upon the existence of the genuine

possibility of failing . . . connected to unpredictability in relationships" (Bullough, 2008, pp. 24-

25). Of course, such unpredictability – charged with complexity – characterizes the larger

relational process of teaching and learning, and has been extensively discussed by curriculum

theorists like Doll (1993), and Davis and Sumara (2006). However, creative potential also

accompanies such risk in that this emergent, unpredictable relational reality also enables

educational practices to be adapted in situ to real-life concerns and needs –"the creative

possibilities of the anomalous" (Valente & Boldt, 2015, p. 579). Ponders Silin (2018):

If, as I also believe, successful teaching is a relational practice in which students and

teachers join together spanning differences in a quest to explore their worlds, then its roots

are to be found in our first awareness of the distance between self and other. (p. 134)

Such distance between self and other – its paradoxical need to be simultaneously bridged and

maintained – comprises vulnerability as both risk and opportunity, and lies at the core of soulful

justice work as accomplice to the larger enterprise of social justice work in education. In this

regard, the relationship between teacher and students, and student and students, requires the

nurturing of an emotional social contract. Backer (2016) elaborates on this concept as follows:

Much of what participants say rationally during a discussion both belies and is grounded

upon an unconscious foundation of repressions, memories, and complexes. If you permit an

emotional contract these features of the self are welcomed" (p. 125).

Vulnerability then is a work of attempting to bridge the distance between self and other through

the mining of authenticity – that which otherwise would be left unsaid.

Rusty, a young Black woman, in her recollection of a meaningful course-based experience,

further demonstrates the relational value of the body for learning in antiracism work in education:

After the Terrance Crutcher shooting my friend posted on Facebook "If you are a Black person, tell another Black person in some way today that you care about them. Because we need our own empathy. Because this is what lasts. Because our moms don't deserve to have to speak of us in the past tense." The next day, without a request from anyone Pauli, you had us come in and hug the people next to us. You have no idea what that meant to me. You are the first teacher of mine to ever speak on the current events, and how messed up this world is, and I get that that comes along with the course but you show that you genuinely care about us, and our thoughts. You give us a safe place to express how we are feeling. And I appreciate that from the bottom of my heart. (Written Course Reflection 2)

Apart from once again referring to the class as a *safe space*, Rusty witnesses to the value of

relationally-affirming embodied affection for antiracism work in education. Her reflection

references the violent erasure of the Black body of motorist, Terence Crutcher, and the ensuing

need for empathy among Black people. However, what if such empathy can be shared among

Black, Brown, and white peoples? May such relational engagement constitute the precious first steps towards interracial solidarity grounded in the personal experience of political urgency? Here, Levinas' (1998) seminal claim that the *face* – or embodied proximity of self to other – holds potent ability stir up within us an empathic, dialogic, ethical vulnerability to the vulnerable other again becomes relevant.

Yet, what can be said regarding the need for curriculum to be vulnerable? Before briefly engaging this question, the following data excerpt tendered by Cerulean, a young white man, midway through the course needs to be elaborated:

> *I feel as if I come out of class feeling angry, without closure. We talk about problems a lot, but I wish we talked more about how to change them. A lot of times I feel helpless, like things are so socialized that there is nothing I can do. I want to know how I can change perspectives, especially through teaching in the future . . . I wish I had the tools to educate more people, but I don't know what to say.* (Cerulean, Written Course Reflection 2)

Cerulean's comment represents a larger shift in consciousness within the class arising from the openness of the course towards emotional exploration around the interlocking themes of racism and antiracism, and emerged as a general consensus within the class during the latter half of the semester. Here, the endorsement of emotional expression meant that students were also more prone towards expressing their feelings regarding the course. Originally, the curriculum had been set up in a manner that sought to largely underscore the need for engaging race and racism in education and society through an intersectional lens, contra post-racial ideology (see Goldberg, 2015). Consequently, class participants worked together in groups on assignments that included facilitating a weekly in-class student-fronted teaching and discussion around the primary theme for the week that was related to a particular aspect of racism, and inclusive of related multimedia resources and readings tendered by the students themselves. Towards the end of the course, the original syllabus also would require for students to undertake an interracial awareness dialog, or face-to-face recorded dialog with someone from another race in order to both learn about their

firsthand experiences, assumptions, and reflections. However, the diverse interracial composition

of the class meant that many students were daily sharing first hand accounts of their experiences

of racism and its deleterious consequences among one another so that this project – which had

originally been intended for a largely white group of anticipated course participants – became

redundant. This turn of events necessitated curricular vulnerability whereby the syllabus as solid

platform be reconfigured in order to remain relevant to the in situ needs and desires as expressed

by learners. After having the class generate numerous ideas for how we could go about generating

a class assignment that would align with the desire of students to become more confident,

assertive, and proactive in their social encounters with racism outside of the class, it was

eventually agreed upon by all class participants that a project be introduced whereby groups work

together to develop articulations and responses to various racially-charged *curveball* scenarios.

Here, *curveball* refers to the kinds of racially-charged strategies often used by interlocutors to

attempt to dismiss, neutralize, or counter the existence and persistence of racism in society. Often

such responses leave the hearer stumped, at a loss for words, and unable to respond during the

encounter. The class continued to list scenarios centered on statements and questions that they

had encountered before in interactions with family and peers. Later, groups selected and worked

together developing hypothetical responses to the sets of curveball statements, and presented their

formulations to the class:

Fig.5: Curveball Scenarios
Group 1: Why are there Black / Hispanic / Asian student unions but no white student unions [also apply to history months]? Why are Black people straitening their hair not considered cultural appropriation? How come black people can use the 'N' word but white people cannot?
Group 2: Why do Black lives matter, but not blue / all lives? What about Black-on-Black crime? Besides Black people commit more crimes than white people.
Group 3: Slavery ended a long time ago. Why can't people of color just get out of poverty? We always hear about the legacy of slavery but what about poor whites?
Group 4: Muslims are terrorists. America is a nation founded on Christian principles.
Group 5: Why do women protest rape but still wear 'sexy' clothing? Besides, boys will be boys.

This student-generated aspect of curriculum, that in many ways was a condensed form of Youth Participatory Action Research (Cammarota & Fine, 2008; see Tanner, 2014) whereby young people "learn how to study problems and find solutions to them" (Cammarota & Fine, 2008, p. 6), in effect placed the vulnerable curriculum under the proverbial surgeon's blade – the outcome of the procedure left wide open and emergent. *Chaos as creative destruction.* Raven, a young Black woman, goes on to describe a positive outcome of this curricular shift:

> *Throughout this semester, I have not been challenged in my views, but I have started to think and develop upon my views more thoroughly. When I say this I mean that coming in I didn't really speak up or take a firm stance one way or another on such matters, but I have been forced to ponder over my thoughts and am now able to speak my positions clearly and firmly.* (Written Course Reflection, 3)

Raven's sentiments are echoed by Clementine, a young white women, who writes:

I feel like I am much more equipped with vocabulary and a way to word what I am trying to say. It's amazing how knowledge is truly power, because I feel much more prepared and comfortable talking to someone about race. (Written Course Reflection, 3)

