Anti-Racist Teacher Well-Being and/as Curricular Praxis

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Doctor of Philosophy in Critical and Sociocultural Studies in Education

Title: Anti-Racist Teacher Well-Being and/as Curricular Praxis

This dissertation explores the well-being of public K-12 teachers in the United States who explicitly identify as anti-racist and/or anti-colonial teachers. Well-being has traditionally been conceptualized as attached to single human individuals in most Western academic scholarship. However, drawing on insights from the posthumanisms, community psychology, Critical Race Theory, and Indigenous studies, this dissertation argues that these teachers' well-being is not only influenced by the larger institutional, political, and environmental contexts in which they live and teach; it is co-constituted with them on the level of ontology. In order to explore these teachers' well-being, this study draws on immersive cartography (Rousell, 2021), a posthuman methodology that centers affect (Gregg & Siegworth, 2010), process, and emergence. While methods were also borrowed from traditional, qualitative, humanistic methodologies (i.e. interviews and focus groups), process, relationality, and emergence were centered. Four interviews and one focus group were selected for the dissertation based on affective resonances. Together, these interviews and an instance from a focus group map a terrain of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being which co-constitutes with multiple temporalities from teachers' pasts, collective histories, and multiple environments. Many teachers had deep personal connections of many types to various forms of oppression, and these histories informed their willingness to question societal common sense—including their own. Furthermore, the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) teachers in the study found themselves resisting or circumventing the white, feminized position of "footsoldier of colonialism" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021) in the teaching profession by doing work outside the classroom, or by leaving the traditional classroom for other work in the broader field of education. Implications of this work

include a need to address the *dividual*—as opposed to individual—character of ongoing anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher education, particularly its hidden curriculum. The dividual substrate of the hidden curriculum of ongoing teacher education is aggregate, continuous, and pre-personal, and includes racist affects, gendered embodiment, and collective histories. Changing this dividual substrate is perhaps more challenging than changing individuals; nonetheless, anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers discussed being sustained in community with students and with other teachers similarly oriented.

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[1] I choose to hyphenate my name when publishing although it is not legally hyphenated.

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DEDICATION

To Todd—in deepest gratitude for the journey.

May you be well. May we be well. May this world be well. May it be so.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

> Toni Cade Bambara begins her novel *The Salt Eaters* with the question, "Are you sure that you want to be well?" And she is not just talking about physical well-being, she is talking about a well-being of the spirit. (hooks & West, 2017, p. 58)
>
> Wellness is not a state of being, but a state of action. (Nagoski & Nagoski, 2020, p. 29)

This Ph.D. journey has traversed a global pandemic and personal upheaval. Before becoming a Ph.D. student, I taught for a total of ten years in public schools in South Carolina—three years prior to pursuing a master's degree at the University of British Columbia, and seven additional years during and after finishing that degree. I first got involved with anti-racist work as an undergraduate student in 2003, during the years following 9/11. At the time, Islamophobia, xenophobia, and racism combined forces in the U.S. popular imagination (to an even greater degree than they had before), and many of my friends at the time and I felt that the U.S. could not be on a worse track. Of course, we didn't know yet what more would be to come.

When I was eight years old in 1992, my white, Eastern European family moved from rural southeastern Ohio to the suburbs of Atlanta, Georgia, following a move by my father's company (National Cash Register [NCR]). I attended a high school in metro Atlanta, Georgia, where the student population had no racial or ethnic majority. In hindsight, the Advanced Placement classes I took were far more segregated than the school at large, and although there were many East and South Asian students in my classes, there were very few Black[2] or Latinx students, and no Indigenous students that I knew of at the time. Nonetheless, being part of a larger school community that took a great deal of pride in its diversity was foundational to my understanding of

[2] Throughout, I follow the capitalization conventions of Gotanda (1991, p. 4), who discusses 'white' as a term of racial domination, and therefore not deserving of capitalization, and 'Black' as a term of politically and socially liberatory identity. These conventions are also discussed in Rosiek & Kinslow (2016). I also therefore capitalize "Color" in referring to People of Color, Students of Color, etc.; however, when discussing color as a general category it is uncapitalized. I also retain original capitalization in quotations.

the world. As was growing up in an increasingly racially integrated neighborhood. As was growing up with my father's work friends in the electronics industry, some of whom were immigrants from Taiwan, Mexico, India, China, and the Philippines.

After my undergraduate years, I was excited to be hired at a school on the west side of Greenville, South Carolina where the population of students was fairly evenly divided among Black, white, and Latinx. We had many Latinx students from Colombia and Mexico, and several from Honduras and other central American nations. I taught at that school for the first three years of my teaching career, and there were powerful and moving and unforgettable moments of taking students on service learning trips and field trips. There were also tragedies that included student suicide, fights, and administrative violence against and neglect of students. Our school was also subject to intense scrutiny from the state of South Carolina and the school district because of low standardized test scores, and the pressure to narrow curricula and teach to the test was intense. The high-pressure environment created during those years (under the No Child Left Behind policy of the George W. Bush administration) engendered cliquishness, back-biting, suspicion, judgment, self-protective posturing, and mistrust among colleagues and between teachers and administrators. I had the distinct feeling that I was being tasked not with educating young human beings but with creating cogs to fit into a capitalist machine—or worse.

Things came to a head, perhaps, on a warm and sunny spring day toward the end of my second year in the classroom. I was still a relatively new teacher and had been overworking myself for nearly two years at that point, trying to organize everything from community service learning projects on weekends to a school recycling club to field trips to see Shakespeare plays in Atlanta. I was overwhelmed, over-tired, and not caught up on my grading. The students were antsy because it was spring, and, like most young people, they would much rather be outside.

It made sense to me—to my own thinking—that day, that we all needed a break. I would take the class outside with perhaps a brief activity to complete. I don't recall at this point exactly what. I would take my grading with me and sit in the shade while the students had some time in the sun. It would be the breather we all needed. At one point, I took a brief break from grading because my students wanted me to get up and participate in a game of pickup softball they were playing. We laughed, released momentarily from the stultifying constraints of school. For a moment, we were young people outside on a spring day (I was still only twenty-three at the time). Until one of our building administrators came outside and found us. She was livid, and we were ordered back inside.

After a very stern talking-to by my administrator, principal, and department chair later that week, I was informed that I made two important and large mistakes: I did not have "bell-to-bell" instruction that clearly addressed the state standards for English Language Arts according to the State of South Carolina. I also was not supervising my students closely enough; a couple had wandered down to the benches in the softball field dugouts and could have theoretically left campus without being detected. This was a very big potential legal liability for the school. It was quite naïve of me at the time, but at age twenty-three, I assumed that 15- and 16-year-olds were old enough that they ought not need to be supervised like elementary school children. I hadn't taught long enough at that point to understand how very different maturity levels can look from student to student at that age, or to understand the liability schools can face if students are not closely supervised at any age under eighteen.

I never made these kinds of mistakes again in my teaching career; I was vigilant about supervision from then on, certainly not wanting to cause a lawsuit for the schools at which I worked. I was attentive to the demand for "bell-to-bell" instruction, always sure to have bellringers, exit tickets, and standards on the board, as well as standards-based, class-period-long activities if we ever

did have class outdoors again. I learned how to work within the system and did still manage to get students outside on spring days in future years.

But there was a feeling at the pit of my stomach that stuck with me from that day, perhaps in the form of a question: could it be so wrong—*so wrong*—to simply value the collective desire to be outdoors, together, on a warm spring day after a long winter? And why was this not a valid curricular goal in itself—not even for a moment? Wasn't there more to education than merely meeting state standards? Wasn't this a good in itself?

After that moment, I decided I needed to move on (for the first time), go to graduate school, try to figure out what was going on in the world and in society so that just such a moment became profligate in the material-discursive arrangement of schooling. If I am honest, I half-checked out mentally during my third year in the classroom, and I put my efforts toward getting into graduate school. I took a moonlighting job at a tutoring agency to pay off what was left of undergraduate credit card debt. I did what I needed to pass my portfolio evaluations at work. I left after my third year of teaching to attend the University of British Columbia's master's program in Society, Culture, and Politics in Education. I left, at the time, for the west coast of Canada—*as far from South Carolina as I could manage*.

I did come back. I returned and taught seven more school years at two additional schools in South Carolina, bringing with me lessons learned while in Canada. I learned to question my positionality during my time on unceded Musqueam territory (Vancouver, BC). I learned an immense amount by spending time around Indigenous and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community organizers and other graduate students and professors. I learned about structural white supremacy and white saviorism for the first time. I learned the history of residential boarding schools in Canada and the U.S. I learned about Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous

ways of knowing. This did not mean that every bit of this learning immediately translated into my classroom practice upon my return. White supremacy is a lifelong unlearning.

I did try. I tried to teach inclusive history, to incorporate parts of the Zinn education project into teaching the history of Indigenous peoples in North America. We looked at excerpts from Christopher Columbus's journals and tribal maps of North America. We staged class "protests" when we read works by Emerson and Thoreau. We discussed gender norms and beauty standards when we read Kate Chopin. We investigated contemporary white supremacy when we read Frederick Douglass or Olaudah Equiano or Harriett Tubman or Langston Hughes or Zora Neale Hurston. We discussed wealth disparities when we read *The Great Gatsby* and discussed McCarthyism and mass hysteria when we read *The Crucible*. I was proud to support some of our first out trans and non-binary students and student activists in South Carolina public schools in the twenty-teens (2012-2019).

Following the Charleston AME Church massacre in June 2015, a Black colleague and I initiated anti-racist faculty conversations between the English faculty at our two respective district high schools, and we planned curriculum to discuss race and racism with our students upon our return to school in the fall. We wanted to scale the project up to become district-level professional developments, but we were informed by our school district that if our professional development sessions were not designed by the state department, they could not be used for teachers to gain recertification credits (for which most professional developments counted). In 2017, I switched to teaching middle school, and when I taught seventh grade, I got "in trouble" again (another stern talking to) for trying to include the It Gets Better project and Black Lives Matter in my curriculum, and for trying to bring a Jewish speaker to school during a unit studying Holocaust literature (it's a long story, but suffice to say here that it was a heavily evangelical Christian community). I had some successes, and I had good moments, and I had failed relationships with certain students, some that I

still regret. After my 10th year in the classroom, I planned a more permanent exit to higher education.

All of this has led me here. All of this,[3] and more.

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out six months into the first year of my Ph.D. program. At the time, I packed up my things in Oregon (where I had only been for six months at that time) and drove back across the country (during a pandemic outbreak, a snowstorm on the upper great plains, and an earthquake in Utah). At the time, we were told the university would function remotely for at least the first three weeks of spring term; I ended up staying back in South Carolina for 18 months of shutdown before returning to Oregon in fall of 2021. I also returned to South Carolina to see my (now-ex) husband every summer, winter, and spring break of the years I was in Oregon from 2021-2024.

COVID-19 magnified the prominence of the idea that we *must* care for those caring for the sick and dying. Relational work kept people alive and provided care for the loved ones of the dead and dying. Indeed, "Care work, both paid and unpaid, is at the heart of humanity and our societies" (International Labour Organization, 2018). Teaching, likewise, is and has often been framed as both a caregiving and a feminized profession (Grumet, 1981); however, such framing draws on material-discursive arrangements of performative gendered expectations (Butler, 2006) and racialized emotional labor (Woody, 2021). While teaching certainly involves caring, part of the goal of this research is to trouble taken-for-granted understandings and valuations of care work.

[3] Phrase inspired by Woolf (2022). Woolf's autobiography, *All of This*, describes her husband's cancer diagnosis and rapid decline the week following their verbal agreement to get divorced (which they canceled after his diagnosis). It is a beautifully written, deeply human exploration of the complexities of relationships with others and medical systems and family and self and existence.

Bahn et al. (Bahn et al., 2020) state that in a society focused on production of *more*, care work (often done by womxn)[4] that *sustains* life is devalued, and "women's physical and mental health, and the societies that rely on them, are at stake" (p. 695). In the teaching profession, there is much discussion of individual "stress-management" and "self-care" in teacher professional development (Aguilar, 2018; Boogren, 2019; Kanold & Boogren, 2021), yet such "self-care" is recommended in larger contexts of over-work, under-payment, and feminized, racialized, and colonial expectations of unpaid, tacitly expected emotional and "invisible" labor.

Tellingly, approximately 8% of teachers leave the classroom each year (Loewus, 2021). However, teacher attrition is a more complicated phenomenon not entirely representable by statistics because teachers also come and go from the profession (Lindqvist et al., 2014), sometimes returning to the classroom after hiatuses. I left the classroom for three years and returned for seven, and I personally struggled significantly with well-being during my K-12 tenure.

Now, even more teachers are considering leaving the profession than before the pandemic (Loewus, 2021). Furthermore, educators in minoritized communities tend to experience "marginalization by association" (Stapleton, 2021), and teacher turnover tends to be significantly higher in "historically underserved communities" (Simon & Johnson, 2015). As early as 2001, Ingersoll found that teacher turnover was annually 15.2% at high poverty schools and 10.5% at low poverty schools (Ingersoll, 2001). Yet teacher well-being continues to be an under-studied area of teacher retention, particularly in the retention of teachers oriented toward social justice education practices. And, even when it is studied, teacher well-being is framed as an individual phenomenon (Harding et al., 2019; McLean & Connor, 2015); the problem is *located in* and *attached to* an individual

[4] "'Womxn' is an intersectional concept that seeks to include transgender womxn, womxn of color, womxn of Third World countries, and every personal identity of womxn. It an antithesis to the daily micro-aggressions that subtly, but systematically work to undermine the value of womxn and enforce their secondary social status." (Kunz, 2019, p. 2) I will, likewise, use this term throughout this dissertation to indicate womxn as an expansive category that includes trans- and non-binary womxn, womxn of Color, womxn of "Third World" countries, and all possible positionalities of womxn.

human teacher. Instead, this dissertation assumes that teacher well- and ill-being are very often imbricated in—are *in relation with* larger structures, institutions, environments, and material arrangements (Mcphie, 2019). As Noddings (2012) states, "In care ethics, relation is ontologically basic, and the caring relation is ethically (morally) basic. Every human life starts in relation, and it is through relations that a human individual emerges" (p. 771). This research, however, also aims to honor more-than-human relations as ontologically basic, as will be discussed more thoroughly later.

Structure of the Dissertation

The remainder of this introductory chapter will give an overview of the literature on burnout, trauma, and how processes of racialization impact and co-constitute these phenomena in the teaching profession. I will provide a more thorough introduction to my positionality as well as a series of definitions of terms that are important to the conceptual orientation of the dissertation. Chapter two provides a more in-depth exploration of the concepts and literature informing this work, and chapter three provides a brief methodological overview. Then, four case studies have been developed out of the nine initial semi-structured interviews conducted. These four were chosen in part because the stories of these particular teachers discussed many phenomena that were common to most or all of the teachers who participated (although the specificities of each teacher's story are distinct), *or* because they contained unique insights not present in other teachers stories but which are important to anti-racist, anti-colonial teaching praxis. There is also one interlude chapter between the third and fourth case study drawn from the second focus group. It contains a conversation between the teachers whose stories appear in case studies two and three and explores a complex moment of emergent anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher praxis. Following the case studies is a conclusion chapter with analysis, implications, and possible directions for future work.

Burnout, Trauma, and Racialization

In literature on trauma (Fern, 2020), and particularly in emerging work on healing "racialized trauma" in the U.S. (Menakem, 2017), trauma has begun to be understood both as generational (Walters et al., 2011) as well as structural. According to Menakem (2017),

> Most of us think of trauma as something that occurs in an individual body, like a toothache or a broken arm. But trauma also routinely spreads between bodies like a contagious disease…. What we don't often consider is how trauma can spread from body to body in any relationship…. Whenever one group oppresses, victimizes, brutalizes, or marginalizes another, many of the victimized people may suffer trauma and then pass on that trauma response to their children as standard operating procedure…. The result is a soul-wound, or intergenerational trauma. When the trauma continues for generation after generation, it is called historical trauma. (0:33)

Menakem explains that racialized historical trauma has been passed down over generations in the United States, but it manifests differently for differently racialized groups of people. For example, while one trauma response for BIPOC may be to "over-function" and not take or even acknowledge the need for rest, Menakem explains that for white people, trauma responses include unreasonable fear of BIPOC (seen in actions ranging from "purse clutching" and "car door locking" to police officers' frequently over-zealous "fear for their lives" when confronting POC). Importantly, Menakem does not use this framing as a means to equalize racialized trauma for BIPOC and white people, nor does he excuse white people for violence inflicted out of inherited racialized trauma responses. Rather, he uses this framing to draw attention to the way that trauma lives not only in individuals' minds, but also in and *across* multiple bodies and in the material-discursive arrangements of racialized societies.

In other words, trauma functions vis à vis embodiment, affect, *and* cognition in racist, settler colonial, white supremacist, patriarchal, ableist, and heterosexist societies. Furthermore, within such societies, "racialized emotional labor is not limited to specific jobs, places, or interactional dynamics, but derives from deeper, enduring systems that orient the emotions of marginalized groups" (Woody, 2021). It is not surprising, then, that teachers of Color in particular report increased uncompensated (but tacitly expected) emotional labor (Cormier et al., 2021). Inequitable unpaid (and often unrecognized) emotional labor becomes a flow of affective tension, which shapes bodies and the embodiment of well- and ill-being via "allostatic load" (Kelly-Irving, 2019), or the toll of cumulative stress--including via stress responses such as the body's production of cortisol--on the body. Therefore, teacher well-being must be understood as thoroughly racialized and embodied *across* bodies within the white supremacist settler colonial institution of schooling as well.