Evident in Raven and Clementine's accounts is a greater sense of autonomy in being able to *live out* antiracism curriculum – a likely consequence of their taking ownership, along with the rest of the class, of the curriculum and their ensuing learning and growth. Rödl (2016) cites Bakhurst's (2011) claim that "the end of education is autonomy . . . the power to do and think in the light of what there is reason to do and think" (p. 84) whereby the learner "grows into its own form" (p. 96). This claim, read alongside the two preceding data excerpts and Foucault's (1976) central dictum that "power and knowledge directly imply one another" (p.27), demonstrates the value of dispersing curricular control among the co-triadic agents of learner and teacher.

ii) The value of the body for learning:

In her intriguing study of teaching multicultural education and intimacy through learning to zydeco dance, Jewett (2008) claims that embodiment – "the imprints and manifestations of power, ideology, and socialization on our very bodies" (Berila, 2016, p. 36) – is the existential basis "for making knowing possible" (p. 3). While this premise was explored in the initial spring section discussion of how raced subjectivity comes to emerge through embodied encounter, in this current spring section that aims to center the value of the body for intersectionally-grounded antiracism work I wish to reinforce the idea that "embodiment is constitutive and not merely representative" (Jewett, 2008, p. 3). Jewett (2008) continues:

> [I]t is hard to think the body. The temptation is to leave the personal, highly localized topography of bone and flesh and flee quickly toward analysis of the social body . . . Yet the body is not a blank slate upon which social knowledge is written . . . As Strathern [2004] suggests, "the body is not an object that takes on cultural form but is, in fact, the subject of culture, its 'existential ground'"" (p. 41).

To this end, the body in antiracism work becomes a locale where knowledge can both be transformed and circulated. The body is a site of knowledge; an epistemological site (Berila, 2016, pp. 39-41).

I tender the value of the body for antiracism work in education since the wellbeing of the psyche and ensuing experience of emotional life largely hinge on the condition and exposure of the body as a topography of knowledge accumulation and production. Consequently, our curricular investments suffer from a profound lack of depth and grasp of reality when these fail to engage with the body as a co-constitutive component of knowledge – and *being*. Curriculum theorist Deborah Britzman's (1998) provocative question, "What would a curriculum be like if the curriculum began with the problem of living a life?" (p. 49), therefore needs to be foregrounded in relation to all antiracism curricular endeavor, especially bearing in mind that life is experienced, learned, and lived through our bodies. Such claim follows on from Schubert's (1994) claim that "What is fundamentally curricular and what is fundamentally human are the same fabric" (p. 26). Any compromise on this principle risks reducing curriculum and instruction to the doldrums of institutionalized irrelevance.

Incorporating Ta-Nehisi Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me* as the central course reading was an explicit decision on my part to center the body as foundation for our engagements with race, racism, and antiracism work within the class. Coates' descriptions of racism, for one, and filled with frequent, powerful allusions to the body. For instance, in describing the murder of his friend, an innocent motorist, Prince Jones, by law en*force*ment, Coates (2015) provides the following acerbic, materially-constituted description:

> Think of all the embraces, all the private jokes, customs, greetings, names, dreams all the
> shared knowledge and capacity of a black family injected into that vessel of flesh and bone.
> And think of how that vessel was taken, shattered on the concrete, and all its holy contents,
> all that had gone into him, sent flowing back to the earth. (pp. 81-82)

Then, reflecting on his latter visit with Prince Jones' mother, Coates (2015) relays an account of her words to him that testify to the painful effects of her memory of her son, Prince Jones, lingering throughout her body:

> It was unlike anything I had felt before . . . It was extremely physically painful. So much so that whenever a thought of him would come to mind, all I could do was pray and ask for mercy. I thought I was going to lose my mind and go crazy. I felt sick. I felt like I was dying. (p. 144)

The body holds profound literate power in that it is both able to be read and to speak. The Black body of Prince Jones was read, as threat, while the body of his bereaved Black mother continued to speak the visceral ruptures of pain. Emerald – a young Black woman – reflects on the particular significance of her engagement with Coates' (2015) *Between the World and Me* as follows:

> *"Between the World and Me" has also been useful because it offers a space for me to read about racism, as a black person. This may seem odd, but it is common, as I feel that I disconnect from my blackness when reading about racism. In order to hold the weight of the words of abuse, systematic oppression, and aggression, I have to read from a more objective, observant standpoint. I cannot do that while reading "Between the World and Me". The black body is discussed so much and through such an emotional and personal lens, that is impossible for me to not relate to his experiences. I feel like I'm having a conversation with him, about being black. And that helps me to think deeper in how I am impacted by racism. It is so easy to think of systematic impacts, but Coates motivates me to think of my own life. How does it feel for me to live inside of a black body? How can I find freedom in this world of oppression? This pushes me to consider how I currently navigate the world as a black woman.* (Written Course Reflection 2)

Emerald's claim that *It is so easy to think of systematic impacts, but Coates motivates me to think of my own life* highlights the shift from strictly contending with the macro effects of racism – as much outwardly-focused curricular content often does – to engaging with the body as locus of personal racial experience and struggle. Significantly, Emerald's reflection also bears witness to the need for incorporating curricular texts and resources that carry narratives of the embodied

experiences of Black and Brown people, and here the metaphor *mirrors, windows, and doors*

(Botelho & Kabakow Rudman, 2009) becomes relevant. Such texts and resources are able to

serve as *windows and doors* in the education of white students regarding the persistent,

personally-experienced visceral realities of racism by Black and Brown people, but also as

mirrors upon which Black and Brown students are able to recognize and engage with those

material histories and experiences that co-constitute their identities.

Yet, what can we say regarding the significance of the bodies of students as co-constitutive

of curriculum? Xanthos – a young white man – reflects on the value of incorporating the bodies

of students into instructional practices in antiracism work in education:

> *This class has changed my views on race, class, and gender in a variety of ways. I think one*
> *of the most compelling lessons we did was the lesson on intersectionality at Old Main. I*
> *never really considered how race, gender, and class all are related whether we see it or*
> *not. I had never considered the correlations among the three, but the activity showed me*
> *how being a different race, gender, and/or class affects my "rank" in society. It also made*
> *me feel bad for those who are affected greatly by intersectionality. I think I was a Muslim*
> *male that lived in an urban area. Seeing how I would rank compared to a white male in an*
> *urban area (with which I would technically identify) is sad. I think that activity was able to*
> *take me out of my "white privilege" mindset and see how other people are seen in society*
> *and how the "other" might feel.* (Written Course Reflection 3)

Here, Xanthos is referring to an embodied activity I developed for the course. I named this

activity *Power Grid*. Having employed the *Privilege Walk* activity in previous classes, whereby

learners take a step forwards or backwards relative to a barrage of questions that are meant to

ultimately position learners relative to their privilege, I noticed a number of problems with this

activity. First, because the *Privilege Walk* requires learners to respond to an set of broad questions

relative to their experiences in life, some learners are often hesitant to honestly react to questions

since ending up positioned right at the front [supposedly very privileged] or back [supposedly

underprivileged] of the Privilege Walk holds its own potential for shame. Second, the arbitrary

nature of questions means that patterns of privilege following the activity often do not represent

the variegated demographic realities of society. For instance, during the last time I employed the

Privilege Walk as a class activity back in 2015, the only Black girl in the class of otherwise white

students ended up positioned first and right at the front [supposedly very privileged] of the walk.