(Super)Positionality

There is a tradition within qualitative research to position "oneself" in the research, as the instrument of the research, because we (researchers) are all embedded within the social fabric which we study. There is, as many say, no "position from nowhere" from which to write about the human social world. However, "I" have been influenced by studying a few key philosophical traditions throughout both of my graduate degrees, which include posthumanisms and Barad's (2007) physics-philosophy. In these traditions, it is not simply that there is an "I" to position within "the research," as if the "I" and the "research" do not always already co-constitute each other. As if they are separable entities in the first place. And as if the "author" and the "writing" are also separate, separable entities (Foucault, 1998).

Writing does things. This may seem, at first glance, to be a most obvious statement. However, in unpacking this short statement, the elements of an ontology that drives this dissertation

project begins to unfold itself. This work is situated[5] as part of the "ontological turn" in the social sciences and humanities, and as such, this work is also concerned with the constitutions of categories, things, and concepts—concepts which include *author*, *research/inquiry*, *findings, writing,* and, in this case, *anti-racism* and *well-being.* As Jackson and Mazzei (2023) state: "Scholars occupying [the ontological turn] share a departure from epistemology and method to *enactments of inquiry*. In other words, "things" (i.e. method, objects, subjects, knowledge) do not pre-exist inquiry, ready to be represented; rather, they are constituted (and entangled) in particular conditions" (p. 134). *Writing* thus becomes an *act* of thought—a thought which is pre-personal, pre-individual, and not attached to a sole human/humanist author. Thought organizes writing organizes thought moves affect touches matter constitutes bodies, both human and other-than-human--which is also not binary.

Because writing does things, moves affect, can compose thought differently, it is important that form will sometimes look slightly different in this work than in a traditional dissertation, though many elements of traditional dissertations have already informed thought and pre-composed its conduit ("author"). There will be elements of both the familiar and the strange, and what is familiar and strange may also co-compose one another. To return to the concept of positionality, then, my positionality has already begun writing itself, not only in the dissertation, but also in the job interviews leading up to it and taking place during its composition; the diversity, teaching, and research statements written as parts of job applications; the processual performances of "a" subjectivity entailed in those writings.

The contrasts among performances of subjectivity can, at times, be jarring, and the way in which writing thinks a subjectivity into being at a particular juncture can and does change. Which is

[5] The use of the passive voice is purposeful here; in accordance with process ontologies that underpin this research, if author and work co-constitute, and also co-constitute the possible consequences of this research, then it is not as if it is only that "I chose" this ontological orientation; it has also "chosen" me, or it and I have entangled long before this project became in its current instantiation.

the "real" researcher's positionality, then? The narrative is not so linear. To give an example that highlights some of the disjunctures and juxtapositions, I include the next part side-by-side: the original positionality statement written as part of the dissertation proposal (left), and excerpts of job application documents from my 2023-2024 job search (right). The questions raised, the gaps and aporia constituted, the silences that speak (Mazzei, 2011), all become part of the thought that unfolds vis *à* vis this and "my" other academic writing.

As a white, queer, non-binary womxn and middle-class settler scholar, I benefit from a multitude of privileges even as I experience degrees of marginalization along several axes. While this research troubles the ontology of individuals as discreet beings in the first place, positionality is nonetheless an important starting point, as research is always produced in relation with "apparatuses[6]" (Barad, 2007), and those include the becoming-subjectivity of the researcher. Mazzei et al., drawing on the work of Deleuze and Guattari, trouble the concept of authorship, stating, "If all utterances are of a collective nature, the possibility of inquiry that emanates from a unique, essentialist subject is no longer thinkable, which is, of course, the assumption that grounds conventional qualitative methodology"	Excerpt from the cover letter that ultimately landed the job I will take next: As a former K-12 teacher who has worked with diverse populations and learned culturally relevant and sustaining curricular practices, teaching in the Department of Literacy, Educational Foundations, and Technology would be a wonderful opportunity to continue to collaborate with scholars and teacher educators who share strong commitments to educational equity and social justice in Educational Foundations. I am currently a doctoral candidate (ABD) in Critical and Sociocultural Studies in Education (CSSE) within the Educational Studies

[6] In her explanation of apparatus, "The basic idea," states Barad, "is to understand that it is not merely the case that human concepts are embodied in apparatuses, but rather that apparatuses *are* discursive practices, where the latter are understood as specific material reconfigurings through which "objects" and "subjects" are produced" (2007, p. 148).

(Mazzei et al., 2020). Thus, in writing about "my" positionality, I also bring "my" relations explicitly into the research, not as a means of simply "describing me" but as a means of honoring that any "standpoint" (Harding, 1997; Moreton-Robinson, 2013) is already an imbricated set of relations, and those relations impact all further relations that emerge in, with, and through the research. Thus, it is important to note that the ways in which I will discuss subjectivity, standpoint, and well-being in this work will borrow a good bit of language from Western enlightenment Humanism (Braidotti, 2013) for the sake of "shorthand" at times (and because even the grammar of the English language contains implicit assumptions about the ontological separability of *doer* and *deed* (Derrida, 1995)), even while "I" seek to undermine and set loose different "enactments" (Mazzei et al., 2020) of subjectivity, resilience, resistance, and research as the project, and the writing, continue. I have been raised in the Western tradition of education, and in a white supremacist, settler-colonial, bellicose, capitalist, patriarchal, gender-	Department at the University of Oregon and expect to complete my Ph.D. degree requirements by the end of June 2024.[9] I meet all required and preferred qualifications for the position. I bring evidence of a robust developing program of research and publication in philosophical, social, and cultural foundations of education, teacher preparation, curriculum studies, and qualitative and posthumanist research methodologies. My research focus on teacher retention and well-being for anti-racist and anti-colonial educators comes out of my ten years' experience teaching middle and high school English Language Arts (ELA) and four years' experience (including the 2023-2024 school year) teaching at the undergraduate and master's levels, including courses in Educational Foundations and elementary and secondary culturally sustaining literacy practices. I have worked with and

[9] Well, it became August 2024. Which is fine.

binary, ableist, heteronormative culture. It is therefore necessary to *continuously* interrogate and dismantle the ways in which acculturation in such a violent society shaped and shapes my subjectivity as formed in relation. To begin this, I will discuss a contradiction in my family's history[7]: my people came to Turtle Island[8] to escape potential violence in eastern Europe in the early 20th Century and experienced ethnicity-based discrimination during the first two generations they lived here, yet they assimilated into white supremacist society and thereby reaped its benefits via the dispossession of Indigenous, Black, and other People of Color. My father's father gave his blessing for his sons to change their name from Aszkiniewicz to Adkins (two out of three of them did) *because* he had faced workplace ethnicity-based discrimination	met the needs of underrepresented student populations at the K-12, undergraduate, and master's levels (including but not limited to Spanish-speaking populations; I also speak intermediate-level Spanish). I have also supervised teacher candidates certifying in ESOL[10] in addition to their content areas. In addition, I have taught both remotely and in person over the last four years. … Excerpt from a teaching statement: To create the most trauma-informed, anti-racist, anti-colonial classroom possible, I center relationship building from day one, and I give students opportunities to share their writing and

[7] Here I seek to begin (and only to *begin*) something akin to what Christine Sleeter (Sleeter, 2014) has accomplished in her "critical family history" projects, in the aspiration of working continuously towards justice and reparations.

[8] I specifically use the term "Turtle Island" rather than "North America" here as part of a practice of "naming beyond the white settler colonial gaze" (Paris, 2019). Paris states, "The naming of people and places has been a violent practice of control and erasure against Indigenous peoples and lands across the centuries of White settlement on Turtle Island (currently most commonly referred to as the nation-states of the United States, Canada, and Mexico)…. Research often participates in and perpetuates such namings of deficiency and erasure….. What would and does it look like to refuse these regimes of representation, to name beyond erasures, to engage in a desire-based naming, to name as part of an educational research and practice that sustains communities and their lifeways?" (p. 219) This use does not assume I have ownership over the use of the term "Turtle Island;" as a settler, I am mindful that I am still learning its proper uses. However, I will refer to the United States as the U.S. when relevant, and to Turtle Island when it is the continent usually called "North America" in its settler societies in question.

[10] English for Speakers of Other Languages

himself; however, from then on, our family has benefitted from unimpeded white privilege. My maternal grandfather went to college on the GI bill following World War II (a benefit that, while supposed to be available to all returning soldiers, was denied to most returning Black veterans). He became an 8th grade English teacher and basketball coach and bought a house for his family of 10 with my grandmother—a house in which my generation was also partially raised.

It took me 36 years to learn that I was born on Algonquin, Shawnee, and Tuscarora land; previously, it took my going across Turtle Island and across a colonial border (into Canada) for two years for me to learn that I'd made home on Eastern Cherokee, Yuchi, Eastern Catawba, and Saluda land. I continuously work to undo some of the legacies of colonial Catholicism in my Catholic school upbringing; I have learned, also, in my adulthood, about residential schools that attempted to strip entire generations of Indigenous peoples of their cultures and languages after stealing, abusing, and murdering many of their lands, languages and bodies.

experiences with one another early and often in order to build communities of learning while increasing group trust. While I am keenly aware that "there is no such thing as a safe space for People of Color in a white supremacist society" (Leonardo & Porter, 2010), I seek to build *accountable* spaces (Ahenkorah, 2022) with students. Furthermore, I have learned that trauma-informed teaching also involves Canvas/virtual platform design that stays consistent week-to-week and assignment-to-assignment throughout the term. I utilize Universal Design for Learning and Accessible Assignment templates (as well as consistent use of closed-captioning, microphones, and other classroom technology) to ensure that accessibility and regularity are built into the structures of my courses.

I also ensure that I offer office hours on Zoom, which is generally more accessible to students who may work part time or be

I seek to be in solidarity with all those who have been victims of historical and present trauma, dispossession, genocide, murder, and psychic and spiritual violence. I do not condone my ancestors' assimilation into whiteness, but I do have a sense of the multiple types of violence they were themselves attempting to escape, likely not thinking at all about who else they were harming or dispossessing in that process—which is itself a manifestation of privilege.

Telling this history is crucial to begin this work because, in the words of Aileen Moreton-Robinson, "Feminist standpoint theory accepts that political interests and moral values are part of knowledge production and they shape our research" (Moreton-Robinson, 2013, p. 335). My political interests and moral values have been shaped both by settler colonialism and by an understanding that, in the words of Murri Aboriginal activist, artist, and theorist Lilla J. Watson, "If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together" (Watson, 1988). While white saviorism was certainly a force

taking care of family needs while in school. I always make space for students to let me know if they would like to meet with me outside these hours (including for on-campus coffee if they would like an opportunity to talk), but I find that some students who are hesitant to reach out to request a meeting will come to drop-in style office hours. I also ensure that I follow up on email with students who miss my classes, not to pry, but to let them know that they were missed and to give them the opportunity to let me know how I can best support them. I find that this practice generally keeps students on track better than assuming that they should be the ones to reach out to me first if they miss class, especially for students who may be dealing with some level of overwhelm in their lives.

I openly let my students know that I, too, utilize the university's counseling center as part of my effort to continue to de-

that shaped me early in my teaching career and for which I am continuously accountable, I have grown to understand that the same forces (settler colonialism, white supremacy, capitalism, etc.) that do the most immediate, violent harm to BIPOC bodies ultimately harm all, including more-than-human communities. My standpoint then, is not the "outsider within" status that Hill Collins describes as the foundation of Black feminist standpoint knowledge (Hill Collins, 1986), but instead aims at *becoming* (always a process) a "traitor" to whiteness who "occup[ies] the center but whose way of seeing (at least by insider standards) is *off-center*" (Bailey, 1998, p. 288). Importantly, Bailey notes that "anti-racist" is not just an *individual* standpoint but "is a political position achieved through *collective* struggle" (p. 288, my emphasis). It is, in other words, also a moving, growing, changing set of relations. It requires that those with white body privilege learn from the outsider-within knowledge generated by BIPOC *and* "interalize" and think critically about such knowledge	stigmatize seeking mental health care. I also advocate for food assistance resources, medical resources, textbook subsidies, etc. that the university offers to ensure my students know these supports are available to them. Via these multiple means, I strive to create accountable spaces of learning that decenter whiteness, examine multiple systemic forms of oppression, and create accessible, caring, consistent, and trauma-informed opportunities for creative resistance and imaginative resilience for my students as scholars, leaders, and global community members. … From a service statement: In my service both as a graduate and undergraduate student and as a K-12 teacher, I have continued over many years to learn from and support the leadership of BIPOC people, particularly women of Color. I was trained as a National

in order to honor its intellectualism and brilliance (Muhammad, 2020). "My" ability and desire to move to an "off-center" standpoint within whiteness has been formed by elements of subjectivity that come to be, in relation, in off-center ways: experiences being fat-shamed as an assigned-female-at-birth (AFAB) child, a gradual embrace of omnisexuality and non-binary gender/gender fluidity, polyamory, diagnoses of OCD and panic disorder, and the inattention that was given to all these throughout my childhood such that I only came to understand certain early experiences (for example, what might be called panic attacks) much later in life. In these domains I came to identify, or at least experience affinity with/attunement to others who experience *other* types of marginalization, even if not along the same lines or for the same reasons. I have sought out the company of other "Others" (Fanon, 2008; Said, 1979) and in turn I have learned, and continue to learn, much from them. I become with them. For me, then, to research teacher well-being is deeply "personal," but not in an "atomizing" sense of the word "person." It	Coalition Building Institute trainer by women of Color as an undergraduate, and I later co-facilitated professional development concerning anti-racism in Anderson, SC with a colleague of Color. I currently serve as junior graduate student representative in Division B of the American Educational Research Association. Here, I continue to learn from the leadership of the women of Color on the graduate student executive committee and the women of Color who comprise the leadership of the larger division. They have taught me much about centering our humanity and committing to doing a few things well rather than overcommitting. My commitment to anti-racist and anti-colonial work stems from my experiences as a high school student at a highly racially and ethnically diverse high school. I went on to a predominantly white, predominantly upper-class, protestant

is also the only ethical standpoint I can conceive of taking to attempt to map how teacher well-being might become differently along different domains of marginalization: well-being for teachers with non-white identities, well-being for teachers with other types of disabilities, well-being for teachers who identify as LGBTQIA+, well-being for any teachers whose bodies do not fit the white, able-bodied, thin, younger, male, normative body ideal (Taylor, 2018). And in these ways, well-being is not merely "personal," it is deeply, irrevocably political, structural, protean, and affective--not contained within the boundaries of individual bodies, although the impacts are thoroughly *em*bodied.	Christian undergraduate university; the stark contrast between high school and college, and the contrast between assumptions that operated in both places, propelled me into diversity work beginning in my undergraduate years. As I have gradually come to terms with my own queer identities, I have built an increasingly healthier integrity in this work. I would look forward to using my research, teaching, and service to continue to work and partner with colleagues, teacher candidates, practicing teachers, and local schools surrounding XXXXXXX in XXXXXXXX.[11]

The disjunctures produced in comparing these narratives side-by-side highlight the ways in which we are often expected to perform a kind of critical interrogation of subjectivity that is not so self-assured in our research, yet expected to exude a certain level of confidence and competence when we enter the market for academic employment. This is only one possible reading of one of the contradictions raised here, and the reader may find many others. We both curate and constitute our "selves" vis *à* vis writing.

[11] The XXXXX marks were placeholders for me to fill in the school's name and location.

All of this brings me to the concept of "self-care" (self-curation?) in teacher education, as well as concepts that will be related to teacher "self-care" in the course of this dissertation. The next section will provide some definitional orientations.[12] Before beginning, however, it is important to note three things: 1. These definitions draw on various readings that go on to inform the literature review for the dissertation. Some are quoted directly from sources and others are amalgamations of definitions I have gleaned from these, and other, readings, discussions, and listenings. 2. Many/most of the concepts at play cut against the grain of positivist research that avers that there is a stable, "real" world that is fundamentally knowable. Therefore, these definitions are provided as orientations to thinking--as starting points, not end points--so as to provide entry into the literature review and the analysis to come. These definitions are not final arbiters of what these concepts might do or become in other contexts. And, 3. These are a selection of definitions of some of the foundational concepts for this dissertation. I could have included many more related concepts. However, the hope is that this list is extensive enough to orient the reader in the work, and as other concepts become necessary to include and/or explain, this definitional orientation will provide enough conceptual entry into the work to lay a foundation for other concepts to be incorporated as necessary.

Definitional Orientations

Ontology: Study of the nature of reality, or nature of being.

Epistemology: Study of the nature of knowledge, or how we come to know things.

Axiology: Study of the nature of ethics or values.

[12] I draw on Springer (2024) for the inspiration to provide definitional orientations into this work both for an academic and, potentially, for non-academic and equally important audiences--particularly for a dissertation defense audience. I also draw on the work of Jackson and Mazzei (2012, 2023), who provide definitions at the beginning of each chapter of their work, *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research*. These definitions also serve to provide entree for those less familiar with the terminology of this field of study.

Methodology: Study of how techniques, apparatuses, thought, concepts, and/or research methods come to produce both knowledge (episteme) and reality (ontology). Also interweaves axiology throughout.

Well-being: This work builds on a few key definitions of well-being, which begin with more individualistic definitions but grow into more expansive definitions.

McCormick et al.'s framework (2021) for Early Childhood Professional well-being included "nine, interrelated 'senses of well-being': comfort, security, affinity, self-respect, communication, engagement, contribution, efficacy, and agency" (p. 3).

Giving a more expansive definition in the field of community psychology, Prilleltensky (2005) states:

> My claim is that the well-being of any one person is highly dependent on the well-being of her/ his relationships and on the community in which she/he resides [4]. Well-being may be defined as a positive state of affairs in which the personal, relational, and collective needs and aspirations of individuals and communities are fulfilled [5]. This definition subsumes narrow conceptions of physical and mental health, for they are a part of well-being and not the whole of well-being [6]. Well-being refers to a satisfactory state of affairs for individuals and communities that encompasses more than the absence of disease. There are many aspects of the psychosocial, economic, political, and physical environment that influence the state of well-being; and there are many aspects of well-being that reach far beyond health and encroach into the realm of values, thriving, meaning, and spirituality. My definition of well-being is in line with comprehensive conceptualizations of health promotion put forth by the WHO [7], by the Canadian government [8], and by the new public health paradigm [9–11], all of which emphasize the values of self-determination, participation, community capacity-building, structural determinants, and social justice. (p. 54)

Mcphie's (2019) "Extended Body Hypothesis" (EBH), based in posthumanism, expands an understanding of well-being even further:

> The Extended Body Hypothesis (EBH) that I put forward in this book claims that mental health and wellbeing is not bounded solely within a brain or even within a body. 'It' is not merely a thing that can be isolated, categorised or essentialised [sic] within a subjective self in order to fix, mend or normalise [sic]. Mental health and wellbeing is introduced in this book as a process spread in the environment—an emic-etic process that weaves through a permeable, a-centred self—hence the need to create a new concept: environ(mental) health. If mental health and wellbeing is conceived in this way, it begs the question, where should we look for it? Or indeed when? It has ethical ramifications if we begin to conceive of our mental health as immanently placed of environments as opposed to transcendently placed from or in static ones. It becomes political, cultural, social, racial, ecological, posthuman and most definitely physical. (p. vi)

In other words, it is not just a matter of the well-being of the individual being *part of* community well-being and vice-versa; it is that these are imbricated on an *ontological* level. It is also not just that the well-being of individuals and communities depend on participation, structural determinants, and social justice in the *human* realms; well-being of individuals and communities are ontologically entangled with one another and with ecologies, biospheres, and more.

Burnout: According to Nagoski and Nagoski (2020), burnout's original and technical definition draws on the work of Freudenberger, and includes the following three elements:

1. emotional exhaustion—the fatigue that comes from caring too much, for too long;
2. depersonalization—the depletion of empathy, caring, and compassion; and
3. decreased sense of accomplishment—an unconquerable sense of futility: feeling that nothing you do makes any difference.

And, [they state,] here's an understatement: Burnout is highly prevalent. Twenty to thirty percent of teachers in America have moderately high to high levels of burnout. (p. 6)

Anti-racism vs. abolitionism:

According to the Abolitionist Teaching Network (ATN) (2024):

> If teachers are not well, how can we expect the students to be well?
>
> Radical self-care must be communal. ATN puts the wellness and healing of teachers at the center of educational justice and collective liberation.

ATN also makes an important and useful distinction between anti-racist work vs. abolitionist teaching:

- antiracist education: a teaching approach that centers on acknowledging racism, whiteness, and how racist ideas become policy, creating inequities
- abolitionist education: a teaching approach that centers on abolishing oppressive educational systems, while loving, protecting, remembering, and healing children of color and their communities

The definitions of anti-racist education that this work draws upon contains elements of both anti-racist and abolitionist definitions.

Racialization: The material-discursive processes by which bodies become read and treated as "raced" and "otherized" in white supremacist societies.

Racial projects:

According to Omi and Winant (2015),

> *A racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial identities and meanings, and an effort to organize and distribute resources (economic, political, cultural) along particular racial lines.* Racial projects connect what race *means* in a particular discursive or ideological practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized*, based upon that meaning. Racial projects are attempts both to shape the ways in which social structures are racially signified and the ways that racial meanings are embedded in social structures. Racial projects occur at varying scales, both large and small. (p. 125)

Decolonization: The actual event of returning land to Indigenous peoples (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

De-weaponization: In "The precarious position of the Black settler pedagogue: Decolonizing (De-weaponizing) our praxis through the critical reading of native feminist texts" (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016), Cherry-McDaniel asks:

> Is the work I do with my students decolonizing? Absolutely not. I am not empowered to, nor have I empowered future teachers to, return land to anyone robbed of it. I have not changed the power dynamics and economic inequalities present between the colonized and their colonizers. I would, however, call my work de-weaponizing. As teacher educators, preservice teachers, and currently practicing teachers, we have the choice to continue our

> work in potentially dangerous ways, or resist assuming the position of cultural foot soldier for the colonizing state. (p. 44)

De-weaponizing work, then, resists "the position of cultural foot soldier for the colonizing state" in a number of ways that can include more expansive curricula, non-violent and less coercive relationships with students and communities, deeper listening, learning about the histories of settler colonialism, etc.

Anti-colonialism: Education and/or activism that works against the manifestations of colonialism. This can include both decolonizing and de-weaponizing praxis.

Hidden curriculum: The curriculum not taught explicitly but which shapes who and how teachers and students become in educational institutions and in society. Draws on the work of Anyon (1981) and others (see Kentli, 2009) who explore how social class and other aspects of social positioning (such as race, gender, etc.) are reinforced via norms and expectations for speech, behavior, comportment, cognitive and intellectual and embodied expectations, institutional building structures, daily routines and schedules, type of curricula and learning activities offered, etc.

Standpoint: Describes theories that consider the "relations between power and knowledge" (Harding, 1997) and aver that those who occupy marginalized positions within society have better access to understanding the operations of power and oppression because they must understand these operations in order to survive, whereas those with more privilege are shielded from needing these understandings.

Intersectionality:

> Intersectionality is a way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor. They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways. When it comes to social inequality, people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves. (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016, p. 2)

Intersectionality theory considers how "individuals typically express varying combinations of their multiple identities of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and religion across different situations. Social context matters in how people use identity to create space for personal freedom" (p. 125). Thus, intersectionality theory considers how multiple identities and multiple social contexts and geographies inform one another and create one another.

Immanence: Based in Deleuzian philosophy. "Deleuze's philosophy of immanence emphasises [sic] connections over forms of separation. But this connection must itself be a connectivity between relations and not between different identities. This is because an external principle would be needed to ground those identities (for example, identity depended on the human mind--thereby setting it up as transcendent)" (Williams, 2010, p. 129)

Transcendence: Ontologies of transcendence are considered opposite of ontologies of immanence, this is a concept of God, or the Ideal, or a realm outside of the current reality that gives reality its form and meaning.

Affect: While affect theory (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010) is a wide and ever-burgeoning field of theory and therefore impossible to give a complete definition in a brief format, it is generally understood as flows of energy or force that are transpersonal and/or trans-subjective; they impacts bodies while not being attached to or originating from only one body or phenomenon.

Repetition: A Deleuzian concept. According to Deleuze,

> To repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique or singular which has no equal or equivalent. And perhaps this repetition at the level of external conduct echoes, for its own part, a more secret vibration which animates it, a more profound, internal repetition within the singular. This is the apparent paradox of festivals: they repeat an 'unrepeatable'. They do not add a second and third time to the first, but carry the first time to the 'nth' power. With respect to this power, repetition interiorizes and thereby reverses itself… Monet's first water lily… repeats all the others. Generality, as generality of the particular, thus stands opposed to repetition as universality of the singular. (Deleuze, 1994, p. 1)

Repetition is something like a style of behavior, a mode (Rabinow, 2003), and/or an intervention in temporality. Repetition is an "agential cut" (Barad, 2007) that shapes reality via a code, something akin to the kind of mathematical code that forms fractals. It is abstract but its effects are real and material.

Difference: Another Deleuzian concept; Deleuze states:

> Difference is the state in which one can speak of determination *as such*…. Instead of something distinguished from something else, imagine something which distinguishes itself--and yet that from which it distinguishes itself does not distinguish itself from it. Lightning, for example, distinguishes itself from the black sky but must also trail it behind, as though it were distinguishing itself from that which does not distinguish itself from it…. Difference is this state in which determination takes the form of unilateral distinction. We must therefore say that difference is made, or makes itself, as in the expression 'make the difference.' (Deleuze, 1994, p. 28)

If repetition is an intervention in reality that carries forward a code or style, difference is the creation of a new singularity. It could also be the creation *of* a new code, or it could be the creation of a new singularity with a repeating code. Which brings us to our next concept.

Refrain: Jackson (2016) writes of refrains, also drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's work:

> Deleuze and Guattari explained that everywhere in nature, there are gestural, visual, and postural refrains: repetitious and rhythmic patterns of sound and movement that stake out a territory. Because refrains are repeatable, they are portable and can be carried into various places and circumstances. Refrains draw us in; they are compelling in their expression--think of the chorus to your favorite song that you hum or sing over and over again, either aloud or in your mind, as you go about your day. Finally, refrains have a catalytic function to make something new, such as when music takes hold of a refrain and releases into an improvisational creative expression…. The refrain is an ontological force of territorialization and deterritorialization. (p. 1)

Refrains, then, as ontological forces, can be conceived of as that which carries forward repetition--they are never exact copies, but they are repeatable and portable and catalytic.

Assemblage: According to Buchanan (2021), "a multidimensional concept that holds it all [Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalytic philosophy] together" (p. 22). It is based in the French word *agencement*, which implies not merely a collection of pre-established objects, but a moving, morphing, concatenation and specific arrangement of agencies, affects, subjects, environments, and more. As Buchanan (2021) puts it: "Concepts should bring about a new way of seeing something and not simply fix a label to something we think we already know about…. Given a specific situation what kind of assemblage would be required to produce it?" (p. 22)

Molar: In Deleuze and Guattari's immanent ontology, molar lines are "rigid line[s] that uphold the status quo. These might be institutional structures (such as a school bell schedule) or internalized discourses (what it means to be a 'good' teacher or student)" (Strom, 2018, p. 109).

Molecular:

> Deleuze studies objects not as they seem to be before the naked eye but as dynamic masses of molecules…. The molecular sensibility is found… in the tiny perception or inclinations that destabilise [sic] perception as a whole…. The microscopic perspective has a political dimension as well. All societies are rent through by molar and molecular segmentarities. They are interrelated to the degree that all action is conceivably political if politics are understood to be of both molar and molecular orders. The former, a governmental superstructure, does not disallow the presence of the latter, 'a whole world of unconscious micropercepts, unconscious affects, rarefied divisions' that operate differently from civic and political arenas. Molecularity is tied to a 'micropolitics' of perception, affect, and even errant conversation. (Conley, 2010, pp. 177-178)

Pre-personal: In a Deleuzian, and in posthumanist ontology, the realm of forces, affects, repetition, and difference--the realm of the abstract but real. Things are "pre-personal" not in the sense of temporally *before*, but as ontologically a-priori.

In her article "Rethinking agency: A phenomenological approach to embodiment and agentic capacities," Coole (2005) conceptualizes agency on a spectrum from "pre-personal, non-cognitive bodily processes [at one pole]; at the other, transpersonal, intersubjective processes that instantiate an interworld. Between them are singularities: phenomena with a relatively individual or collective identity whose provisional forms and activities come closer to modernity's sense of agency without coinciding with it" (p. 128).

This conception of *agency* also helps to think the pre-personal as the non-cognitive. Non-cognitive activities and processes are all around us both in bodily processes (the circulation of blood, the regulation of digestion) and in the processes of the earth (volcanism, the carbon cycle, erosion), the solar system, the galaxy, the cosmos (black holes, gravitation, star death, etc.).

Transpersonal: Drawing on Coole's same definition, then, the transpersonal is "intersubjective" (p. 128) in the sense of being between (inter) singularities (subjects). Subjects might be conceptualized as a sub-category of phenomena. Phenomena are that which differentiate themselves (e.g., via Deleuze's concept of difference) from a background, which, as Deleuze puts it, does not differentiate itself from the phenomenon. However, for agency to be transpersonal, then, it must cross or connect multiple phenomena. Part of the argument of this dissertation is that teacher well-being is both constituted of pre-personal affects and also so thoroughly transpersonal that conceiving of it as attached *only* or *primarily* to the singularity part of the agency spectrum (where

teachers' subjectivities live) fairly well misses the mark, and misses also the opportunity to act to improve well-being.

Posthumanism: As has been stated by Rosiek et al. (2024) :

> Posthumanist philosophies refuse the binary of direct realism and social constructionism, both of which center a humanist spectator subject as the sole agent of inquiry. Instead, they frame research as ontologically generative, but not freely so. Social and material conditions limit what it is possible to do and desire. In some cases, objects of study are regarded as active participants in inquiries and the world's ongoing metaphysical becoming. (p. 1)

Elsewhere, posthumanism has been discussed in a variety of ways. In Braidotti's (now foundational) text, *The Posthuman* (Braidotti, 2013), Braidotti discusses the ways in which posthumanism is a response to entrenched Eurocentric Humanistic thought, which has become

> a doctrine that combines the biological, discursive and moral expansion of human capabilities into an idea of teleologically ordained, rational progress. Faith in the unique, self-regulating and intrinsically moral powers of human reason forms an integral part of this high-humanistic creed, which was essentially predicated on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century renditions of classical Antiquity and Italian Renaissance ideals (p. 13).

She goes on to explain: "Central to this universalistic posture and its binary logic is the notion of 'difference' as pejoration. Subjectivity is equated with consciousness, universal rationality, and self-regulating ethical behavior, whereas Otherness is defined as its negative and specular counterpart" (p. 15). Posthumanism, then, avers that there is no such thing as "natural" teleological progress, and reason only gets us so far in the pursuit of the knowledge of reality. Humans are not the most--or the only--moral actors in the entire ecology of the earth and the universe, and materiality as well as pre-personal and trans-personal agents, both human and other-than-human, matter. Agencies across the spectrum co-constitute one another and co-constitute an ever-changing realit(ies). In beginning to understand the ways in which Eurocentric philosophies have produced Otherness--and dangerous and damaging Otherization and oppression--it also becomes necessary to focus on an "expanded sense of responsibility… that includes accountability for the ontological, ethical, and political effects of the ways of knowing employed in research projects" (Rosiek et al., 2024, p. 2). As colleagues and I have written, this means continuing to be in conversation with Indigenous and Black studies scholarship that call for responsibility for the ways in which Eurocentric philosophies have ignored, erased, co-opted, appropriated, or assimilated ideas from Black and Indigenous intellectual traditions without due respect and recognition, particularly as concerns concepts such as non-human agency, temporality, and ethical reciprocity and responsibility.

Response-ability: The hyphenation of this term draws originally on Harraway's *Staying with the Trouble* (2016), and is also discussed extensively by Springgay et al. (2020). Springgay et al. describe "anarchiving as response-ability" and base their anarchiving research practice in the values of "tending and reciprocity" (p. 904). Importantly, they emphasize that

> Tending and reciprocity embody a way of being in the world "with" others--or what Stacy Alaimo (2016) calls transcorporeal relations. Withness is informed by Indigenous scholars Juanita Sundburg (2014), Bonnie Freeman (2015), and Jon Johnson (2015), who articulate *with* as a "more than" orientation (Springgay & Truman, 2018). Withness is not simply about collaboration but rather emphasizes complicated relations and entanglements with humans, nonhumans, and land, and an ethics of situatedness, solidarity, and resistance. (p. 904)

Response-ability in research is, quite literally, the ability to respond, to be with, to enter and sustain relations, and to be ethically accountable. It is important that, like Springgay and colleagues, this work also recognizes the ways in which Indigenous principles (particularly, drawing on Archibald

(2008)) those of "respect, responsibility, reverence, reciprocity, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy," which also inform the ethos of response-ability. While this work is conducted by a white settler academic without the expertise or insider positionality to give situated accounts of these principles, it is informed by the concept that "each principle has a separateness that is like a long flat piece of cedar bark used for weaving a basket. As each piece is woven together, it may lose its separateness and become the in-between space that creates the background for a beautiful design" (p. 153). As work that aspires to be in good relation with Indigenous philosophies as well as with Black studies and Critical Race Theory scholarship, response-ability is a principle that is woven into the design of this dissertation--the reader will be the judge as to whether poorly or deftly--and is an ethos that has informed the methodology next described as immersive cartography, which in turn has informed the way in which I approached the doing of the interviews and the writing of the dissertation.

Cartography: This work draws on others who use posthuman cartography (not to be confused with cartography in the field of geography) as a methodology of immanent becoming in response-able relations. Rousell (2021) begins his explanation of immersive cartography this way:

> Perhaps these are the opening propositions for an immersive cartography: Begin in the middle. Explore your milieus. Experiment with making maps of them. Stay in place and keep moving at the same time. (p. 2)

He continues:

> Deleuze (1997) describes how… initial forays into immersive cartography involved two kinds of mappings: a mapping of extensions, as external relations between bodies, space, time, matter, and form; and a mapping of intensities, as "affective constellations" comprised of intensive relations, events, and becomings. (p. 5)

Immersive cartography, as will be explored in the next chapter, is a methodology of process. It is a methodology that honors both the more-than and the withness that happen in relation with people, their milieus, their extensive and intensive environments, with affects generated in relation and in-the-moment during research. It is a process-oriented methodology that also honors the more-than of research temporality--the ways in which personal, collective, and political histories are always already folded into the phenomena that emerge in what is officially deemed the research moment(s) and effects. As a process-oriented methodology that dwells in the creation and mapping of relations--both extensive and intensive--it is a way into research response-ability that is accountable to what emerges as a result of entering unanticipatable relations rather than what is established as knowable a-priori.