How does a teacher debrief *that*? Apart from the fact that this misalignment could now be held by

some white participants as proof that *being poor white equals Black and Brown historical*

marginalization, the Privilege Walk as a whole clearly does not yield either validity or reliability

of the social stratifications it attempts to measure and represent. Third, the Privilege Walk

ultimately only concerns itself with privilege, or advantage. Yet, engaging with privilege relative

to positioning alone only works to reify the seemingly overbearing appearance that forms of

social disparity and marginalization predicated on race, gender, class, and ability – as examples –

are hopelessly predetermined and locked. Besides, merely recognizing one's privilege still largely

leaves unchallenged the means through which said forms of social disparity and marginalization

predicated on race, gender, class, and ability – as examples – are continuously reproduced (see

Lensmire, McManimon, Tierney, Lee-Nichols, Casey, Lensmire & Davis, 2013). In context to

race this necessitates a move beyond only engaging with white privilege towards explicitly

engaging with white supremacy: power.

The Power Grid activity works to add the triadic dimension of power to our grappling with

privilege and positioning, and is especially useful for building greater awareness of the

intersectional complexities informing racialized experience and identity. Leading up to the

activity, our class invested significant time in exploring a number of intersectional themes as

these relate to race and racism. For instance, readings from bell hooks' (1992) *Black Looks: Race*

and Representation and Kimberlé Crenshaw's (Crenshaw, Ritchie, Anspach, Gilmer & Harris,

2015) *Say Her Name: Resisting Police Brutality against Black Women* helped to raise awareness

of the compounded forms of physical and emotional violence to which Black and Brown girls and

women are subjected on account of their combined racial and gendered phenotypes and identities;

Diamond and Bainbridge's (Bainbridge, Din, Fon & Ludwick, et al., 2010) film *Reel Injun*

encouraged reflection upon the stereotyping and marginalization of indigenous peoples of North America, and Martin Luther King Jnr.'s (see mipdo, 2014) speech at the Montgomery State Capitol after the March from Selma to Montgomery worked to highlight the complex historical interplay between race, racism, and social class. In my experience doing classroom work around matters of identity, the traditional formula of activity followed by debrief often requires significant pre-activity exploration of themes to be engaged during the activity in order to ensure that learners are able to engage the activity with sufficient clarity and depth.

Prior to the activity I developed a number of identity configurations – such as Black educated homosexual, rural Muslim woman wearing hijab, and white Christian man – that would be used during the grid exercise. During class, learners worked to generate their own ideas for identity configurations. Once there was a sufficient amount of configurations for each participant, these were randomly divided among participants on a one-per-person basis. We then headed out as a class onto a sprawling campus lawn adjacent to the main university building. With leaves on the ground a crisp yellow and brown, and the dry perfume of the gentle autumn breeze running across our bodies, we spread ourselves out in a random assemblage. Learners were reminded that they were to take a few moments to imagine themselves into the intersectional persona they were to become for the exercise. Later, once learners expressed that they were ready to begin the exercise I instructed them to describe – and embellish, as needed – their persona to those standing in general proximity to them. Once learners were acquainted with the various identity personas present, they were encouraged to engage in negotiation and dialog with those around them in order to arrange themselves relative to the two axes that had been demarcated beforehand. The catch here is that every time learners would position themselves on the grid, they would encounter new personas in the process of positioning so that the negotiation and dialog was ongoing. In this regard, learners were granted the opportunity to repeatedly consider the relationship of their identity relative to multiple other identity personas. Once the process appeared to be saturated and learners expressed confidence that their positioning on the grid was

most tenable relative to their arrangement alongside other identity personas, individuals – still standing – were encouraged to share around their identity personas, and to justify how their identity personas related to other identity personas in immediate proximity to themselves. Here, clear identity striations became evident in the way the grid had structured itself. Significantly, the grid took on a clear triangular hierarchical form that clearly demonstrated how accrued advantages [privilege / past] and opportunity relative to dominant norms [power / future]. Rather than utilizing the sole forwards-backwards linear movement of individuals that characterizes the Privilege Walk, the Power Grid activity encourages participants to interact among one another across two intersecting linear axes. The vertical axis draws attention to the historical domain that enables *privilege* on a continuum that ranges from highly privileged to highly underprivileged. Here, participants are required to engage with the divergent historical realities that accompany their respective identity personas. The horizontal axis, in turn, centers the future domain that enables *power* on a continuum that ranges from supremacy to marginalization, and here participants engage with those disparities of opportunity to exercise personal and social influence that characterize their respective identity personas. Deliberation across the grid of two complimentary axes ultimately results in identity personas assuming positions representative of the *present* relative to those *past* privilege and *future* power constitutive elements. This triadic engagement with *positioning*, *power*, and *privilege* allows for greater grasp of the ongoing, historically-informed nature of how racism operates across intersectional lines, and may be implicated in the subsequent marginalization of peoples in the present. Additionally, unlike the Privilege Walk that leaves some participants with little more than a realization of *Okay, so I'm privileged!* (see McIntosh, 1988) and others with a morbid reminder of their marginalization, the Power Grid – by very account of its engagement with the domain of power which is diffuse and open-ended (see Foucault, 1976) – allows for an added layer of activity that draws attention to the pliable nature of identity positioning. Here, once activity participants have unpacked the social significance of the their respective identity persona positions through debrief, participants can be

encouraged to suggest action-oriented changes to policy and practice that would enable their identity personas to move up the continuum of power. This latter exercise – largely inspired by US political philosopher John Rawls' (1971) thought experiment of the *veil of ignorance* whereby social subjects envision restorative, equitable social practices from the hypothetical vantage point of their marginalized positioning – aids in deconstructing the determinist impression that socially disadvantaged subjects are hopelessly locked into marginalized positions. Of course, there are multiple other means towards incorporating the body as vital co-constituent of curriculum and instruction. For instance, in class we regularly started sessions with a brief interoception exercise whereby learners and teacher become silent in order to better sense their "breathing, digestion, hunger, arousal, pain, emotion, fatigue, and the like" (Berila, 2016, p. 44).

The pedagogy-focused discussion in this section has sought to highlight the need for explicit engagement with emotion and body in antiracism work in education since – as demonstrated in previous data sections – learners and teacher come to class with already intact racialized psychic and identity experiences and investments that comprise their embodied and emotional constitution. Of course, there is always more work to be done when it comes to antiracism as educational enterprise. Xanthos, the young white man who demonstrates clear shift in sociopolitical consciousness in the preceding data excerpt, goes on to remark in a manner contrarian to the central objectives of the course:

> *Maybe if we look past the color of each other's skin, then we could move forward to better things.* (Written Course Reflection 3)

Clearly, the dominant thrust of the class was to raise awareness of the dire need to notice skin color so that future educators can engage in restorative, equitable practices, and in this regard I was left uncertain as to whether or not the class had been successful. However, rather than considering this apparent manifestation of stasis an indictment of the effectiveness of the course, we can instead draw heart from Marx's (Marx & Engels, [1848] 2014) observation that revolutions – here implying the internal revolution of coming to greater antiracism awareness –

are for the most part gradual and incremental processes. *Spring, the season of sowing, will surely come again.*

In the concluding chapter we will travel from the localized setting of a US university class to the alpine highlands of Andean Ecuador. Such a move is necessitated in order to demonstrate the values of embodied dislocation and concomitant psychic dissonance for antiracism work and, by extension, other forms of anti-oppressive endeavor, as well as the added benefit of comparative international experiences as significant resources for antiracism learning and pedagogy. Here, limitations of this study are described in conjunction with a discussion of the creative implications and brief synopsis of this work.