Last, but certainly not least: a note on the ethics of knowledge/knowing. Lather once stated that "Embracing not knowing is the condition of a less dangerous doing" (Lather, 2009, p. 346). Western Enlightenment epistemology has traditionally been founded on principles of there being a "knowable" world, accessible through reason and practices of "falsification" (Popper, 1965). However, as the Western academy is also a settler colonial institution, many of its knowledge-claiming practices have proven violent, coercive, assimilationist, erasing, and/or co-opting. This dissertation's orientation to knowledge is also partially inspired by Snyder (2022), who spoke in his dissertation defense on Indigenous Commonsense about "knew" knowledge instead of "new" knowledge. Snyder's context was Indigenizing education and Indigenous knowledge; however, he stated, "'knew' knowledge invites us into a different relationship. I don't know what to tell you, but I do have some questions that may be generative" (2022). This dissertation, while not doing either decolonizing or Indigenizing work, does aspire to de-weaponizing and anti-colonial research that attempts to lessen and/or eliminate some of the worst, most harmful practices of the settler colonial

academy. It does not hold a prescription for anti-racist/anti-colonial[13] teacher well-being, but it hopes to generate questions that may, in turn, generate more just possible futurities. I take up a tradition with which I have greater familiarity (posthumanist immersive cartography), and I use it to orient toward immanent becomings in response-able relations that share a commitment to less violent knowledge practices. In doing so, I do risk assimilation and appropriation of the Indigenous and Black theories also cited. I do not assume that this work will necessarily achieve its aim of de-weaponization, although I continue to believe that part of the response-able work of white settler scholars is to continue to learn, and to be willing to "learn publicly" (Tallbear, 2021). In this way, this dissertation is a manifestation of where the thinking has taken me, and this work, thus far. And, in continued response-able relations following the finishing of this phase of the work, I hope to learn how to continue to do even better, understanding that this is and will be a never-finished project.

[13] Throughout this work, I retain both anti-racist and anti-colonial as the primary orientations of the teachers who participated in this study. For most teachers, anti-racism was both more familiar and also more prevalent throughout our conversations. Some conversations applied broadly to equity-focused teaching practices, but insights were still relevant to specifically anti-racist and/or anti-colonial praxis. I retained both in the writing of the dissertation because anti-racism and anti-colonialism are also conceptualized, in this dissertation, as distinct but also entangled in settler colonial, white supremacist contexts such as Turtle Island. I retain only anti-racist in the title of the entire work because of the heavier explicit focus on anti-racist teacher praxis.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Relating vis à vis Relational Ontologies

This work draws upon four main strands of literature in order to conceptualize teacher well-being. Critical Race Theory (Bell, 2018) allows me to conceive of teacher well-being as permanently and thoroughly racialized; Indigenous studies (Calderon, 2014; Moreton-Robinson, 2000) allows me to understand teacher well-being as a relation with/in settler colonial logics and violence, including temporal logics and arrangements (Jacob, 2021; Rifkin, 2017); feminist new materialisms (Barad, 2003; Braidotti, 2013) and community psychology (Prilleltensky, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2020; Prilleltensky et al., 2016) allow me to conceptualize teacher well-being as material, embodied, and transpersonal (Mcphie, 2019).

While it is important to honor the nuanced differences among the onto-epistemologies of each of these literature bases, I draw them together in conversation in order to conceptualize teacher well-being as relational, embodied, and entwined with larger institutional ecologies and power networks in society and on the planet. Therefore, part of the methodology of this work also entails "plugging in" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to various theories and literature bases in order to foreground particular aspects of teacher well-being in process and in specific contexts. It is an enactment of "thinking with theor[ies]" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), of "thinking without method" (Jackson, 2017), and of thinking where the thought takes (off). In this conceptual literature review, I will offer an overview of important concepts from the posthumanisms and new materialisms and distinguish these from positivist ontologies. I will dwell specifically on Affect Theory briefly, as well as concepts of agency, temporality, and subjectivity as they are conceptualized in posthumanisms and new materialisms.

Posthumanisms and New Materialisms

In *Always More Than One*, Manning defines movement as "to think-with a bodying in act [sic]" (Manning, 2013, p. 15). Although the grammar of this phrase itself purposefully enacts relational ontology, it requires some explanation. Such an explanation will allow me to relate how this research conceptualizes embodiment and thought. Manning draws on Deleuze and Guattari's concept of "absolute movement" to conceive of both experience and embodiment differently than would a positivist ontology[14]. Instead of certainly knowable phenomena, they become processes. Manning explains that "for Deleuze and Guattari, absolute movement is a vibration, a resonance that precedes all form or structure" (p. 14). Therefore, the "occasion of experience" entails "cuts from total[15] movement [which] land total movement, dimensionalizing it, opening total movement to an actualizing in concert with the now of time in the making" (p. 14). Experience, then, is an agential cut in the "resonance that precedes all form or structure" of the universe; it is agency that cuts to form dimensions, space, and time--the "now of time in the making" which is temporality-in-process, not temporality as static points on a linear scale. I will return, later in this dissertation, to the concept of non-linear temporality; for now, suffice to say that neither experience nor temporality are conceived of here as being as straightforward as colloquial understandings of these concepts.

Furthermore, to understand Manning's distinction between the "absolute" and the "actual," it is also important to understand Deleuze and Guattari's distinction between transcendence and

[14] Karl Popper, often considered foundational to positivist thinking, averred that if we do not know how to test a certain theory, it is hard to have certainty about that theory, but if we *can* test a theory, then it necessarily means that certain things cannot happen in reality; thus the theory makes claims *about* reality. He advocated "critical realism:" the idea that we can make increasingly better and more informed guesses about reality and then seek to falsify our theories; however, such thinking excludes from the domains of "knowledge" and "science" anything that cannot be falsified. Philosophies of immanence, as I understand them, diverge from positivism's assumption that in order to be knowable or to count as true, something must be both testable via randomized experimentation as well as falsifiable. However, even the goals of "knowledge" and "truth" are also not necessarily the primary goals of philosophies of immanence. Rather, possibility, futurity, and experimentation with reality take precedence.

[15] Manning uses the phrases "absolute movement" and "total movement" interchangeably.

immanence (see prior definitions as well). In their introduction ("Rhizome") to *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari's description of philosophies of "transcendence" and philosophies of "immanence" is illustrative of another important ontological distinction. They describe "the God who sows and reaps, as opposed to the God who replants and unearths (replanting of offshoots versus sowing of seeds)" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 18)[16]. In other words, their ontology is one of making new out of old (replanting and unearthing), of ontological continuation that is a "repetition of difference," as they discuss in *Difference and Repetition* (Deleuze, 1994). It is a philosophy against ontological bifurcations and pure divisions (of then vs. now, of subject vs. object, etc.), even while continuation exists *as difference itself*. Manning goes on to explain that

> Difference does not occur through the stratification of self and other or inside and outside. Difference emboldens processual shiftings between strata that foreground and background modes of experience, each of them affected by incipient reachings-toward, a reaching-toward not of the subject, but of experience itself. (2013, p. 7)

The "stratification of self and other or inside and outside" would be of an ontology of "reaping and sowing." Foregrounding and backgrounding modes of experience is of an ontology of "replanting and unearthing"--of continuation, not bifurcation. Therefore, "preconscious experience," as Manning describes it,

> is pure and direct in the sense that it fields virtual events at the cusp of their becoming-actual.[17] In this entwinement with the qualitative, a living of feeling creates a taking-form of

[16] While Deleuze and Guattari engage problematic racializing and othering language concerning the bifurcation of "East" and "West," the "special case" of "America" and "Indians without ancestry" (this language enacts the creation of "Others" in the sense of Edward Said's *Orientalism* (Said, 1979)), their distinction between immanence and transcendence has proved fertile for many later philosophers and methodologists upon whose work this study will draw. This is not to justify their use of such language. It is, however, to make an argument for retaining the parts of their philosophies that offer possibilities for living that may be more in alignment with the goals of Indigenous futurities, Black futurities, queer futurities, and living beyond fascisms, both micro and macro.

[17] Virtual-actual is another Deleuzian distinction. For more information, see (Parr, 2010).

expression. This taking-form of expression is the dynamic of becoming-selves. (p. 7)

Experience and taking-form, in other words, are ontologically foundational to the cohering of "individual" "selves" or subjects. In a world of "a living of feeling," it is not *individuals* who exist and *then* feel and/or experience reality, it is feeling and experience that shape and co-constitute with "individuals." In this sense, "emotions" *are not*, but affects *become*.

In this dissertation, the concept of the pre-personal and pre-individual become salient in a variety of the case studies discussed later. These concepts help to think teacher well-being as varying pre-personal and transpersonal (Coole, 2005) assemblages (Buchanan, 2015).

The pre-personal and transpersonal, to reiterate, are part of what Coole (2005) describes as a spectrum of agencies. The middle of the spectrum is where Coole locates "individual or collective agents…where they emerge as contingent singularities" (p. 124). The pre-personal may be described as "immanent," of a realm which is real and not separate from *this* life, *this* reality, but also a-subjective, not (yet) attached to or congealed into singularities or collectivities. The pre-personal is abstract and fundamentally un-representable, which is what makes it difficult to express in language, but it is nonetheless real and very (potentially) powerful. The transpersonal, again, is where agencies that entangle multiple individual or collective agents lie and where inter-subjective "interworlds" emerge (p. 128).

Affect Theory

Affect theory, which is intimately related to the pre-personal, de-individualizes the transcendent, Western, humanist conception of "emotion" (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010). It also simultaneously *em*bodies it. To understand affect (as opposed to "*e*motion,"), it is necessary to think with the concept of "motion," which Manning also discusses in *Always More Than One* (Manning, 2013). When Manning discusses the "occasion of experience," she distinguishes "total movement"

from "everyday movement;" nonetheless, *movement* undergirds both. In his introduction to Manning's *Always More Than One*, Brian Massumi explains:

> As for the primacy of movement that it is necessary to posit for thinking individuation, the reader will be left to discover it on their own. How movement moves individuation, and in the process makes that ultimate chunk we call our body an event requiring a verb—*bodying*—will likewise be deferred. (p. xxiii)

It is deferred in part because it is abstract and unrepresentable and therefore the hope is that the reader will come to a sense of movement moving as ontological primacy throughout the reading of the entire text. That said, Manning's concept of total movement draws on Deleuze and Guattari's absolute movement which is "without a subject—it passes through, it flows, but it does not yet cut" (Manning, 2013, p. 14). "Everyday movement," however,

> tends to background this quality, but this does not mean the force of movement-moving isn't always active, contributory. Despite appearances, movement is not of a body. It cuts across, co-composing with different velocities of movement-moving. *It bodies*. The body-as-such is an extraction that appears in the collision of movement-moving and actual movement, a momentary collusion of tendencies that seem to make up a whole. Form in its bare actuality is a mirage. With total movement always coursing through it, form is infinitely more-than. Extrude the body… to find this movement in the more-than, to find the movement-moving coursing through actual movement. (p. 14, my emphasis)

Bodying, for Manning, is a "calling forth [of] a field of relation through which [one] emerges as a multiplicity rather than a static, interactive self" (p. 10). The body that must be extruded in the case of embodied teacher well-being, then, is the Western, humanist notion of individual, atomized bodies. In this way, this study is radically *pro*-body. It is against the *control* and atomization of what a body *is* and *can become*. It is against racist and colonial trappings of the body. It is against

understandings of well-being that do not include and implicate *bodying* as an always-ongoing process of relationality that produces "the body multiple" (Mol, 2003). This study will seek flows of resistant and resilient anti-racist and anti-colonial affect; it will/does affect, will/does seek and play with movement, will/does body. These bodyings are unpredictable and super-individual, even as they fall differently among experiences in and of bodies. This study also understands systems of oppression such as settler colonialism and white supremacy as conceptually akin to Deleuze's description of "controls" in his "Postscript on the Societies of Control:"

> Enclosures are *molds*, distinct castings, but controls are a *modulation*, like a self-deforming cast that will continuously change from one moment to the other, or like a sieve whose mesh will transmute from point to point. (Deleuze, 1992, p. 4)

Settler colonialism and all its "grammars" (Calderon, 2014) *body* just as casts (like a cast on a broken arm) *body*. But just as "the empire writes back," (Ashcroft et al., 2002) the body bodies back as well when it engages *absolute movement* as a potentially anti-colonial, anti-racist force. This does not mean that any and all engagement with affect is by definition anti-colonial or anti-racist. Certainly movement is present in the "self-deforming casts" of hegemonies. But tapping into ontological movement is necessary for anti-racist and anti-colonial work as well.

Agency, Temporality, and Subjectivity in Traditional Humanist and Posthumanist Inquiry

In traditional humanist inquiry, such as naturalistic (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and ethnographic (Yon, 2003) inquiry, agency is conceptualized as individual, rational, atomized, conscious, and belonging to human beings (to some humans more than others (Braidotti, 2019)). Temporality is conceived of as linear, teleological, and progressive, and subjectivity is individual, rational, atomized, conscious and/or unconscious (e.g. Freudian psychoanalysis), and belonging to human beings (and perhaps to some animals). In the words of Braidotti (2013):

> The human of Humanism is neither an ideal nor an objective statistical average or middle

> ground. It rather spells out a systematized standard of recognizability—of Sameness—by which all others can be assessed, regulated, and ***allotted***[18] to a designated social location. The human is a normative convention, which does not make it inherently negative, just highly regulatory, and hence instrumental to practices of exclusion and discrimination. (p. 26, my emphasis)

As a normative convention, the human of Humanism is most often the White male cisgender heterosexual able-bodied younger man of Da Vinci's famous "Vitruvian Man." This becomes the norm against which all other bodies are placed in a hegemonic hierarchy (Taylor, 2018), which draws upon a history of eugenics (Clayton, 2020) and social Darwinism.

Posthuman inquiry, conversely, conceives of agency as spatially distributed and enacted (Mol, 2003); entangled (Barad, 2003; 2007); and on a spectrum: embodied—singular—transpersonal (Coole, 2005). However, it is important to note that Coole's spectrum of subjectivity does *not* hierarchize types of subjectivity, nor does it conceptualize them as transcendently distinct from one another. Temporality in posthuman inquiry likewise is conceptualized as quantum and disconti(n/g)uous (Kirby, 2011), yet entangled (Barad, 2007), and potentially even, to my current thinking, holographic. For if theories of space have developed to conceptualize space as holographic, and if space-time is a singular entity (not space *and* time but space-time) as we understand from Einstein's general relativity, then by implication time would be likewise holographic.[19] Relatedly, Tilhou states:

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[18] I emphasize the word "allotted" here to draw attention to the connections between allotments of social location and allotments of land under settler colonialism and capitalism.

[19] As physicist Carroll (2016) defines holograms, they are "displays [of] what appears to be a three-dimensional image by scattering light off a special two-dimensional surface. The holographic principle says that the universe is like that, on a fundamental level: Everything you think is happening in three-dimensional space is secretly encoded in a two-dimensional surface's worth of information" (pp. 280-281). The concept of the hologram, then, carries implications for thinking through the ethical (or, more properly, the obligatory—as will be discussed below) dimensions of relationality and entanglement. States Carroll: "there are subtle correlations between things that happen at different locations, which cut down on our freedom to specify a configuration of stuff through space" (Carroll, 2016, p. 280).

> General relativity gives name to the pull of massive matter on matter of smaller mass. This pull warps and distorts time and space, two that are inextricably linked, making timespace movable, malleable, not-fixed (Einstein, 1988; Greene, 2004, 2011). The fabric of time–space curves and bends, beckoning objects in a sense of magnetism, by what Einstein decided, was the conduit for gravity. (Tilhou, 2022, p. 1)

The point here is that if only specific configurations of matter are possible because forces, affects, and matter are more entangled spatially and temporally than they may appear to everyday human observation, then agency is likewise entangled among embodied, singular and transpersonal agencies that carry material ethical trajectories and implications, which are not infinite and therefore must be curated carefully.

In posthuman inquiry subjectivity is likewise conceptualized as distributed, entangled, becoming, and constituted in "events" (i.e. Whitehead's "superject"). In Mazzei's words: "Whitehead's superject is that which becomes or emerges as a result of feeling and being felt" (Mazzei, 2020, p. 7). This resultant emergence of subjectivity "is rather a process of *auto-poiesis* or *self-styling*, which involves complex and continuous negotiations with dominant norms and values and hence also multiple forms of accountability" (Braidotti, 2013, p. 35, my emphasis); this emergent process is not transcendent or autonomous but ontologically intra-active (Barad, 2007).

This research will also draw on Barad's (2007) concept of "apparatus." Barad describes apparatuses as follows:

> (1) Apparatuses are specific material-discursive practices (they are not merely laboratory setups that embody human concepts and take measurements); (2) apparatuses produce differences that matter--they are boundary-making practices that are formative of matter and meaning, productive of, and part of, the phenomena produced; (3) apparatuses are material configurations/dynamic reconfiguration of the world; (4) apparatuses are themselves

> phenomena (constituted and dynamically reconstituted as part of the ongoing intra-activity of the world); (5) apparatuses have no intrinsic boundaries but are open-ended practices; and (6) apparatuses are not located in the world but are material configurations or reconfiguring of the world that re(con)figure spatiality and temporality as well as (the traditional notion of) dynamics (i.e., they do not exist as static structures, nor do they merely unfold or evolve in space and time). (p. 146)

In this study, the intra-action (Barad, 2007) of personal and political histories, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, practices of whiteness in schools (e.g., Castagno, 2014), and settler colonial grammars in schools (Calderon, 2014) produce differences that matter and are formative of matter and meaning and the production of the phenomena of teacher well-ill-being. This work will go on to consider the specific ways in which these apparatuses form a hidden curriculum of teacher becoming in each of the case studies that follow.

Implications for Teacher Education Research

Teacher education research thus becomes differently in posthuman inquiry. Instead of the atomized individual (teacher or student), the unit of analysis becomes not the individual humanist subject; *milieus*, *movements, refrains, disruptions, irruptions, events, concepts, or assemblages* (Nail, 2017) might be more properly engaged as units of analysis. Because agency is conceptualized as emergent, intra-active (Barad, 2007, 2003), becoming without a subject (Mazzei, 2013), embodied, singular, and/or transpersonal (Coole, 2005), the *agentic assemblage* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2016) might be discussed and/or enacted in the writing, but it becomes impossible to state in Humanist conventions *which human individuals* assert agency understood *as solo mastery or ownership of the merger of intentionality and action*. Instead, phenomena are produced via agential cuts (Barad, 2007); via ingression and prehension (Whitehead, as cited in Mazzei, 2020); via Deleuzian conceptual events (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). Deleuze and Guattari discuss events in relation to concepts in their book *What is*

Philosophy? (1994) as the instantaneous changes made to reality by concepts when concepts coalesce. Concepts have an existence, an ontology—albeit an abstract one—but they are co-constituted with their material impacts. To consider Deleuze and Guattari's definition of the concept "speaking" the event, it is important to understand "events" as non-personal, unique, unrepeatable, materially-discursively impactful coalescences of (a finite number) of forces that have *potentially* infinite impacts. They state:

> The concept speaks the event, not the essence or the thing—pure Event, a haecceity, an entity…. It is like the bird as event. The concept is defined by *the inseparability of a finite number of heterogeneous components traversed by a point of absolute survey at infinite speed*…. It is *infinite through its survey or its speed but finite through its movement that traces the contour of its components* (p. 21).