Chapter 5

Omega: Expanding Antiracism Work

Home would find us in any language. (Coates, 2005, p. 129)

The following chapter takes up the case for uncovering the prevailing limitation of the study so far, a gaping hole, namely, that this dissertation has largely relied on an oversimplified, localized Black-white binary without adequately incorporating and accounting for other racial differences of both phenotype and identity. This is a notable omission bearing in mind that contemporary forms of racism in the US are increasingly characterized by antagonistic racializing practices that mark Brown people as threat (see Considine, 2017; Strom & Alcock, 2017), a reality hitherto only briefly discussed in this study: the Brown immigrant; the Latin@; the Muslim. Of course, such tendential social practices recount the *yellow peril* (Kim, 2007; see Cheng, 2001) racialization of the Asian *other* as scourge and threat, as well as the extermination and disposition (see Onion & Saunt, 2014) of indigenous populations. And, yet, the ongoing racialization of Brown others is not merely restricted to the USA – it is a thoroughly global phenomenon further especially complicated by numerous nativist reactions to substantial migratory flows borne of material and economic necessity. In promulgating a reductive Black-white binary, antiracism work can therefore inadvertently operate to obscure and distort the experiences and struggles of Brown peoples with racism and skin-based oppressions. Ignorance of the racialized experiences of Brown peoples also cloaks the cultural means through which particular Brown peoples are granted honorary status and opportunity for absorption into whiteness (see Roediger, 1994; Ignatiev, 1995; Brodkin, 1998; Anagnostou, 2013), and often so through violent, self-validating racialized performance practices that target peripheral others situated further from the power center of whiteness (see Gauthreaux, 2010).

Yet, before further elaborating on the localized, binary-based limitations of this study and the potential that these hold for extended race and racism-based exploration and research in

future, it is necessary to tender an indictment of a notable curious absence – the proverbial

elephant in the room that is conspicuously *present* precisely because it was anticipated but instead

is absent. Bearing in mind that race and racism are thoroughly global phenomena that proliferate

multiple localized contexts, why do discussions of race and racism not feature in the field of

Comparative and International Education? This question is pertinent since the study of race and

racism in multiple global contexts is bound to be both comparative and international in nature. Of

course, the problem with contemporary Comparative and International Education [CIED]

research is that it still largely leaves complex social realities tied up within the categorical

straightjackets of nation-states and so does not sufficiently engage with fluid embodied and

cultural flows that transcend national borders. This observation holds especially true for CIED

research – or profound lack thereof – of race and racism. A keyword search [as of April 1, 2018]

of the entire back catalog of *Comparative Education Review* [CER], a preeminent journal in the

field since 1957, for instance, yields few viable results when a term like *race* and its derivate

forms *racism*, *racial*, *antiracist* and *antiracism* are entered. A search of the term *race*, as

example, yields eight hundred results, yet many of these constitute either book reviews [260

times] or subsidiary materials [101 times]. Additionally, a number of research papers mention

race [439 times] yet either only as a word that is given glib attention and otherwise left under-

theorized or as a secondary – not primary – focus of discussion and analysis. Furthermore, in

most of the instances where the word *race* occurs it is deployed as a noun denoting competition.

Of the few studies that indeed engage with *race* on a more thorough basis, the overwhelming

majority of them do so within exclusively localized international contexts where comparison is

conspicuously absent – bar a few notable exceptions such as special issue 47[1] (see Freeman,

2003; Siddle Walker & Nesta Archung, 2003) that places the educational experiences of Black

populations around the Globe in conversation with one another, as well as an otherwise sprinkling

of book individual chapters (see Strabhaar, 2016). And while a number of papers in CER deal

with themes broadly-related to *race* like ethnicity (Singleton, 1977), indigenous concerns and

education (see Hickling-Hudson & Ahlquist, 2003), postcolonial thought (see Takayama,

Sriprakash & Connell, 2016), and decolonizing pedagogy (see Tom, Suárez-Krabbe & Caballero

Castro, 2017), suffice it to state that *race* in-and-of itself is a material and cultural reality that,

having colored past and present social contexts around the Globe, requires specific attention.

Race as a set of intra- and inter-cultural practices predicated on spectra of embodied phenotypes –

while often related to ethnicity, colonialism, and indigeneity – is not a synonym for ethnicity,

colonialism, and indigeneity, and neither do any of these broad terms adequately serve as a form

of metonymy broad enough to fully encompass the full depth and complexity of *race*. After all,

ethnicity is largely determined by cultural distinction and may not factor *race* at all – think here

of the cultural distinction between Catalan and Spanish who are racially indistinguishable.

Likewise, colonialism and indigeneity do not necessarily imply domination predicated on racial

difference as demonstrated by the Mongol-Sino Yuan Dynasty and its eight-decade long colonial

occupation of the Korean kingdom of Goryeo during the Twelfth Century. Race, as much as it is

often implicated alongside other categories of the social, requires explicit treatment precisely on

the grounds that its kinship to the violence and brutalities of racism is a truly global phenomenon

that – while demonstrating manifold cultural iterations and localized idiosyncrasies – is read

across the body. In correspondence with a former editor of *Comparative Education Review*

[CER], Dr. David Post, I questioned the conspicuous absence of thorough, explicit engagements

with race and racism in the journal since it's inception by the Comparative and International

Education Society six decades ago. Dr. Post briefly responded and noted: "There is also the fact

that the foundations of the field were laid when national development was the main business, and

when ethnicity was seen as an unfortunate distraction" (Email correspondence, 2/12/2018). While

Dr. Post substitutes the term *ethnicity* in place of the term *race* that I initiated in my original

question, it is especially important to note his admission that confirms my own hitherto

perception: that the field of comparative and international education has largely come to be

known as a platform for post-positivist neoliberal discourses of development centered on

competing nation-states: a covert neoliberal colonizing enterprise. Additionally, it needs to be noted that post-positivist approaches littering the field of CIED that emphasize objectivity, truth, and the demarcation of variegated manifestations of social life into neat and tidy statistical categories are not adequate towards engaging with the complex, messy work of studying of race and racism. For instance, *Asian-American* – while being a useful "practical category" (see Brubaker, 2002, p. 197) that enables broad discussion and even political solidarity (see Chen, Chin, Hao, Kamisugi, et al., 2009) predicated on a very broad shared spectrum of phenotypic traits and ethnic alliances – is not a stable, objective sociological category in itself since ethnic variations among *Asian-Americans* such as Burmese, Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Korean, Laotian, and Vietnamese, as examples, demonstrate significant variability relative to income and socioeconomic status, education, and cultural values and practices (see López, Ruiz & Patten, 2017). Hence, broad racial categories coalesce at times and fall apart at others lending them unsuitable for rigid objective categorization. Likewise, while the systemic trajectories of racism can be studied fairly objectively (see Frankenberg, 2013), the psychic and identity-based affects and dynamics through which racial subjectivity arises and deploys itself is a highly subjective phenomenon that manifests much instability and contradiction. Perhaps this instability and messiness may be speculated as plausible reason for why the field of CIED has manifested such a curious dearth until now of research into race and racism. Consequently, the field of CIED is ripe for multi-sited ethnographic enquiry that grapples with race and racism in their multiple, fluid, evolving manifestations within interdependent and dialogic local and global contexts, and in this regard accords with Rust, Johnstone & Allaf's (2009) call for comparative and international education "that advances humanity instead of modernity" (p. 134). One can only marvel at the endless stream of possibilities that could be set free if, for instance, Spradley's (1979) rather accessible *discovery principles in the study of meaning* (pp. 155-160) are applied to a multi-sited global ethnographic research of race and racism. Such adaptive shift in focus certainly is not a stretch bearing in mind the insight of globalization – also in its relation to education (Spring,

2008) – as not only an economic process but especially a cultural process already inserted by existent post-structural (Ninnes & Burnett, 2003), post-colonial and postmodern contributions to the field (Hayhoe & Mundy, 2008, pp. 18-19).