In other words, concepts deploy their immanent intensity by surveying 'no less than every state of affairs.' Concepts reconfigure, or at least touch, all affairs (immanent and actual); they fundamentally rearrange reality, though they are, by their nature, *finite* in the components that make them up. Events, as singular configurations of pre-personal affects, forces, materiality, subjectivities, intensities, and possibilities, *are ontological productions*.

Teacher education can be understood as a multiplicity of these kinds of "events," and thus can be understood as ontological (Rosiek & Gleason, 2017). Teacher education research becomes an opportunity[20] for research-creation (Springgay et al., 2020; Springgay & Truman, 2019) and for "minor pedagogies" (Mazzei & Smithers, 2020) to emerge. It may also be understood as "immersive cartography" (Rousell, 2021) in that it maps as it co-constitutes possible realities. For example, Madden's work (2015, 2017, 2019), views "teachers' narratives as networks of agents, absence, presence, elsewhere, and elsewhen [sic] and examine[s] the circulation of power and co-constitution

[20] Although "affordance" might be a better term, for "opportunity" too may carry connotations of individual Humanist subjects for whom the "opportunity" is present to be taken advantage of.

of whiteness therein" (Madden, 2017, p. 643). Madden "plugs in" to theories similarly to Jackson & Mazzei (2012), not to "see" (an enactment of the ableist, humanist spectator subject) what is "really going on," but to become part of the "teacher assemblage" (Webb, 2009), "mapping" "spectres [sic] of whiteness" (Madden, 2017) in order to engage and potentially redirect their flows.

These ontological productions are ethical to the core. In the words of Rosiek, Snyder, and Pratt (2019): "We live in a moral universe in which everything is an agent or part of an agent and *every action carries a moral dimension*" (p. 7, my emphasis). However, under a dispersed, eventalized image of subjectivity, thinking ethics without a subject becomes necessary; ethics happen and draw "us" in, and we are still responsible for what becomes of them.

Relationships with Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Posthumanist inquiry and Indigenous[21] ways of knowing share several similar but distinct concepts, particularly that of non-human agency (Rosiek & Snyder, 2020). In both paradigms, reality is conceptualized as relational, and in Indigenous paradigms it is also often holistic (Simpson, 2017, 2020; Wilson, 2008). However, the ethical and lived dimensions of Indigenous ontologies, I argue, act as exemplars for posthuman inquiry. Posthumanisms will continue to entangle certain elements of Humanism,[22] but can learn crucial insights by engaging Indigenous scholarship. Rosiek and I have

[21] While it is crucial to acknowledge that there is no singular "pan-Indigenous" perspective and many ways of knowing are unique to distinct tribes, there are broader commonalities that most Indigenous people worldwide seem to share, among the most crucial of these being relationality as the core of reality (Wilson, 2008).

[22] "The posthuman subjectivity I advocate," states Braidotti (2013, p. 51), "is rather materialist and vitalist, embodied and embedded, firmly located somewhere, according to the feminist 'politics of location.'" However, for Braidotti, as for many other scholars of the posthuman turn, her "monistic philosophy of becomings rests on the idea that matter, including the specific slice of matter that is human embodiment, is intelligent and self-organizing. This means that matter is not dialectically opposed to culture, nor to technological mediation, but continuous with them" (p. 35). Western enlightenment Humanism, on the contrary, bifurcates mind and body (Descartes' famous "I think therefore I am"), claims that the body is matter, but that matter at its most fundamental is dead, inert, not vitalist. This is how nature becomes "opposed" to culture, with nature being simply "material" and "culture," because it is of the human "mind," becoming intelligent and vital. Western enlightenment Humanism, ironically, is a *de*humanizing philosophy in that it *devalues bodies* as being co-constitutive with living, intelligent, moving, desiring forces. For if bodies and minds are separate entities in the first place, some (devalued) bodies can be construed as lacking in human intelligence, culture, etc. If, instead, we understand *bodying* as a vital force that co-composes all becoming-bodies, no human (and, importantly, no more-than-human or other-than-human) body can properly be construed as devoid or deficient of culture, intelligence, inherent value, etc. Furthermore, because Western Enlightenment Humanism relies on bifurcations, the idea that we can

written elsewhere (Rosiek & Adkins-Cartee, 2023) about the politics and ethics of being white settler scholars located in academia who cite Indigenous studies scholarship. We have written about how we are always already either risking appropriation and extraction by choosing to cite Indigenous scholars, particularly as parts of Indigenous thinking bear on or bear similarity to conversations about non-human agency in posthumanisms, or, we are risking erasure of the contributions of Indigenous studies scholarship to our thinking on these subjects--thinking that has, in almost all cases, been around for much, much longer than posthumanism in the Western philosophical tradition. There is no position of innocence, and while we chose then, as I choose now, to err on the side of risking appropriation and extraction in an attempt to avoid erasure, we also recognized then, as I do now, that the ethical implications of these choices lies in what futurities are enabled or disabled by making those choices, as well as in our political engagements outside of our writing and outside of the academy.

In order to engage Indigenous ways of knowing, I attempt to think with the call to "be a good relative." What would it mean for me, as a white settler scholar to aspire to be a good relative to Indigenous ways of knowing and being? Perhaps as a starting point: good relatives call, listen, form relationships, spend time, are not codependent, and act in solidarity while honoring uniqueness and distinction. Here, I will detail some of the most important things I have learned by reading (listening to) Indigenous studies scholarship thus far. I will return to what, if any, ways in which this work might act in solidarity with Indigenous futurities in the conclusion.

Briefly, some crucial learnings as I have understood them thus far (as a white settler-colonial novice[23] to Indigenous understandings of reality) concern the following. First is the spirituality of

completely bifurcate posthumanisms from Humanism is also false; posthumanism will continue to entangle and re-assemble elements of Humanism.

[23] Acknowledging the positionality implied by the embodiment colloquially understood as "me" is not to reify or reinscribe a Humanist onto-epistemological view of such embodiment or such positionality; rather, it is to acknowledge

Indigenous ways of knowing. In the words of Tachine: "I understood… that *spirit* and *knowing* are intricately connected just as story and knowing are linked together" (Tachine, 2018, p. 65). As yet, posthumanisms do not share an understanding or definition of a post-Enlightenment Western "spiritualism." While a fuller discussion of this particular issue and the (very important[24]) reasons for such avoidance is beyond the scope of the current writing, a few scholars such as Ramey (2012) have begun exploring the hermetic and potentially spiritual dimensions of some thought broadly considered to enact posthumanist ontologies.

Furthermore, in listening to and learning from the scholarship of non-Indigenous women of Color[25], posthumanisms may take example from "women of color feminisms [that] engage with Indigenous feminisms because [they] have dreams and visions that can be supported through collaboration and alliances, for [they] experience settler colonialism and its intersection with capitalism in different ways and shape [their] lives in the present" (Denetdale, 2020). Again, without reifying biological essentialism or Humanist individualistic subjectivity, it is nonetheless noteworthy that a great deal of posthumanist scholarship thus far has been written by White, English-speaking scholars with some notable exceptions (e.g. Dixon-Román, Wynter, Tuck). Thus, listening to learn from; learning how to live out; attuning to assemblages that enact posthumanisms in both solidarity with and difference from Indigenous ways of knowing offers possibilities for greater accountability to the values of anti-racist and anti-colonial, ecologically respectful "affirmative ethics" (Braidotti, 2019) already espoused by many who write broadly under the umbrella of posthumanist thought. In

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the material-discursive ways in which "nature-cultures" (Kirby, 2011) *matter* and produce enactments *differently* depending upon phenotype, skin color, hegemonically performative (Butler, 2006, 2011) gender, and so forth.

[24] i.e. a deeply-ingrained history of cultural appropriation, commodification, and theft (often for profit) of non-Western and non-Judeo-Christian spiritualities.

[25] Throughout, I follow the capitalization conventions of Gotanda (1991, p. 4), who discusses 'white' as a term of racial domination, and therefore not deserving of capitalization, and 'Black' as a term of politically and socially liberatory identity. These conventions are also discussed in Rosiek & Kinslow (2016).

this way, posthuman scholars might learn to *read* and *cite* in more generous, generative, affirmative, anti-colonial ways (Liboiron, 2021).

Indigenous Feminisms

Such concepts of resistance and resilience are also grounded in Indigenous feminist understandings of the fundamentally relational nature of existence (Wilson, 2008). While once again, it is both ethically and politically risky for me, as a white settler anti-colonial scholar, to draw on Indigenous scholarship in a project that does not directly work with or benefit Indigenous communities, it is nonetheless the hope of this work to engage in a kind of "de-weaponizing praxis" (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016) that works in anti-colonial ways and potentially in solidarity with the aims of Indigenous futurities (Simpson, 2017). In other words, Indigenous feminisms bring "me" back to positionality, and remind me of the crucialness of remaining humble in the face of what I do not know, what I cannot know, and the ways in which "response-able" research (Springgay et al., 2020) is always relationally accountable to/with/in contexts.

Further, Cree scholar Wilson (2008) states, "If research doesn't change you as a person, then you haven't done it right" (p. 135). Wilson

> articulates the ideas of relationality and relational accountability being the shared paradigm of Indigenous research. With an acceptance of relationality comes the realization that models do not work outside of specific contexts, and following relational accountability, I cannot presume to know the context of other people's research. This study is not intended to impose conclusions on other people or to be a manual of techniques for their research. This would narrow their thinking. I hope that an Indigenous research paradigm provides a foundation from which to work but not a ceiling or walls to enclose or encage others. (p. 136)

Relational accountability, for Wilson, is contextual for all relations. It is not presumptive or prescriptive, but is rather a mode of engagement. It entails a commitment to the specific context of research and to the specific lands and peoples involved. Wilson's concept of relational accountability is specific even to his choice of writing style, as writing and communicating enact relations with both language and with others. He states, concerning writing, that

> The dominant style of writing to an anonymous reader did not live up to the standards of relational accountability I was proposing. Indigenous epistemology is all about ideas developing through the formation of relationships. An idea cannot be taken out of this relational context and still maintain its shape. Terry Tafoya (1995) describes this in his Principle of Uncertainty…. Tafoya postulates that it is not possible to know exactly both the context and definition of an idea at the same time. The closer you get to defining something, the more it loses its context. Conversely, the more something is put into context, the more it loses a specific definition. (Wilson, 2008, p. 8)

In Wilson's work, relational accountability impacts even the style and choice of writing format because these, too, are enactments of relationality. Relational accountability, for Wilson (drawing on Tafoya), means seeking less to "know" (in the sense of "define" or "pin down") than to put into context. Putting things into context, and the relations entailed, are the process, which is also the product. Indeed, Wilson goes on to say:

> Now education or research can be used as both a tool and a weapon. If we're going to educate Aboriginal people through the hierarchical process, what you're basically teaching them is the hierarchical process. Therefore the process is the product. (p. 103)

Thus, learning from Wilson's commitment to relational accountability, as a white settler anti-colonial scholar seeking to engage Indigenous scholarship, I am also accountable to all research relations, including writing. This means, for me, maintaining an attunement throughout the research process

and writing for whenever research or writing "may not be the intervention needed" (Tuck & Yang, 2014). However, having been raised in a society (and, importantly, benefitting from a society) that has been built upon extractive, appropriative relations, I must also presume my complicity in these structures even as I work to subvert them. As Ahmed (2017) puts it:

> When we are trying to intervene in the reproduction of power, we have to think differently; we have to think on our feet…. When we have to think strategically, we also have to accept our complicity: we forgo any illusions of purity; we give up the safety of exteriority. If we are not exterior to the problem under investigation, we too are the problem under investigation. (pp. 93-94)

My political commitment, following Ahmed and in relation to Wilson's work, is to continue to build relationships with Indigenous ideas and knowledge (Wilson, 2008, p. 114) while assuming that I *will not* be able to avoid appropriation and extraction. Certainly, I am committed to continually investigating my own complicities with colonialism, capitalism, heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, and anti-Blackness. And, I am committed to avoiding and/or undoing these harms when and where possible. But part of that commitment is also understanding that this work takes place within larger systems (specifically, academia; k-12 schooling in a settler colonial state; a settler colonial government and white supremacist society, etc.) that are built on these harms, and therefore, I will do (and have already done) harm. Perhaps the political commitment for me, then, is to *maximize harm reduction*.

I also learn from Nicoll (2004), who, while not an Indigenous scholar herself, demonstrates that grounding white settler positionality and subjectivity within Indigenous sovereignty allows her to "examine why Indigenous claims on… place unsettle us [white people] so deeply" (n.p.). Her political commitments concerning both her teaching as well as her theorizing are specific: concerning theory, she states, "white feminists need to theorize how to give up power" (n.p.).

Concerning teaching, she advocates teaching critical whiteness theory to students in order to "unsettle white subjectivity rather than create opportunities for individual confession, catharsis and redemption" (n.p.) She states that "white Australian students will only be inspired and empowered to undertake this challenge to the extent that their teachers are also prepared to reflect on the operation of our white race privilege" (n.p.).

However, she is mindful to note that "the capacity of whiteness theory to function critically in the classroom was undermined precisely to the extent that I fell into performing the role of the anti-racist white teacher, which maps closely onto the subject position identified by Moreton-Robinson as 'middle-class white woman'" (n.p.). Thus, Nicoll's political commitment, as mine, is to pedagogically enact and draw attention to her own "refusal to embody moral virtue and perform an exemplary role as the 'good' lecturer dedicated to the fight against racism and racists, [which makes] it easier for other white students to honestly explore the ambivalence that accompanies the recognition of their race privilege" (n.p.).

Part of this ambivalence, on Nicoll's part, is also to draw attention to the ways in which, within a settler colonial context, there is often an emphasis on "the paternalist (and maternalist) tropes of reconciliation… following… 'restorative justice'" (n.p.); yet "Justice might… not simply be about 'getting along', but may preserve the right of others not to enter into relationships, 'to not be with me', in the first place" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 11, as cited in Nicoll, 2004, n.p.). In this way, Nicoll "[insists] that Indigenous sovereignty is not a narrow political agenda. It is the very opposite. It is the narrow political agendas of our parliamentary representatives that are preventing this issue of Indigenous sovereignty—*which will not go away*—from being squarely addressed" (n.p., original emphasis). This right "to not be with me" is part of what is compromised (here I again emphasize Ahmed's point about assuming our complicity) when white settler anti-colonial scholars engage

Indigenous scholarship. This is why understanding my own complicity, rather than claiming a stance of "virtue"[26] (Nicoll, 2000, p. 381), is a crucial part of my own political commitment to this work.

Nicoll also writes that "Indigenous sovereignty is not an object capable of being approached from different perspectives. Indigenous sovereignty is a challenge to the very system of perspective that makes academic analysis possible" (Nicoll, 2000, p. 369). Therefore, part of Nicoll's approach to

> the question… as to how white people might engage more positively with Indigenous sovereignty… means that I can only approach Indigenous sovereignty from my embodied perspective as a queer, white woman…. *What* you know will turn out to be less important than *who* you know and what you *cannot* know" (p. 385).

Lather's (aforementioned) statement that "embracing not knowing is the condition of a less dangerous doing" (2009, p. 346) echoes this fundamentally relational axiology. Throughout this dissertation process, whom I have known--both personally and via reading and writing--have been those with whom thought takes flight. However, as I will go on to detail, *mapping* anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-being is a methodology that pays close attention to *process,* to *emergence.* Combined with what I have learned from Indigenous relationality, immersive cartography has allowed me, in some important moments, to lean into giving up a false sense of "control" in the interactions I had with teachers and, to some extent, in the doing of the writing.

Critical Race Theory, Sociology of Race

Sociology of Race and Critical Race Theory (CRT) contain several concepts that are also salient to understanding embodied teacher well-being. First of all, though, scholars such as Childers (2014) have made compelling arguments for "promiscuous analysis." In her own promiscuous analysis, she brings together Foucauldian discourse analysis and Critical Race Theory in order to

[26] The conclusion to my master's thesis included a section called "the virtuous teacher" (Adkins-Cartee, 2014). I now question to what extent such a phenomenon is possible.

develop insights about race and racism in schools that neither frame would have given her alone. Childers states:

> I am interested in the intentional and careful decision making that goes into promiscuous deployments of theory and analysis. I am also interested in how the material world itself is "promiscuous" in how it comingles and infiltrates our engagements forcing us to exceed the containment of our expectations for research. (p. 820)

Taken as part of a "promiscuous analysis," CRT has a methodological strength in its ability to work with and enhance multiple other theories. It allows a set of political assumptions and commitments to travel in ways that make sense for and to different contexts (including theoretical contexts). Bringing together fields of scholarship usually thought separately ontologically and epistemologically honors the ways in which research "exceeds the containment of our expectations" (p. 820) and leaves room methodologically for adherence to what *becomes*, not pre-or pro-scribing possible outcomes. Putting CRT into conversation with the agential realism of Barad (Barad, 2007), Rosiek and Kinslow (2016) similarly aver:

> The world—including the world of matter—is framed as agential precisely because it is *not reducible to any single representation*, nor triangulation of multiple representations. According to this philosophical view, the substance of existence is different—it responds differently—and shapes us differently—depending on how we enter into relation with it. (p. xxv, my emphasis)

CRT's foundational concepts include whiteness as property; the critique of liberalism; race as socially constructed; racism as a permanent, if protean, feature of society; and interest convergence as the only way that the interests of BIPOC are taken into consideration in a white supremacist society (D. Bell, 2018; D. A. Bell, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2016; Rosiek, 2019). Such concepts are descriptions of types of relationships--not only between humans and knowledge, between humans and matter,

humans and other humans' bodies, humans and power, but also between and among power and materiality, power and discourse, discourse and materiality. Mapping relationships is not at odds with an immanent and relational ontology, nor does doing so limit researchers to a single set of relevant methods. Indeed, as Childers (2014) affirms, it is possible to "embrace an unruly approach to thinking about and engaging with empirical materials that is less interested in doing it 'right' and more interested in flexing, breaking, and blurring theoretical and analytic boundaries as needed to respond to the field" (p. 819). Drawing on CRT aims to respond to the "field" of embodied, racialized teacher well-being. It helps to make this work responsible (*response-able*) (Springgay et al., 2020) to/with/in racialized and racializing relations.