Therefore, while this study has thus far concentrated on race and racism within a particular localized context, future research would benefit from a more thorough treatment of racism as geographically and socially fluid and multi-sited (Marcus, 1995). By implication this also means that antiracism pedagogy and curricular engagement – previously discussed in the data section of this study – would benefit from added geographic and social multi-sited exposure. In this regard, it is therefore necessary to tender a related conceptual provocation: In an increasingly globalized world characterized by contact and cultural exchange among multiple local societies, effective antiracism work requires an expanded *glocal* approach. Approaches exclusively locked in local contexts provide temporary, limited perspective. The term *glocalization*, first popularized by Roland Robertson (Featherstone, Lash & Robertson, 1995), draws attention to "the extent to which what is called local is in large degree constructed on a trans- or super-local basis" (p. 26) so that we can distinguish the local in the global and the global in the local (p. 32). In tandem with brief discussions in previous chapters – the Slinky as metaphor for the dynamic inter/national operation and reproduction of whiteness and white supremacy as well as the discussion of persistent legacies of colonialism in the African contexts of Zimbabwe and South Africa – racism may appear to be a localized phenomenon, yet its roots are rhizomatically entangled across the contemporary sphere of nation-state borders. This reality was a major finding of my extensive MA research (Badenhorst, 2012) conducted among thirty-three elementary and secondary school Korean teachers of English. Findings indicated that while racial dynamics in the Republic of Korea were coded with locally-specific cultural and national sentiments, perceptions of racial value and hierarchy were in fact largely internalized through socialization into US media stereotypes that often framed English – highly regarded as the

aspirational language of modernization and prestige – as a white US middle and upper social class cultural asset. Here, users of varieties of English accent performance regarded as non-white were often discriminated against in both public and professional settings, and the English of non-white foreign English teachers working in the Republic of Korea was often considered to be inferior, even if there was no difference in the accented topography and lexicogrammatical quality of their language use. For instance, Sahota (2008), a Canadian citizen of Punjabi descent and of notably darker phenotype, in a separate study testifies to the following experience while applying for an English teaching job in the Republic of Korea:

> Professor Oh asked me where I was from. I was startled at his question at first, because on my resume it clearly said that I was from Canada . . . I told Oh that I was from Toronto, Canada . . . I knew Oh was trying to get at my ethnicity. I'm sure in his eyes he questioned me as a NEST. Having been denied jobs in the past due to my lack of having that all important teaching quality – white skin – I made the decision to hide my true background. I did not tell Oh that my parents were from India, or that I was a first generation British immigrant, or that I spoke a language other than English. I told him I was born in Canada, my parents were born in Canada, and my grandparents were born in Canada. He felt satisfied with that answer, and I felt ashamed and disgusted with myself for lying about who I was. (p. 46; see Badenhorst, 2012, p. 13)

Sahota was eventually denied the job.

The psychic connotations, identity assumptions, and cultural values that inform racism in localized spaces, like the Republic of Korea, are never independent and do not spontaneously emerge *ex nihilo*. Such prejudices are often cross-pollinated and borrowed among localized contexts across the Globe. While colonial conquest, enslavement, and exploitation (see Lipsitz, 1998) can be implicated in the pervasive presence and perpetuation of racial prejudice, it needs to be noted that contemporary cultural exchanges within globalization are themselves also largely

racially constituted (Kane, 2007). The historical and contemporary combine to form an interrelated dominant nexus of whiteness that has spanned the Globe from Argentina (Bastia & Vom Hau, 2013) to Zimbabwe (Rifkin, 1968), and of which the effects continue to linger in iterative degrees. Of course, while "globalization is inclined to produce pressure for convergence, its outcomes are mediated by local categories" (Park, Jang & Lee, 2007, p. 349). Consequently, study of the globalized ascendancy of white supremacy, whiteness, and racism has much to gain from bringing localized contexts into dialog with one another. As Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2002) has argued, and rather convincingly I tender, one cannot adequately understand the historical profile and contemporary stratification processes of race in the USA without taking into account the racialization processes of Latin America. When read alongside Mignolo's (2005) larger claim that the West itself has been co-constructed by Latin America, Bonilla-Silva's argument gains particular gravity.

Bonilla-Silva's (2002) insight – that one cannot adequately grasp the historical profile and contemporary stratification processes of race in the USA without taking into account the racialization processes of Latin America – is of profound significance to the limitations being addressed in this section. Bonilla-Silva identifies the emergence of a tri-racial racial stratum in the place of the previously white/non-white one-drop-rule determined binary that has often manifested as an oversimplified white/Black dichotomy. Writes Bonilla-Silva (2002):

> The rapid darkening of America is creating a situation similar to that of many Latin American and Caribbean nations where the White elites realized their countries were becoming "Black" or "Indian" and devised a number of strategies to whiten their population and maintaining White power. Although whitening the population through immigration or by classifying many newcomers as White is a possible solution to the new American demography, a more plausible accommodation to the new racial reality, and one that would still help maintain "White supremacy", is to (1) create an intermediate racial

group to buffer racial conflict, (2) allow some newcomers into the White racial strata, and

(3) incorporate most immigrants into the collective Black strata. (p. 5)

Bearing in mind the tumultuous circumstances and rhetoric surrounding the 2016 US presidential

election and its aftermath it is clear that especially Latin@s and Muslims – a relatively new

racialized category reinforced in a post-9/11 world (Selod & Embrick, 2013) – find themselves in

the in-between, often precarious position of not-*yet*-White yet not Black either. The racial

experiences and identity practices of these *in-betweeners*, who already constitute authentic racial

subject positions by way of their incompatibility with the white-Black binary and who are

forecast to substantially contribute towards a white minority by 2045 (Frey, 2018), therefore

deserve recognition and closer analysis. This claim is especially warranted on the grounds that

data suggests increasing numbers of Latin@s self-identifying as white (Cohn, 2014; see Hugo

Lopez, Gonzalez-Barrera & López, 2017) – a racial tendency reflected in practices that have

historically marked Latin America, though such trend is admittedly slowly on the decline across

South America as of late (Telles & Flores, 2013). Such claim is also further necessitated by an

observation that the middle buffer in Bonilla-Silva's (2002) tri-racial structure is – according to

Bonilla-Silva's reckoning – strategically allowed to emerge in order to manage and maintain

estrangement between the two polar racial binaries:

<div align="center">

white

[*between*]

Black

</div>

In other words, white supremacy is cushioned by the existence of an in-between racial buffer that

can be marked as the very *threat* necessary to justify and sustain practices of exclusion and

domination [without incurring more traditional accusations of racism] while also ensuring the

ongoing stability of white supremacist racial hierarchy. In the process, interracial conflict can also

be greatly reduced as more races participate in the multiracial *melting pot*. Of course, the problem

with this metaphor is that in a melting pot the *white* froth inevitably always rises while everything else is left to accumulate towards the bottom. At the level of higher education, the racial experiences and identity practices of *in-betweener* racial subjectivities is also necessitated by the reality that total international student enrollment currently surpasses one million in US higher education institutions – a number that is forecast to continue rising (see Project Atlas, 2016). All this said, there is ultimately no surefire way to account for how globally-dependent racial dynamics will play out within the local US context in the ensuing decades. If we are to attribute value to Bonilla-Silva's (2002) summation of studying racial dynamics currently unfolding within the US context alongside the numerous historical racialized trajectories of Latin America we also need to contend with South American occurrences and possibilities that further add complexity to how people may racially identify in future. For instance, people participating in the 1976 national census in Brazil previously self-identified in one-hundred-and-thirty-five categories of race and color once the traditional prescribed four categories of racial classification – white, black, yellow [Asian], and mixed – had been suspended and left open-ended on the survey (Dos Santos & Anya, 2006, p. 35). Again, the possibility of such added layer of complexity necessitates deeper engagement with race as a non-binary social reality.

Drawing on such insights – the need for research engagement with race and racism that accounts for their multi-sited and plural manifestations – the question now needs to be posed how such expanded focus can work to inform antiracism and other emancipatory work in education. This question is simultaneously posed as a call to action that seeks to move beyond the scope of this present dissertation study relative to its limitations previously tendered. Furthermore, this question can be granted additional clarity by rephrasing it as a future consideration for research into race and racism in education as follows: How can comparative and international approaches and perspectives be applied beyond the academic realm of research to become a bone fide form of pedagogy, and especially so a form of practical pedagogical enquiry into race and racism? Here,

it needs to be noted that, once again, CIED's engagement with the practicalities of pedagogy has been especially deficient, too, bar a few exceptions (see Mundy, Bickmore, Hayhoe, Madden & Madjiji, 2008; Kubow & Blosser, 2016). Such dearth of literature notwithstanding, in order to illustrate the vibrant potential inherent in comparative and international education as constituent of pedagogy, I tender the example of an intensive immersion-abroad program for US students in Ecuador, a location that accords with Bonilla-Silva (2002) earlier call for explicit cross-cutting engagement between the US and Latin America. In the narrative (see Kim, 2016) exemplar that follows we encounter Plum – a composite voice of five white US students enrolled in an immersion-abroad TESOL program for both in-service and in-training English language teachers who will in all likelihood be working with racially and ethnically diverse learners at some point in future. This composite voice – which was compiled using recorded ethnographic interviews (see Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland & Lofland, 2001; Jones, Holmes, Macrae & Maclure, 2010) conducted both towards the end [in Ecuador] and after [in the USA] the immersion experience – carries the witness of these students' experiences of race and racism in comparative international contexts, and demonstrates iterative degrees of shift in sociopolitical consciousness (see Kirshner, Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2015; Sánchez Carmen, Domínguez, Greene, Mendoza, Fine, Neville & Gutiérrez, 2015; Watts & Hipolito-Delgado, 2015). It is important to note at this time that this program is separate from the class I taught in the fall of 2016, and the data here represented was collected through a set of two individual ethnographic interviews – during and post the immersion experience – conducted over a one-and-a-half year period extending from July 2015 to March 2017. As such, data excerpts representing the experiences of the participating group of pre- and in-service teachers are here deployed as a mosaic towards deeper valuation of the productive potential of a dislocative pedagogy of place and its significance for educational engagements with race and racism. During the Ecuador program, students complete their required academic work and credits during the spring and summer, and also travel to Ecuador for six weeks during the summer. Here, they participate in lengthy homestays with Ecuadorian families;

take beginner or intermediate language classes in either Spanish or Kichwa; take classes in second language teaching theory and practice; partner with Ecuadorian university students, and share in rigorous forms of critical intercultural exchange; participate in Charlas – or focused conversations – and travel throughout the country in order to meet and learn from indigenous scholars and activists, as well learn about as ecology and sustainability which often carry along with them indigenous practices and concerns. Importantly, the Ecuador immersion experience actively works to disrupt the problematic white gaze that often emerges when white students travel abroad on international study programs. It attempts to do so through the deployment of constant, unrelenting guided reflective decolonizing practices (see Gorski, 2008) that are meant to decenter, among others, notions of white normativity and saviorhood; drawing program participants into ongoing focused analysis regarding racial, cultural, and pedagogical practices and ideologies across both Ecuador and the US; frequent interactions with indigenous peoples and worldviews, as well as facilitating the forging of deep, long-lasting relationships across racial and cultural lines. In the composite narrative that follows, Plum – a composite white agent – reflects on her experience of sociopolitical shift related to race and racism, and relative to her exposure to the manifold comparative and international pedagogical components that comprise the intensive immersion program:

> *We are a very white community. In my high school I probably had two black people and, like, one Asian person, and that was it. It was majority white. And we were also very majority Christian. We have a lot of churches in our town. And they're basically, like, Baptist, Presbyterian, Catholic, like, those sorts of things. So there's not a really lot of diversity when it comes to religion, either. I've always just considered myself to be a white person. Just because my family is all European. We come from every European country imaginable. Uhm, but I never really thought of what my race or culture or ethnicity was but I tried to figure that out through the Ecuador experience, for instance, back when we were in Ecuador, the things that happened with the mestizo and the indigenous people. For example, we were at a, I guess in a club or like a bar. The owner was mestizo and he asked them for paperwork as soon as the indigenous people walked in. And they showed it to him. He got into their face and told them that they had to leave. And he like pretty much kicked them out. And then there was this instance with my Ecuadorian host sister when we were walking down the street and she saw an indigenous person, and she stomped her foot in front of the person and like called them ugly in Spanish . . . "feo". And she called her like*