Other related concepts from the field of Sociology of Race also became salient to this work. Specifically, Omi & Winant's foundational work on racial projects (see definitional orientations) became illustrative at points. Therefore, Sociology of Race and CRT inform an anti-racist, anti-colonial and feminist (standpoint) materialist conceptualization of teacher well-being in helping to frame the *context* of teacher well-being as a permanently racist society where systemic white supremacy constantly takes new forms. They also inspire a relational approach to knowing that is connected--both to intellect and emotion, but additionally via affect, embodiment, materiality, environments, power flows, and both macro- and micropolitics. Teacher subjectivities, which embody well-being, become in relation with the norms and local material arrangements of racialization.

Community Psychology

The field of Community Psychology addresses racialized and anti-colonial trauma healing in important ways that are relevant to conceptualizing embodied teacher well-being. Much psychological literature focuses on the ways in which students and youth experience racialized stress and trauma (Saleem et al., 2021). However, teacher well-being also impacts (I would argue that it co-

constitutes) school climate, which impacts (co-constitutes) student learning (Gray et al., 2017). And just as Saleem et al. argue that "ecological contexts" (family, community) are crucial for how youth manage and respond to racialized stress and trauma, ecological contexts (including school, community, family, and societal-level contexts) certainly matter for how adult teachers also respond to racialized stress and trauma, which do not stop happening once humans reach adulthood. It is not a far stretch to imagine, then, that how well-supported teachers are in processing racialized stress and trauma impacts their embodied well-being, the school community, and how they are able to respond to and support students.

The work of Prilleltensky (Prilleltensky, 2005, 2008, 2012, 2020; Prilleltensky et al., 2016) also conceptualizes well-being more broadly than traditional, individualistic definitions. "The well-being of any one person is highly dependent on the well-being of her/his relationships and on the community in which she/he resides" (Prilleltensky, 2005, p. 54). Prilleltensky also considers the roles of power and oppression in well-being; he states that "it is only when we achieve an integrated political and psychological understanding of power, wellness, and oppression that we can effectively change the world around us" (2008, p. 129). Community psychology, then, offers important ways of understanding possible paths of healing and resilience.

Teacher Education and Professional Development as Anti-Racist and Anti-Colonial Movement and Bodying

Teacher knowledge as conceptualized in posthuman inquiry is thus not merely practical as in "pragmatic" (oriented toward possible futures) (Clandinin, 1989; Clandinin et al., 2018; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Dewey, 1997; Shulman, 1987), but is fundamentally oriented towards the creation of other ontological spatio-temporalities, including, potentially, Indigenous *temporal sovereignties* (Rifkin, 2017).[27] As such, it enacts ontological, ethical

[27] There is a danger of reifying the stereotype of Indigenous people existing only in the past, here, and falling into the trap of Indigeneity as anachronistic is what Rifkin seeks to avoid. It is crucial to conceptualize sovereign Indigenous

creative power. When agential cuts, conceptual events, and ontological movements make something new (phenomena, assemblages, affects) possible, this "something new" need not—perhaps *must* not—be conceptualized in progressive, linear, teleological time, although it certainly involves *future/s/ing*. "Future/s/ing" (Adkins-Cartee, 2018), then, may be conceptualized as speculative (Springgay & Truman, 2019), as cause and effect become entangled and co-constitutive (Barad, 2003; 2007). Indeed, as Springgay and Truman put it:

> Chronological or progressive time is linear and equated with humanist notions of freedom, rationality, peace, equality and prosperity (Freeman, 2010). These normative understandings of time are predicated on advancement, development and innovation. Normative time renders Black, queer, disabled and Indigenous subjects as 'out of time' (Nyawalo, 2016). The progress narrative that shapes modernity is built on transatlantic slavery and ongoing settler colonialism; progress has been achieved by using Black and Indigenous bodies while simultaneously omitting them from the future. …If progress time accelerates, rendering some bodies and subjects successful in schools, while simultaneously pushing other bodies and subjects 'out of time,' then different configurations of time are necessary in order to think otherwise about *learning*" (2019, pp. 547-548, my emphasis).

How might teacher education enact different configurations of time in order to think otherwise about learning? "The way to get started," says Braidotti, "is by composing a 'we' that is grounded, accountable and active. This is the collective praxis of affirmative politics, which can help us out of the alternation of euphoria and despair, giddying elation and toxic negativity" (Braidotti, 2019, Ch. 1). Teacher education becomes ontological "response-ability" (Springgay et al., 2020). Indeed, Springgay et al. draw on concepts of "withness" from Indigenous scholars "Juanita Sundburg (2014),

presents as becoming-with, but also sovereign from, a singular, Western-Humanist, linear, teleological present. Perhaps we might think of temporal multiplicity as temporal decolonization.

Bonnie Freeman (2015), and Jon Johnson (2015)" (Springgay et al., 2020, p. 904) to articulate how "response-ability" entails "[tending] to, [becoming] attentive to, [being] tender, [listening], [bending] into, [sharing], [being] accountable to collaboration, and [exchanging]" as "complicated relations and entanglements with humans, nonhumans, and land, and an ethics of situatedness, solidarity, and resistance" (p. 904). Braidotti further concurs: "The emphasis on affectivity and relationality is an alternative to individualist autonomy" (2019, e-text, Ch. 1). Thus, in constituted 'we's,' affirmative singularities may agentially coalesce, exerting gravitational pull in teacher education, ontologically constituting different, potentially holographic (but not infinite) space-times where greater freedom *with* response-ability become possible.

Research Purpose and Questions

The unit of analysis for this study, given this framing, becomes not the individual teacher, but instead, the assemblage (Buchanan, 2015; Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of the production of poor teacher well-being. This work assumes, therefore, that poor teacher well-being is produced vis à vis processes of racialization (Omi & Winant, 2015) and material racial and social reproduction (Anyon, 1981) as manifestations of settler colonialism (McKay et al., 2020; Tuck & Gorlewski, 2016) and as a posthuman agentic phenomenon (Rosiek, 2019). Furthermore, the assemblages of teacher resilience and resistance are also not conceptualized as the Western, humanist, atomized subject's *personal* resistance and *personal* resilience, but assemblages of collective, material resistance and resilience co-constituted in the production of teacher bodies, knowledges, subjectivities, and practices.

Therefore, I am interested in whether and to what degree "assemblages" of teacher well-being—particularly the well-being of social-justice oriented educators of any and all races/racializations—can be "mapped" (Rousell, 2021), and what assemblages of collective teacher resistance and resilience can become. Specifically, the research question for this study is:

> What can we learn about sustaining anti-racist and/or anti-colonial teachers in the profession by exploring the unique stressors and joys associated with engaging in anti-racist teaching

practice?

Naming—giving words to phenomena—while always partial and contingent, nonetheless carries ameliorative potential (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2005) in cases where oppressions (e.g. white supremacy) function via invisibility and silence (Mazzei, 2011). Therefore, this work also asks:

> Can working with social-justice oriented teachers to map and name the assemblage(s) of the production of poor teacher well-being carry ameliorative power? How can such naming co-constitute space(s) where collective, anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher resilience and resistance become?

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, METHODS, AND DESIGN

This research aims to bring together practicing teachers who orient themselves as anti-colonial, anti-racist social justice educators; however, it also aims at the creation of resistant and resilient anti-colonial and anti-racist educational becomings that supersede individualized notions of agency. Nonetheless, in terms of the practicalities of creating ontogenic circumstances for anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher resilience, some of the design of this research still borrows methods from traditional humanist qualitative inquiry, even as they are engaged, enacted, and analyzed differently. "Qualitative research methods are designed to investigate human behavior and its meanings and the impact of the sociocultural context in which the behavior occurs" (Seal et al., 1998, p. 253). Here, the focus is not human behavior but a distributed sense of teacher material embodiment. This research also aims not at "understanding" "human behavior and its meanings" but at *engaging* the *map* of teacher well-ill-being, and not at fully "understanding" "the impact of the sociocultural context in which the behavior occurs" (as if a singular understanding exists and is possible to definitively know). It aims, again, at *engaging* and *mapping* the interfaces of contexts, affects, bodies, and environments, potentially changing their trajectories.

Nine practicing or former teachers were recruited via snowball sampling methods across five different U.S. states and one U.S. territory. These included Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Kansas, South Carolina, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To this end, I reached out to previous contacts from my own K-12 teaching career, and I also reached out to organizations associated with social justice, anti-racist practice, and anti-colonial practice in education. Some of these were state-level organizations, and some were private, not-for-profit organizations involved in advocacy, publication, ongoing teacher professional development, and more. I omit the specific identities of these organizations in order to preserve the anonymity of participants. Some of these organizations put me in contact with

specific participants, while others let me know how I could reach out to teacher participants who may have an interest in the project.

The purpose of recruiting teachers from different regions of the country was to encourage relationships across contexts and locations, engaging parallels and distinctions in how the assemblages of teacher well-being manifest across different places, and to encourage teachers to strategize together, even as their strategies took place-based forms. This design may also contribute to conceptual breadth in the study.

Furthermore, of the nine total teachers who participated, five self-identified as white, two as Latinx, two as Black (one African American and one Afro-Caribbean), and three identified as LGBTQIA+. These teachers were at varying stages of their careers, although the majority were approximately mid-career teachers. One teacher (a tenth potential participant) withdrew, and two wanted to participate but could not due to time constraints. The teacher who withdrew also did so due to time constraints. This fact alone was perhaps telling, in that teachers who orient themselves to anti-racist/anti-colonial work generally already have quite numerous time commitments outside of classroom teaching itself.

The initial focus group sought to explore the ways in which teachers experience well-being, anti-racism and anti-colonialism in their current teaching practices, and what their engagements with resistance and resilience already have become, and might become. Focus groups traditionally have been:

> used to elicit information about new topics; explain counterintuitive or unexpected results; generate new hypotheses; evaluate instruments and programs; or better explain the range and depth of attitudes, beliefs, and experiences within a defined population. (Seal et al., 1998, p. 253)

However, in this research, teachers engaged a total of two focus groups both as enactments of anti-racist and anti-colonial "research creation" (Springgay & Truman, 2019) (see further explanation of that term in this section, below) and as an initial enactment of teacher resilience and resistance in themselves. Inasmuch as the relationship between teacher well-being and our ability to collectively teach for social justice is often silenced (whether via omission or commission), resilience here becomes a *mode*[28] of engagement.

Understanding that there is no such thing as "safe space" for discussions of race for People of Color in a racist society (Leonardo & Porter, 2010), participants were asked upon volunteering what type of group setting they would prefer. None who participated asked for a group setting that was exclusively People of Color, so we remained one larger group.

In the second focus group, teachers further discussed the stressors and challenges they faced in terms of well-being and formulated what types of action(s) they might engage (or were already engaging) both in their classrooms and/or in their local/regional school communities. These engagements produced "murmurings" of otherwise futurities. To illustrate the point, in their discussion of "work/think/play" in doctoral education, Van Cleave et al. (2018) discuss murmurations of starlings as examples of what becoming with/in research does:

> When taken together, the ideas, authors, and articles are no longer discrete individuals but instead function as one organism, constantly in motion, continuing to change direction as additional shifts engage and interact with it. … [Research] moments reconstitute in unpredictable ways, without intention or purpose, they can also become something unanticipated, perhaps beautiful, and certainly productive of movement and new thinking. As Derrida (1994/1997), Haraway (1991), and Heidegger (1962) remind us, we are never watching any of this. We are always already it in, moving with the shifting energies and

[28] For a more in-depth discussion of the ontology of *mode*, see (Rabinow, 2003).

> forces, like a murmuration. (p. 740, my emphasis)

Because research moments constitute in unpredictable ways, having semi-structured questions assisted the emergence of such research becomings. But the "plan" was not, from the beginning, to stick to a strict protocol established ahead of time but to draw on conversations as one mode of engagement with teachers and material-discursive contexts. Teachers were asked to participate in at least one semi-structured interview of 1.5 hours (to be understood and analyzed similarly). As Mazzei (2013) explained,

> If the interview is also to be thought as an assemblage, there can no longer be a division between a field of reality (what we ask, what our participants tell us, and the places we inhabit), a field of representation (research narratives constructed after the interview), and a field of subjectivity (participants and researchers). Instead, these are to be thought as acting on one another simultaneously. (pp. 735-736)

Therefore, "agential cuts" (Barad, 2007) occurred in the selection of locations, participants, research questions, and methodologies. Interview "data" was not analyzed as constituting singular, transparent, "transcribable," self-representing individual "voices" that "speak for themselves" (Lather, 2009, p. 17, as cited in Mazzei, 2013, p. 733). What the analysis becomes in the writing is grounded in an ontology of "doing without data," or in Brinkmann's (2014) words, utilizing "abductive reasoning." For Brinkmann,

> Abduction is a form of reasoning that is concerned with the relationship between a *situation* and *inquiry*. It is neither data-driven nor theory-driven, but *breakdown-driven*…. The abductive approach presents research as part of the life process, as what we do in situations of breakdown that inevitably arise in life's situations…. Abduction is not driven by data or theory, but by astonishment, mystery, and breakdowns in one's understanding. (p. 722)

Drawing on pragmatist Charles S. Peirce, Brinkmann goes on to explain that "things *are* their effects" (p. 722). As opposed to Popper's focus on theory and hypothesis testing which founds much of positivist inquiry, and as opposed to grounded theory's focus on beginning with the data and allowing it to build theory, abductive research takes place in the "folds" (Deleuze, 1993) of reality-constituting. This is part of why "immersive cartography" (as discussed below) becomes a relevant methodological approach for this research.

Because this work focuses on assemblages of anti-colonial and anti-racist resilience with teachers, the methodology was simultaneously emergent as it took place. In other words, there was a plan, but the plan also always remained in motion (a la Manning, as discussed previously) and open to emergent possibilities. Such flexibility aligns with the epistemological, ontological and axiological commitments of both feminist materialist and anti-colonial, anti-racist feminist work, for which "there is no template or prescription" (Sabzalian, 2016, p. 28) because it is grounded in *living* relationality. As such, this work seeks to enact anti-colonial and anti-racist ways of being among researchers, teachers, and in "reading relations" (Liboiron, 2021).

Case Studies

This dissertation specifically looks at four teachers' interviews from the larger project as case studies. There is also one "interlude" chapter where a moment from the second focus group is explored. Case study allows phenomena to be understood in context; Webb (2009) noted that case studies are "[intended] to describe situations that do not have a clear set of outcomes… [and to] understand the intricate complexity of one case" (p. 52). In other words, case study pays attention to the "inside" of situations--the nuances, context, and what can be learned from the importance of individual stories. The four teachers' stories selected for this dissertation illustrated points that, while in many ways very intricately specific to these teachers themselves, also resonated with one another

intensively, mapping a larger terrain of anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher *well-ill-being*. These stories resonated via affect. Gregg and Seigworth (2010) define affect this way:

> Affect arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*: in the capacities to act and be acted upon. Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relation as well as the passage (and the duration of passage) of forces or intensities. That is, affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, nonhuman, part-body, and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about, between, and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves. Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces—visceral forces beneath, alongside, or generally other than conscious knowing, vital forces insisting beyond emotion—that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought and extension, that can likewise suspend us (as if in neutral) across a barely registering accretion of force-relations, or that can even leave us overwhelmed by the world's apparent intractability. Indeed, affect is persistent proof of a body's never less than ongoing immersion in and among the world's obstinacies and rhythms, its refusals as much as its invitations. (p. 1)

The stories selected for this dissertation unleashed intensities that moved between and among the stories, and between and among participants and myself. The "drive toward movement, toward thought and extension" (p. 1) that these particular stories unleashed may be sensed by the reader while, or after, reading them. They also produced novel interactions between the participants and between the participants and me, as will be detailed in the next chapters. These teachers' stories are important in themselves, in what they have to teach about anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher *well-ill-being,* and they also resonate affectively with larger concepts important to the ongoing education of anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers. In their mapping, these stories produce potential worldings

(Jackson & Mazzei, 2023) via an immersive cartographic orientation to this research. Immersive cartography, which will be discussed next, takes every situation as an "inside" situation--that there is no "view from nowhere" in social research; therefore we always are already acting as part of the situations we measure and describe.

Immersive Cartography

> Writing has nothing to do with signifying. It has to do with *surveying, mapping*, even realms that are yet to come." (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 4-5, my emphasis)
>
> A body is not defined by the form that determines it nor as a determinate substance or subject nor by the organs it possesses or the functions it fulfills. On the plane of consistency, *a body is defined only by a longitude and a latitude*: in other words the sum total of the material elements belonging to it under given relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness (longitude); the sum total of the intensive affects it is capable of at a given power or degree of potential (latitude)…. Latitude and longitude are the two elements of a cartography. (pp. 260-261)
>
> In methodological terms… methods cannot simply be repeated, because in repetition there is always difference; methods are done differently, and will make a difference…. Mapping difference, opening up spaces of and for difference, is thus a central problem for Deleuzian scholars where, methodologically, 'to repeat is to behave in a certain manner, but in relation to something unique and singular which has no equal or equivalent' (Deleuze 2001b: 1). (Coleman & Ringrose, 2013, p. 7).