dirty which is like "sucio". And so it was just little things like that I think really like struck me when I was in Ecuador. Also, my Kichwa teacher was indigenous, but my Ecuadorian mother identified as white like me and I was kind of confused about that because she would not be considered white if she was in the United States. She was Mestizo. But she was like, "I'm white." And she was racist against the indigenous people. So here I am with Luzmila, my Kichwa teacher, who I absolutely adore. And I also love my Ecuadorian host mother Beatrice so much, but at the same time Beatrice is very racist against Luzmila's people because it's just so deeply rooted there. She also had two maids that were indigenous, and even the way she would just kind of, like, treat them was . . . they could eat after we ate in the kitchen but they wouldn't sit at the table with us. They would sit in a chair against the wall. We had dishes that matched all the time – very neat. They would have cracked plates or, like, chipped plates. They got the leftovers. If there weren't leftovers, then they didn't get any. I feel like the more wealthy you are, the worse you think of the indigenous people. Oh, and then there was this one time me and another girl went to the bar and she invited all of her friends and one was an Afro-Ecuadorian woman, and they completely ignored, like, the Mestizos completely ignored this lady. You know, indigenous populations are everywhere in the world, not just US Native Americans, but there are indigenous people in Canada, in South America, and Australia, and all these different countries where they've experienced a lot of oppression and for the most part they're ignored. And it's weird to think like, wow, we stole their land, and we took a lot of stuff from them. I also remember Dr. Carmen, I don't remember her last name. But she was an indigenous woman and a professor at the university. And we talked to her a little bit about gender. And she had studied in Minnesota. She's been to the US a lot, studied here, studied in Spain, so she's very, very, very intelligent. But we talked to her a little bit about gender, and she said when she first came into the field and people saw that it was a female they were like, "Oh, are you the professor?" And when she said yes it was not the respect that she deserved or had earned. In reality she's a university professor who has all these experience and has all this knowledge, and people didn't give her that credit because she is a woman, and because she is indigenous so there already is that kind of racism there because she dresses in the indigenous style, and she is very visibly an indigenous woman. Just because we were white, we were looked at a lot. But also, we were treated differently pretty much anywhere we went, like in the grocery store people were extra nice and extra helpful. And when we were in the market the people at their stands that were selling everything would immediately just talk to us in English – we were immediately spoken to in English because we were white. But now coming back here I think of things that have been going on in the US in general. I guess there's a lot of comparisons and things about how the racism plays out in Ecuador that could be compared to here in the United States. It's similar to here, but not necessarily exactly the same. So I guess what I'm trying to say is racial discrimination here in the United States is still a very strong presence but it's not as direct. It's more hidden and like beaten around the bush. It's maybe in the way that we act towards people and our body language, the language we use when we talk to people. I also think, why was I so focused on racism when I was in Ecuador when it happens every day in the US? I think now it's made me realize how things have been going on in the US, like how upset it actually makes me and how I now have more of an opinion that it happens in the US. It's almost shown me that I focus on it in another country yet we need to fix this in the US. So I definitely think I've become more aware of racism. Um, more disgusted by it, I think. I definitely see things now that I think before I had gone to Ecuador, I wouldn't have really thought anything of

it. But now I look at something and think, you know, that's a little bit offensive or, like, racist, or that has some kind of prejudice behind it. And then it's really hard, too, because my family on my dad's side – they're upset about the fact that Syrian refugees are being let into our country, and I'm like, I understand that you are concerned about people coming into our country that could be related to ISIS and stuff. But at the same time they're people, too, and just because they're from Syria doesn't mean that they're with ISIS or are terrorists. And that makes me so mad. They don't look at it like that. They think they are Middle Eastern, so they're terrorists. And I hate when people say that. So the thing that I took away the most was probably opening myself up to a whole different culture and a group of people because it's similar to here, but not necessarily exactly the same. I'm not as narrow-minded anymore. I became more accepting of others. I also think in terms of intercultural learning the thing that holds us back the most is that bubble, that willingness to embrace instability, and uncertainty. And I think being in that minority stance, in reflection, was a really good way to overcome that by force. I've also been obsessed with this concept of Sumak kawsay which, in the Kichwa lexicon roughly translates "to live pretty". And then there's another meaning which is "to live well". And both really express this orientation specifically towards nature and the natural world, and community, which they see as one because they put agency in nature as well. So this idea of living in commune with the earth and your interpersonal community in such a way that you work hard and you're happy because of it. I've been engaging in this project and how is this concept that's from Kichwa, how would I personally have to recontextualize that to put it in my own life? So I really kind of use that as a fulcrum to leverage against, really kind of examine some of my own practices towards my community of peers, friends, family, my community, environment. (Interview)

In the preceding glocal account it is notable that Plum – a composite white student teacher-in-training voice who witnesses to little prior experience with racial diversity and contact in the US and who originally lived rather oblivious to the prevalence of racism in her home context – reports how her exposure to race and racism in the international context of Ecuador enabled her to partake in critical comparative analysis of race and racism in her home country of the USA where she also eventually becomes more aware of persistent racialized forms of violence and marginalization upon her return. Yet, her reflection simultaneously also bears engagement with a Brown racial category [indigenous] that breaks with the traditional white-Black binary characteristic of the US. Consequently, Plum is able to extend her thought to include fledgling awareness of the experiences and concerns of racialized Brown *others* in the US context. Furthermore, Plum's account moves beyond the phenotypic domain of race to include reflection on its intersections with gender and social class, as well as the racialized character of language

ideologies. In her account, Plum also reports how the material constitution of the kitchen of her Ecuadorian mestizo host mother, who self-identifies as white, raised within her recognition and vivid awareness of racism in action; racism as encounter. In particular, her recall of the racialized disparities she noticed through the arrangement of dishes and cracked plates reminds me of a similar kitchen childhood experience recounted in a previous section, and also simultaneously bears close affinity to Walmsley's (2005) discussion of the material-sensory cultures surrounding food and culinary practices in Ecuador as constructive of racial subjectivities. Here, the material – matter – enabled a less decontextualized conceptual and thoroughly more relational understanding of racism and the embodied means through which it operates. Significantly, Plum's account ends with her adopting an indigenous Kichwa ecological concept – encountered throughout her contact with indigenous Ecuadorians – which she applies to her now more accepting relationship with both others and world. Ultimately, this glocal account serves as prime example of Kubow and Blosser's (2016, pp. 75-90) call for comparative and international education to be synergistically incorporated alongside multicultural education in teacher preparation. Citing Bereday (1964), Kubow and Blosser (2016) write: "The ultimate purpose of comparative education is not only to learn about other peoples and cultures, but to help one know oneself" (p. 86). Significantly, the need for a fusion of personal and public in teacher education – discussed in a previous chapter – is here met.

Admittedly, there are other shortcomings to this work. For instance, while this dissertation sought to engage racism and antiracism work through and intersectional lens especially aware of gender, such focus also largely tended towards exclusive focus upon the woman-man binary. Consequently, discussions around non-cisgender conforming identities were not readily engaged, partly due to logistical considerations pertaining to space and the length of the work. Yet, as Viridian – one of two non-cisgender conforming class participants describes, pedagogical engagements and data-driven discussions around sexual orientation need to be included in

relation to intersectional antiracism and other emancipatory work since such comprise the experiences of a noteworthy number of students:

> Growing up in a homophobic family made me grow with their rituals – the microaggressive jokes, the slandering of out celebrities, the feigned campiness from male family members that led to them being mocked, etc. I took part in these things because it felt normal. When I reached high school and became one of the only "visible" gay students, however, this changed a lot. Soon I became the target of jokes, slurs, and outright harassment from my peers. It was awful, but I did learn a lot. I learned that my internalized homophobia wasn't ok, and that giving into those familial and cultural pressures wasn't ok either. I also learned that I wasn't alone in the harassment and that a lot of people had it much worse than me. While the coming out experience has been rather difficult, it's given me a perspective on the LGBT community that I wouldn't have experienced outside of being a part of it . . . I also think a lot about the amount of Black Trans women that have been killed in this year alone and the intersectionality of their gender identity and race that makes their lives so much more difficult. (Viridian, Written Course Reflections 1 & 2)

I here tender Viridian's reflection in recognition of the dire need for explicit engagement with sexual orientation in antiracism work, as well as a form of humble admission on my part.