Rousell's (2021) "A Map You Can Walk Into: Immersive Cartography and the Speculative Potentials of Data" introduces "immersive cartography" not as "method" but as "speculative *adventure* into inquiry… an adventure that pushes research to the threshold where concept becomes practice, and thought becomes creation: *research creation*" (p. 580). Drawing on the ontology of Deleuze and Guattari, as well as the works of Whitehead, Irwin, Bennett, Barad, Braidotti, and others, he states:

> Immersive cartography seeks to cultivate an alternative approach to social inquiry that is "new" in two senses proposed by St. Pierre et al. (2016): (a) as an ethical commitment to actively re-imagine and re-assemble social relations under conditions of environmental catastrophe and the colonial-capitalistic degradation of Earthly life, and (b) as an aesthetic

> commitment to pursue a risky and intensified project of experimentation with alternative forms of social life and inquiry. (p. 581)

For, if ontologically, a method "cannot simply be repeated" but always enacts difference, there is no choice but to continually enact difference in the research from every point; the research has always already begun "in the middle," to quote a commonly cited Deleuzoguattarian saying. In bringing together material elements as longitude and intensive affects as latitude, Deleuze and Guattari (1987, pp. 260-261) enact a monistic ontology of immanence that can only be navigated via engagement that produces change. However, this research "adventure," as Rousell terms it (not a method or methodology), is always already ethical. Hence, cartography's ethical commitment to "re-imagine and re-assemble social relations under conditions of environmental catastrophe and the colonial–capitalistic degradation of Earthly life" is a commitment to enactments of more just and equitable realities. But, importantly, these are NOT realities already imagined; those already imagined would be a stratification, or freezing, of thought's potential for (as Derrida terms it), "justice to come" (as cited in Barad, 2011, p. 148). The only choice is to experiment. A body, as "defined only by a longitude and a latitude" (in Deleuze and Guattari's conceptual vocabulary), is more than just a "human" body. Therefore, immersive cartography stretches language to gesture towards and enact the extra-linguistic "[operation] outside of language, representation, metaphor, critique, measurement, and rhetorical argument to create a new manifold, or 'bloc,' of sensation" (Rousell, 2021, p. 581).

Immersive cartography, then, is more than what would be entailed in "participatory action research;" it is ontological engagement of research as research-enactment-as-participating-in-the-creation-of-new-realities. It is affect navigation both virtually and actually; it engages the material, but it can also open immanent avenues for new sensations, different extra-linguistic and abstract affects that gesture toward justice as yet unthought.

Immersive Cartography and Research-Creation

Under a postqualitative conception of "data" (Brinkmann, 2014), *mapping* (Mazzei et al., 2020; Rousell, 2021)—or *immersive* cartography (Rousell, 2021), is an active mapping of forces, affects, relations, material structures, locations, and histories. "Mapping" in this sense does not mean making physical or visual maps (although visual representations could become part of the mapping process). It is not "tracing" in the sense that Deleuze and Guattari discuss ("make a map not a tracing") (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987); it is *productive* rather than *representational* (Martin & Kamberelis, 2013)

Immersive cartography is a methodology that allows for a certain open-endedness to data collection and reconceptualizes the meaning and parameters of "data." "Data" itself has become a hegemonic concept in Western, Eurocentric research, and my use of an open-ended concept of "data" aims to de-weaponize what counts as legitimate data in a settler colonial academic setting (Patel, 2016; Smith, 1999). Therefore, while it is possible to predict several of the methods drawn upon (some of which are appropriated from traditional qualitative and positivist inquiry, as described above), it was not possible to trace ahead-of-time exactly what forms data analysis would take. That said, reading data multiply (Mol, 2003) while generating new possible trajectories for action in alignment with anti-colonial and anti-racist political commitments was the overarching aim. Indeed, it was important to hold open both the methodology and the analysis of this study for "motion" to take place in order "to inspire teaching [and research] that might unsettle rigid, Eurocentric conceptions of… *solidarity*… or *provide a meaningful basis from which to theorize and create*" (Sabzalian, 2016, p. 28, my emphasis).

> Likewise, research-creation, as discussed by Springgay, Truman, and MacLean (2020), is an approach to doing research attuned to speculative middles, (in)tensions, and more than representational practices. These practices are accountable to an ethics and politics that are

> situated, relational, and response-able. We use the term practice, as opposed to methodology or method, to signify the shift from form or medium, "toward open ended actions, series, processes and projects." (p. 901)

Honoring place and context, embodiment and specificity, holding open the possibilities for action, process, and representational practice are practices of research "response-ability;" they engage ontological movement and attune to it; they are practices of research creation that are not founded on rigid assumptions of knowledge-making practices, and as such, it is my attempt here to use them in a de-weaponizing way.

Writing

As Richardson & St. Pierre (2005) asserted, "creative analytical practices" in writing "may indeed be the most desirable representations because they invite people in and open spaces for thinking about the social that elude us now" (p. 962). Conceptualizing analytical writing this way also allows writing to move with the "shifting and contradictory" phenomena, subjectivities, environments, and transpersonal assemblages that co-constitute with the research.

Expected Contributions

This work is expected to contribute to an understanding of teacher well-being as a transpersonal, embodied phenomenon imbricated with/in assemblages of white supremacy and settler colonialism. It also hopes to contribute a mapping of possibilities for teacher resistance and resilience in white supremacist and settler colonial contexts that generate racialized teacher trauma and poor teacher well-being. Ultimately, these contexts and the subjectivities they generate harm educational justice. I also hope for this work to contribute to teacher education literature on the retention of teachers oriented toward social justice, particularly along racial lines, and particularly in settler colonial contexts. This work is an urgent call for reconceptualized, collective, and embodied anti-racist and anti-colonial teacher well-being as essential for educational justice, which itself is a

"horizon of possible consequences" (Rosiek & Adkins-Cartee, 2023) that is never guaranteed but is nonetheless aimed for. To reiterate, it also hopes to contribute to more de-weaponized (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016) anti-colonial teaching as well as more de-weaponized posthuman theor(ies), which have too often erased or excluded meaningful Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies (Eglash et al., 2020; Rosiek et al., 2019). And, it hopes to contribute concepts of body-mind-world justice that map the entanglement—indeed, the inextricable relatedness—of justice for racialized bodies, well-being, and anti-colonial justice.

CHAPTER IV: THE CASE STUDIES

What *is* an immersive cartographical case study? Actually, that question of meaning is not quite right. What can an immersive cartographical case study become? As Jackson & Mazzei (2023) put it:

> Why, we ask, is a research text that foregrounds the experience of the "subject" that wishes to answer the question, "What does it mean?" considered more clear, authentic, and more full of potential to incite change than an analytic text that produces questions about "How does it work?" or "What is it doing?" (p. 45)

So: How does an immersive cartographical case study work? What is it doing? According to Rousell, "perhaps these are the opening propositions for an immersive cartography: Begin in the middle. Explore your milieus. Experiment with making maps of them. Stay in place and keep moving at the same time" (Rousell, 2021b, p. 2). Two words in this quotation are drawn from the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari and require explication. **Milieu**: in Brian Massumi's (1987) translation of *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Massumi explains that "In French, *milieu* means "surroundings," medium" (as in chemistry), and "middle" (p. xvii). In the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, "milieu" should be read as a technical term combining all three meanings" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. xvii). Further: **map**. It is worth quoting Deleuze and Guattari in the original at length to get a better sense of it:

> The rhizome is altogether different, a *map and not a tracing* [original emphasis]. Make a map, not a tracing. The orchid does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome. What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an *experimentation in contact with the real* [my emphasis]. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it *constructs* [my emphasis] the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs,

> the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that is always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back "to the same." The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged "competence." Unlike psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic competence (which confines every desire and statement to a genetic axis or overcoding structure, and makes infinite, monotonous tracings of the stages on that axis or the constituents of that structure), schizoanalysis rejects any idea of pretraced destiny, whatever name is given to it—divine, anagogic, historical, economic, structural, hereditary, or syntagmatic. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 12-13)

Immersive cartography, then, in its "map-making," is "experimentation in contact with the real." It constructs the unconscious, the preconscious, affects, movements, and connections between fields. These can be fields in the sense of "fields of study" or "disciplines" but can also be planes of thought laid out in an assemblage. It can always be "reworked" and is not a closed structure. *It does not give finality.* Crucially, once again, it does not "decide" "knowledge" once and for all.

I will circle back and think further with these quotations once I also lay out a few cursory points about **case study**. According to Rhee (Rhee, 2004), "most scholars agree that a case study is not a particular method but a strategy" (p. 72). Drawing on Yin (1994), Rhee explains that

> a case study is a comprehensive research strategy that deals with situations "in which there will be more variables of interest than data points;" [it] "relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to be converged in a triangulating fashion," and [it] "benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis." (Rhee, 2004, p. 72)

In engaging case studies of teachers oriented to anti-racist praxis, under a traditional qualitative humanist understanding of research, one might be engaged in in-depth interviews which explore a pre-established phenomenon from the lens of human experience. One might then go on to employ a survey or questionnaire to verify the results of several interviews; one might also conduct participant observations or engage in other traditional ethnographic practices to "triangulate" one's data. The goal would be the most accurate possible description of the phenomenon under investigation and the best possible descriptions of the multiple factors that contribute to the phenomenon's emergence.

Differently, in an immersive cartography of anti-racist teacher well-being, there is indeed a "phenomenon" under investigation (anti-racist teacher well-being and/or ill-being), and related variables (joy, burnout, challenges, racism, white supremacy, etc.)—but the meanings of all of these are assumed to be deferred (Derrida, 1995)—but deferred *not only* through chains of linguistic signs and signifiers, but through chains of material-discursive-affective-more-than-human entanglements (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013, 2019). It relies, not on "the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis" (Rhee, 2004, p. 72) but on a conceptual orientation that has already "begun in the middle." In this way, using case studies as a way of mapping an immersive cartography allows each case to map intensities and affects and unleash worldings in conversation and in concert with each other case study. The reader is invited to pay attention both to what is written but also to what (else) becomes unleashed when reading.

Azalea

Azalea was drawn to teaching. She knew fairly early in college that she wanted to teach, and she spent two college summers teaching in Freedom Schools. She said that after that experience, she became "very tunnel-vision focused" on teaching. The college she attended was "very TFA (Teach for America)-heavy," and given both her Freedom School summer experiences and her background as a Black cisgender woman who grew up in poverty, she was suspicious of Teach for America and its neoliberal agenda. So, she opted for an AmeriCorps position after college instead, coaching tennis and teaching literacy in Boston. Azalea now acknowledges that "there are so many issues" with many such programs (including AmeriCorps), but the year she spent in AmeriCorps still helped her find her way as a young person. After a year of AmeriCorps, she went back to graduate school so she could enter the teaching profession, and then she began teaching in a major city in the Southeastern United States. She taught middle school social studies for five years, and then spent a year teaching high school social studies. After six years in the classroom, Azalea burned out, but she did not give up on education. Azalea now works for an educational non-profit in the Washington, DC area which specializes in working for educational justice. She said that she "was very proud of the type of educator that [she] was." She described what she experienced as "what leads to a lot of burn out or pushout."

Azalea's word choice ("pushout") is significant. A great deal has been written on student pushout in K-12 schools, specifically pushout of Black girls (Crenshaw et al., 2015; Martin & Smith, 2017; Morris, 2018; Parks et al., 2016; White, 2018). As a Black woman, Azalea uses this same language to describe her experience of feeling forced to quit the teaching profession. The story of how this anti-racist Black cisgender woman teacher who is deeply invested in racial and social justice became pushed out of the teaching profession is worth paying attention to in the story of anti-racist educator well-being; while every Black womxn educator's story is unique, the contours of the

processes of racialization Azalea experienced, as well as the political, economic, environmental, and affective backgrounds that co-constituted her becoming "pushed out" will likely resonate with many anti-racist Black womxn educators—and many anti-racist educators generally as well.

In Omi and Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States* (2015), Omi and Winant discuss how "Race is both a social/historical structure and a set of accumulated signifiers that suffuse individual and collective identities, demarcate social boundaries, and organize the distribution of resources. We cannot understand how racial representations set up patterns of residential segregation, for example, without considering how segregation reciprocally shapes and reinforces the meaning of race itself" (p. 125). In Azalea's case, although she is not talking about the geographical aspect of "redlining" in housing segregation (Rothstein, 2018), the ways in which "redlining" and "pushout" have crept into many elements of society's treatment of Black bodies and subjectivities not only "reciprocally shape and reinforce the meaning of race itself," but also *co-constitute* Azalea's becoming pushed out of the K-12 teaching profession.

The redlining of the teaching profession happens in multiple ways, and is illustrated by the majority white constitution of the teaching workforce, which is still approximately 80% white (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). When education was integrated following Brown vs. Board, many Black educators were pushed out of the profession as Black children were bussed to formerly all-white schools to integrate them. Black community schools were closed and Black teachers, principals, and administrators were fired (Ladson-Billings & Anderson, 2021). As a result, even though majority-white schools tend to have majority-white teaching forces, majority-Black, majority-Latinx, majority-API (Asian and Pacific Islander), and majority-Native American/Alaska Native schools also tend to have majority-white teaching forces (even as the percentage of BIPOC and teachers who share a racial or ethnic identity with students tends to be higher than in majority-white schools) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). In other words, while creating

circumstances that feel intolerable for BIPOC educators, causing them to either not enter or to leave the profession, is not the same as direct policies of firing BIPOC faculty and administrators or enacting legal segregation in housing, the result—fewer BIPOC, and specifically Black, teachers in the profession—is largely the same.

Rund Abdelfatah and Khalil Gibran Muhammad make a similar argument regarding the "throughline" between the origins of the U.S. police force (slave patrols) and the over-policing and disproportionate police brutality continually inflicted upon Black bodies (Abdelfatah, 2020). To make this argument, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, a historian at the Harvard Kennedy School, "tell[s] parallel narratives about the history of policing in the north and the South. These stories are very different but share some striking similarities. Most importantly, they share one key feature--the use of brutal force to control black Americans" (Abdelfatah, 2020). Similarly, Michelle Alexander argues that mass incarceration of Black Americans has become "the new Jim Crow" (Alexander & West, 2012) by a similar argumentative logic:

> The current system of control permanently locks a huge percentage of the African American community out of the mainstream society and economy. The system operates through our criminal justice institutions, but it functions more like a caste system than a system of crime control…. Although this new system of racialized social control purports to be colorblind, it creates and maintains racial hierarchy much as earlier systems of control did. Like Jim Crow (and slavery), mass incarceration operates as a tightly networked system of laws, policies, customs, and institutions that operate collectively to ensure the subordinate status of a group defined largely by race. (p. 13)

What this argumentative logic does is to tell parallel stories and to point out both similarities and differences; however, the proof of the significance of the parallels among stories is in the striking similarities of their tangible *results* for Black people in the U.S. While some might object to a lack of

statistical analyses or quantitative data to "prove" causation rather than correlation, looking at the results of systems avoids a kind of "colorblind" logic (Alexander & West, 2012; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; Castagno, 2014; Omi & Winant, 2015) that can become embedded in assumptions made about the necessity of statistical proof for an argument's validity. Indeed, the assumption this study rests on is that ontologically, what is of consequence in a phenomenon is demonstrated by its results. Looking at outcomes of policies, systems, and/or assemblages, and valuing outcomes over "intent" (whether of policies or systems or individual people) is part and parcel of anti-racist work.

What Zaretta Hammond calls "cognitive redlining" has also taken place since the inception of anti-literacy laws between 1740-1834, which made it illegal to teach enslaved or free People of Color to read and write (Hammond, 2023). Continued housing redlining practices that have resulted in continued de-facto segregation, the pushout of Black and other teachers of Color from the profession, deficit attitudes toward the cognitive capacities of children of Color, and inequitable emotional labor put upon teachers of Color (such as spearheading diversity, equity, and inclusion committees; consulting with white faculty about how to improve relationships with students of Color; and generally having the stress of living in a racially violent society go unrecognized by administrators and fellow faculty in educational workplaces) (Adkins-Cartee et al., 2023) co-constitute an educational "assemblage of violence" (Wozolek, 2021), the result of which is the pushing of educators of Color out of the profession.

Azalea illustrated additional parts of the push-out assemblage this way; she stated:

> I mean, how long people have been, you know, raising a lot of the same, or very, very similar issues around pay and respect, around support, around a lot of different elements that make being an educator increasingly more difficult to sustain or maintain. We could give a list of very specific things like, let's have a livable wage, right? And student debt is so often—I know that would have made a big difference for me as well. Debt cancellation. Stronger

> benefits for health and vision; I guess a lot of these could be applied to a lot of different workers all over, particularly educators. Adjusting time for the school day—it's so early. It's so early. Thinking about what is healthiest for students…. This is not how their bodies function; they're not ready at 7:30 in the morning. And I "cos-played" at being ready at that time for six years, but I wasn't actually…. So I could give you a very long list of things… but what it boils down to I think is that it would take a multi-prong overhaul of just so many pieces of society. The United States' love of capitalism. We're all getting crushed under it—or most of us are getting crushed under that, and it has a domino effect. The United States' love of incarceration…. The way those pieces manifest in school or in the schooling experience as a teacher, as a student, as anybody that's involved in schooling.