Moving towards the conclusion of this work – an ongoing work – a number of broader implications need to be outlined. In particular, I tender three such implications centered on educational practice and its relation to research in education. First, there exists profound need for educators to engage antiracism work in a manner that validates emotion. It was especially notable that all Black student teachers that participated in the class and the study reported being on the receiving end of everyday macro- and micro-aggressions targeted against their bodies and darker phenotype. These Black students expressed numerous experiences of emotional trauma that often brought on lingering depression, anxiety, anger, and rage. Additionally, a number of Black woman student teacher trainees reported significant emotionally painful experiences regarding their perceptions of their bodies and body image. These student teachers were emotionally affected by white normative blue-eye-blonde-hair beauty standards constantly reinforced through media, television and movies, and advertising. Such data confirms existing literature highlighting the negative emotional consequences – such as depression – that often accompany experiences of

racial micro- and macro- aggressions, as well as white supremacist representations of *white* as the norm by which society often unconsciously comes to judge beauty, ability, intelligence etcetera. The implication hereof for education is that educators, and especially so white educators, need to allow space for emotional exploration and expression when dealing with matters of race and racism in classroom contexts, while also equipping themselves with the necessary literate knowledge to accommodate the life-worlds Black and Brown women in an empathic manner. Unfortunately, antiracism work – at times – comes off as purely ideological, intellectual engagement where the punch line is *racism is bad; we must not be racist; people must act nice towards people from other races*. Here racism is projected as something external; something outwardly social. Yet, in the process we lose the opportunity, we lose the necessity, to engage with racism on the level of the soul; for this reason antiracism work needs to be as much about **soulful justice** as about social justice. Here, in particular, I think of Rusty's previous account in an earlier section, and how she reported, towards the end of the course, that the space created to work through emotions like anger and anxiety in class had been very meaningful to her. Why is it that we – teachers – so often feel uncomfortable in the presence of tears or the expression of emotion when it is not the tear or the emotion that is the problem but those underlying memories and burdens that students often carry inside? I claim that when our students participate in the personal work of deconstructing the lingering effects of racism they are more likely to empathize with others and commit to actively engaging in communal antiracism work in future. Over the past three years I have been extensively involved in the planning and instruction of the Philadelphia Urban Seminar – a teacher preparation program that strives to immerse future educators in anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-ableist pedagogies. During this course, which contains a practicum-teaching component in public schools, it is profound to behold the significant growth that occurs in student teachers when they learn to not ignore and repress their emotions, but rather work through their anxieties, anger, and insecurities so that they are enabled to enter the teaching field with a significantly higher degree of empathy for the emotional lives of

their students. And while such body and emotion focused work in curriculum and instruction is vulnerable to the kind of unpredictability reflected on in a previous section, it is precisely this emergent character that enables educational practices to be adapted in situ to real-life concerns and realities. Here, I also especially want to emphasize that the personal body-and-emotion-focused work that I am describing is also deeply relevant to educators conducting antiracism and intersectional work since – as recounted before – I recall battling bouts of anxiety, insomnia, and feelings of inadequacy throughout my time teaching the course. *Becoming antiracism* can be emotionally-exhausting work at times. Concomitant with these implications is the need for educators – especially those engaging intersectional antiracism work – to earnestly grapple with those practical values afforded by the body and materiality for education, and curricular practices in particular. This is the predominant implication the weight of this entire work seeks to convey. After all, *racial subjectivities – old and new – emerge through material embodied encounters that then reproduce and reify within the psyche, persisting in iterative identity alignments of trust and estrangement*. On such grounds, *antiracism work is an ongoing process of psychic and identity excavation that persistently relies on reengagement with the body and materiality*.

Second, there exists profound need for educators to engage white fragility and anxiety in antiracism work. In the foregoing data sections – and in the data corpus at large, much of which was not included in this study – the majority of white students reported feelings of profound anxiety regarding interracial encounters and a fear of causing offence through their speech and actions. In other words, being perceived to be *racist*. Such admissions confirm literature that locates in white people "an impaired sense of a core self" (Thandeka, 1998) into which they have been socialized and through which they often struggle to establish relationships with racial others on the grounds that they carry with them latent forms of anxiety, shame, and guilt. These emotions often manifest in the form of the white savior – where especially white student teachers with good intentions report a deep desire to care for and rescue the racial other who they

frequently frame as broken and in need of *care*. In line with Second-Wave of Whiteness Studies

and Second-Wave White Teacher Identity Studies – previously elaborated on – that seek to

understand whiteness in ever more complex ways, I argue that this desire to *care* for the racial

other on the part of white educators, often prematurely and in superficial ways, could also be

understood as an attempt on the part of white student teachers and educators to override their

unspoken emotions of anxiety, shame, and guilt in order to reestablish relationship with Black &

Brown racial people, however ill-adjusted such desire may be. In other words, such phenomena,

when they manifest in papers or through reflections and comments tendered in class, is something

teacher educators can work with. These are teachable moments. Bearing in mind that upward of

eighty percent of teachers who go into the workforce are white middleclass women between the

ages of 21-24 it is necessary to validate the need to care yet also point out the danger lurking in

not ensuring that the care we provide as educators is accompanied by the simultaneous work of

undoing those institutional, social, and cultural racial injustices that necessitate care and concern

in the first place. Otherwise our caring risks existing only to reproduce itself and the

accompanying sense of feeling good and noble with oneself, hereby reproducing deficit thinking.

Therefore, focused and explicit interrogation of the sentiment of care needs to be conducted

throughout teacher preparation programs and course, and especially so those where matters of

race and other potentially painful identity-related subjectivities are engaged.

Third. In line with the limitations identified in the current section, there exists profound

need to expand on the way we think about race and racism in antiracism work and pedagogy. The

traditional Black-white binary along which discussions of race and racism are most often

conducted on the national stage and in the literature needs to be expanded on since this dichotomy

does not represent the very particular experiences of Hispanic, Middle Eastern, Asian, and

Indigenous students that are charged with xenophobic historical antecedents and contemporary

realities amplified in a post-9/11 world. Furthermore, data previously discussed supports the

growing body of literature that students often experience race as intersecting with other identities including gender, language, sexual orientation, religion, able-bodiedness, socioeconomic status etcetera. To this end, antiracism work in education requires us to notice very carefully: Which other groups exist on the margins? Which groups have more recently been racialized? Which groups are gradually being assimilated into whiteness? It also requires us to take into account how the simultaneous coexistence of multiple non-normative identities may compound the experience of forms of epistemic and other violence. For instance, it is significant that linguistic difference is often equated with racial difference, especially in a growing, often hostile, monolingual-cum-bilingual context like the US. What are the particular experiences of a L1 Spanish speaking girl from an immigrant background who simultaneously needs to learn English – a language that often is framed as the cultural possession of white America? What are the experiences of young non-Cisgender conforming males across the racial spectrum? Such questions, as examples, help to identify and map out the range of experiences that mark our learners in context to their variegated embodied experiences and cultural identities.

This work has sought to foreground the profound value afforded by embodiment and emotion for antiracism work. In departing – a movement towards new seasons of becoming – I leave you with a mental image of Kintsugi: the mending and revalorization of broken pottery. While the different plates in the kitchen I witnessed in my youth were not fractured or broken, the larger racial subjectivities and practices they signify are indeed indicative of the fractured and the broken. Emotion – in its intimate relation to the body – however holds the potential to serve as the golden resin that mends our broken, fragmented fractions of being. Our racial hurts and injured dreams, all different yet painful in iterative and varying degrees, paradoxically hold the very means through which the mending of relationships predicated on already existent embodied subjectivities and essences can once again occur. *Hopefully*, through aspiration – and throughout the ceaseless seasonal labors of education.

Peace be upon you

               me

                 us all.

Even as our aggression lingers.

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