Azalea's words entangle multiple systems, environments, and affects that contribute to anti-racist teacher well- and ill-being. Student debt cancellation (or the lack thereof) in an era of ballooning costs for higher education entangle with "cos-playing[29]" at being ready to teach at 7:30a.m., while students presumably also "cos-play" (or perhaps don't even attempt to) at being ready to learn at 7:30a.m. Exhausted bodies are co-constituted with the United States' love of capitalism and mass incarceration. McPhie puts forth a strikingly similar thesis via his "Extended Body Hypothesis" (Mcphie, 2019). He claims:

> that mental health and wellbeing is [sic] not bounded solely within a brain or even within a body. 'It' is not merely a *thing* that can be isolated, categorized or essentialized within a subjective self in order to fix, mend, or normalize. Mental health and wellbeing is introduced…as a process spread in the environment—an emic-etic process that weaves through a permeable, a-centered self—hence the need to create a new concept: *environ(mental)*

[29] Cosplay is a term colloquially used as a portmanteau for "costume play," which takes many forms including conventions such as Comic Con and various Live Action Role Playing games and events (LARPs).

> *health*. If mental health and wellbeing is conceived in this way, it begs the question, *where* should we look for it? Or indeed *when*? It has ethical ramifications if we begin to conceive of our well-being as immanently placed *of* environments as opposed to transcendently placed *from* or *in* static ones. It becomes political, cultural, social, racial, ecological, post-human and most definitely *physical*. (p. vi)

The "where" and also the "when" of anti-racist teacher mental health and well-being entangle environments and histories. These are the ways in which temporality itself bears echoes of the "wake" (Sharpe, 2016) of chattel slavery not only in the "Anthropocene," as Mcphie and others call it, but within the "Plantationocene[30]"—and these environments and histories become part of the Black teacher push-out assemblage. While Mcphie mentions race and racialized access to nature, racist conservation schemes, and that there are racialized elements to discourses that circulate as part of the total environment, his work is not primarily focused on race/racialization. This work adds to Mcphie's "extended body hypothesis" by exploring the ways in which anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher *environ(mental) health* becomes a specifically racialized phenomenon. In this way, inquiry concerning Black teacher pushout—as well as pushout of any teachers who share commitments to anti-racist and/or anti-colonial work—becomes part of what Sharpe (2016) calls "wake work."

Describing a temporary art installation on the Mississippi River by artist Charles Gaines, Sharpe (2016) states, "I read Gaines's temporary monument as grounded in the knowledge of the wake, in a past that is not past, a past that is with us still; a past that cannot and should not be pacified in its presentation" (p. 49). Understanding Azalea's experience as part of a "past that is not past," Azalea's pushout from the K-12 teaching profession becomes not merely her "individual" "choice" to leave the teaching profession, but a manifestation of the ripples created by the wake of

[30] This term, according to Haraway (2015), was collectively created by participants in a recorded conversation for *Ethnos* at the University of Aarhus in October, 2014.

plantation-era enslavement of Black bodies. Her pushout is not merely *one* teacher's *individual* choice to leave the profession but becomes part of the "re-segregation" (Rosiek & Kinslow, 2016) not just of one school or school district but of the education profession as a whole. This plugging into *temporal* context—contemporary, historical, and futures enabled—adds to conceptualizations of anti-colonial teacher well- and ill-being (*well-ill-being*) and *environ(mental) health* (Mcphie, 2019) as co-constituted by and with histories, policies, systems, ideologies, institutions. This understanding of anti-racist teacher pushout—particularly that of BIPOC educators—also aligns with Critical Race Theory's (CRT's) understanding of the importance of stories. As Ladson Billings puts it: "The primary reason, then, that stories, or narratives, are deemed important among CRT scholars is that they add necessary contextual contours to the seeming 'objectivity' of positivist perspectives" (Ladson-Billings, 2016, p. 19). Azalea's story—and the other cases in this study—add context to discussions and policy decisions regarding teacher well-ill-being—context without which education is more likely to continue damaging practices that contribute to Black, anti-racist teacher pushout.

Speaking further of how histories of segregation have co-constituted her well-ill-being, Azalea also described the history of the last K-12 school at which she worked and discussed how the school's history entangled with language, performative social justice, and her becoming pushed out. She said:

> We know how often we see language co-opted or the illusion or performance of justice or equality. The school I worked at was established in the year 2000 in [a large Southeastern city]. It is a prep school, and they really pride themselves on—because so many of the other private schools were established in 1956, 1960, for very obvious reasons…. We have a different history, and we have the express purpose and the mission and vision of reflecting the diversity of [the city]. So I was like, well, if I'm going to be teaching at a private school, I'm glad it's going to be this one…. They know who they're getting; I didn't hide my politics

> at all…. But when I would push for what felt really easy, like curricular changes to some of the practices that they held dear—like, hey, the multicultural parade—the way we do it is pretty problematic. Can we revisit this?... In my head, I was saying, this is what you said during the interviews I did with you, and I've never hid my politics, right? And yet when push comes to shove, you're not willing to make changes, or you're not willing to actually practice what you are messaging to everybody… They were like, we're doing a lot better than all of these schools over here…. But it was like, tick a box. We did that thing, and we're doing better than a lot of our peers.

Here, Azalea calls attention to how the history of the private school at which she taught entangled with material-discursive practices of anti-racism and frustrated affect entangled with her eventual decision to leave. This particular private school was not founded during the desegregation era (1956, 1960, as Azalea put it) when many private schools were founded as an opt-out of public schools, which were becoming newly integrated. The school, in fact, prided itself on having a different history than those other private schools. The school hired someone who did not hide their politics, but when Azalea tried to push for changes in the school's curricula that aligned with the school's stated values, she was met with pushback and performative politics. For someone committed to anti-racist education, the performance of equity and justice (without substantive commitment to change) became part of an affective flow of frustration (or perhaps a blocked flow of affect), and when flow is blocked one place, it spills out other places, along the sides. Azalea ended up literally spilling into a profession *alongside* education; she quit teaching and transferred to working with a non-profit educational organization dedicated to social justice in education.

Commonly, discourses of well-being focus on concepts of ease, rest, relaxation of *a* body. Under this expansion of Mcphie's Extended Body Hypothesis (EBH) (Mcphie, 2019), not only other phenomena but also other *space-times* percolate through and permeate teachers' *well-ill-being*. During

interviews, I also asked participants what sustains them in their anti-racist and/or anti-colonial work and what brings them joy. This question drew upon Tuck and Yang's (2014) article "R-Words: Refusing Research." In it, they ask: "How do we learn from and respect the wisdom and desires in the stories that we (over) hear, while refusing to portray/betray them to the spectacle of the settler colonial gaze?" (p. 223). Part of refusal of the settler colonial gaze is the refusal to tell only pain narratives. As such, centering the sustenance and joy of anti-racist and/or anti-colonial educators also becomes part of the assemblage *ontologically generating* teacher *well-ill-being*. Both explicitly asking and explicitly writing about these topics refuses the reduction of the story of anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher *well-ill-being* to *either well-* or *ill-being* alone.

Relatedly, as Rosiek and Pratt (2024) explain concerning the protean nature of systemic racism: "The protean character of racism suggests that effective anti-racist inquiry cannot be bound by the law of the excluded middle because racism cannot be comprehensively represented, nor ever conclusively said not to be present. It evades final semiotic capture and ontologically manifests in the very processes by which we seek to represent it" (p. 198). Similarly, anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher *well-ill-being* ontologically manifests in the *process* of inquiring about it, talking about it, writing about it, as well as in the processes *inquired about, talked about, and written about*, even as "inquiry is a form of becoming that establishes some viable subject/object, agent/agent relations among many possible relations…[which] require justification not through a perfect match with an exogenous world but instead through reference to the qualities of the futurities they enable" (p. 199). Here, inquiring about sustenance and joy in anti-racist/anti-colonial teaching praxis not only refuses a narrative of teacher ill-being exclusively, but also enables resonances with other teachers' words, with the potential readers of this text, and with futurities that center and validate practices of anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher sustenance and joy as indispensable to retention of these (and similar) teachers.

> In response to the question of what brings her sustenance and joy, Azalea said several things: I developed some great relationships with students. It's cool to "keep tabs" on them; I was back in [my college town] a couple of weeks ago. One of the students I taught my first year—she was in 6th grade—is now a first-year [student at the college]. I'm like, oh my God; I can't believe this! …I have seen [these relationships with students] as very much the physical embodiment of my "why." I never wanted to put pressure on [the students] to be the source of my happiness or my joy, but it truly did bring me joy to be working with—maybe middle school students. That was kind of a dream. They're a mess, and this is going to sound terrible, but this is my truth—[playfully] *whatever*—but I remember—I didn't even want to teach middle school. I was like *no*—anybody but middle school! Give me literally any other grade. But it was my first job out [of undergraduate education] and then it was a full-time position that was available, and I fell in love with it! I'm like, even on the worst day, at least I'm not going through puberty again! [laughter] Not that I'm laughing at them, and not that I wish ill on them. But I'm like, you know what, homie, you're allowed to be a bit of a jerk right now because your hormones are raging and your frontal lobe—you still got another 12 years before that fully forms. So, I have to bear with you the next 45 minutes, and then we can try again tomorrow. But it was those moments of them just being so jovial and so unpredictable, but also there were moments of predictability as well. They were smart, kind, and infuriating, and a mess, and also surprisingly mature sometimes, and really sweet people.

This enactment—of connections and fulfilling relationships with students, making a difference in students' lives—not in the abstract but in tangible, specific, contextually-specific ways, became a "refrain" (Jackson, 2016) that was echoed in many other participants' stories, as later case studies will illustrate. To reiterate, As Jackson, paraphrasing Deleuze and Guattari, explains, refrains are

"repetitious and rhythmic patterns of sound and movement that stake out a territory. Because refrains are repeatable, they are portable and can be carried into various places and circumstances. Refrains draw us in; they are compelling in their expression…. Finally, refrains have a catalytic function to make something new, such as when music takes hold of a refrain and releases into an improvisational creative expression" (p. 1). The refrain of joyous teacher-student and teacher-colleague relationships becomes portable both in this work and, potentially, in and with readers of this work. Such a refrain also does have a catalytic function to make something new—potentially, new joyous relationships with students and/or colleagues that could be deepened by having them affirmed and centered in this work. When we understand joy in relationships as indispensable to anti-racist, anti-colonial praxis, as many other anti-racist, anti-colonial and BIPOC scholars have always done and continue to do (e.g. Hill, 2020; Love, 2020; Muhammad, 2023), we add more voices to a refrain already singing itself into existence; we amplify the refrain. As Lamont Hill stated in 2020: "We are dreaming together, envisioning a free and safe world where we finally turn *to* each rather than *on* each other. If we have learned anything from this moment of Covid-19, it is that we cannot survive a crisis through individual action and practice" (p. 112). To emphasize, the refrain of joy in community, with students, even as we engage in continuous struggle for justice, is not new; it is a concept and practice that has been present in the work and lives of people and teachers working for justice since time immemorial. It is the joy in the struggle that has sustained, for example, practices of Black fugitivity since the time of enslavement.

For Azalea, the joy-refrain that percolates through her teaching involves keeping up with former students ("keeping tabs" on them), empathy for/with students' bodies ("you're allowed to be a bit of a jerk right now because your hormones are raging and your frontal lobe—you still got another 12 years before that fully forms"), the unpredictable, jovial, humorous and lighthearted, and strikingly sweet and mature (*and* "jerky" and immature) "blooming, buzzing confusion" (James et al.,

1981) that is middle school ("even on the worst day, at least I'm not going through puberty again!"). All these form a refrain repeated differently (Deleuze, 1994) in other teachers' stories, each repetition extending the territory of a becoming (in this case, the territory of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher joy and well-being) (Adkins-Cartee, 2014).

This joy-relationships-refrain is everywhere embedded in nested layers of context. There are also parallels here to Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory of developmental psychology; however, as Eriksson et al. (2018) point out, well-being research has drawn on different iterations of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1996) as it developed over the course of Bronfenbrenner's life.[31] Specifically, his later work (and research that draws on his later work) investigates interactions within and between the nested systems in the model. Taken as part of an assemblage with posthumanist inquiry, it is not simply that the layers of nested systems *inter-act* with one another; layers of nested context *intra-act* (Barad, 2007) to *co-constitute* one another on the level of ontology.

To illustrate, Azalea also described some of the roots of her commitment to anti-racist education:

> I identify as a Black woman—Black cisgender woman. I'm loosely Christian; I mean, I was raised in a Christian household…. And I grew up in poverty. I think I learned from an early age a lot about racism and sexism and the consequences of being impoverished. And also, I have a brother who is autistic, and that is another element that really trained my eye and heart. I don't want to sound like I totally understand, but I bore witness to that…. I ended up developing interest in doing whatever I could to correct things that I saw that weren't right.

[31] For example, see Prilleltensky's (2012) ecological model of justice and well-being (p. 11).

Blackness, white supremacy, misogyny, ableism, poverty in the U.S., racism, sexism, a brother with autism all intra-acted to co-constitute Azalea's commitment to "doing whatever [she] could to correct things that [she] saw that weren't right." While I did not follow up to ask more about her relationship with her brother or what she bore witness to specifically (in retrospect, I wish I had), it was clear that understanding one type of marginalization helped sharpen her lens on other types--a sentiment that also repeated differently in other teachers' stories. Azalea went on to state:

> I guess I'm not a very black-and-white thinker…. But I am also like, if you boil things down to "people should be cared for," [that axiom] is, to me, absolute. I think that's a non-negotiable. We can make that happen. Why don't—why aren't we doing that? Why aren't we working better to do that? So in that regard, it's personally my upbringing, my family experiences and learning a lot more, and having the knowledge, the study, the Mary Adkins-Cartees of the world who are doing this type of research, like doing studies, learning a lot of that material and figuring out how we should approach things differently… So in that way it was personal.

In this research moment, the façade of the research "fourth wall"[32] was broken, and the researcher (me) became part of the participant's narrative of her being/becoming an anti-racist educator. Along with/alongside her personal indignation about why our society does not, on a basic level, care for people. Alongside her upbringing. This research is/was already *doing* something—even if something small—in sustaining anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher work (hers, and mine). The futurities enabled by this writing may include the ways in which doing this kind of research can also contribute to the retention (and the recruitment) of teachers committed to anti-racist, anti-colonial work—perhaps by other teachers and researchers in other/future times as well.

[32] In theater, the "fourth wall" is considered the "wall" of the stage that faces the audience. When the "fourth wall" is broken, the audience is included in the play, or actors step out of character to address the audience directly.

There were moments like this in several of the interviews. The methodological orientation of posthuman cartography allowed me to lean into "my" imbrication in the research. The "extended body" "I" inhabit/which inhabits me/with which I become in this research inevitably became with the research. In a recent book talk on Jackson and Mazzei's newly released book (as of this writing) *Postfoundational Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry* (Mazzei & Jackson, 2024), Jackson expressed being "guided by concepts that are permanently contingent, responsive to relational encounters, [and focused on] what things *do* and create; we are part of the doing and becoming." In the conversation/question-and-answer session that followed the book talk, MacLure and others ruminated on how the body—albeit a posthumanist, extended body constantly in flux with the world—is still the instrument through which any qualitative research takes place. This matters in that the body conducting the research ("mine") also became part of the assemblage of teacher well-ill-being. Doing this type of research—while a very small contribution to anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher well-being—opens the potential for affirmation that continuing to engage anti-racist/anti-colonial ways of being/becoming is valuable and matters to those educators with whom we come into contact. Such (small) affirmations can be important because they cut against the individualistic way in which teacher well-being and retention is often framed.

Azalea also shared this experience:

> I remember, previously, supervisors would say, take care of yourself; you're a teacher, you know. Practice self-care. At those staff meetings, I'm like, if I really want to take care of myself, he wouldn't be keeping me here at this point. This meeting that could have been an email. But also I think administrators are some of the best—or they're capable of being some of the best people to intervene and to disrupt operations.

Azalea points out a "molar" line that circulates amidst the teaching profession. Molar lines (another term from Deleuze and Guattari's work), as Strom (2018) describes them, are "rigid line[s] that

uphold the status quo" (p. 109). These are conceptual, affective, immanent lines of becoming. The status quo here is that teachers, if they are "properly passionate" about their professions (Ball, 2001), should be taking care of themselves *so that* they can continue to care for others/their students. However, as Hersey (Hersey, 2022) explains in *Rest is Resistance*: *A Manifesto*, what this molar line of the status quo in teacher well-being reifies is a concept of feminized labor (the "pink collar" workforce, of which the teaching profession, along with nursing, secretarial labor, jobs in the beauty industry, etc.) where *even rest itself* is performed in the service of future *work*. Rest for its own sake, as a human—and/or divine, as Hersey puts it—right, is verboten. "Staff meetings" become synecdoche for many bits of under- and uncompensated labor, superfluous labor that acts as a blockage to self-care.

It is easy to code an interview with a teacher for instances of overwork, instances of feeling under- or unappreciated, undercompensated, unencouraged, and exhausted. These are all-too-common complaints within the education profession. But it is sometimes exactly in the place of the molar where thought also takes flight again. Underpaid, overworked, burned out teachers have become *so* the norm as to become all but ignorable in national and policy-level discourse. The hero/villain dichotomy in which the (feminized (Grumet, 1981) teaching profession is so frequently situated in the media (think *Waiting for Superman* (Guggenheim, 2010) versus *Bad Teacher* (Kasdan, 2011)) has all-too-obvious parallels to another binary, the patriarchal Madonna/whore complex. It is not necessarily to frame this teacher as "ill" and an idealized, rationally-worked, properly compensated, well-respected, well-rested teacher as "well;" it is to dwell in the in-between. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) go on to say:

> A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle…. A line of becoming

has only a middle…. A becoming is neither one nor two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between, the border or line of flight or descent running perpendicular to both. (p. 293)

Azalea acknowledges that administration can be a direct source of domination of teachers' time, and acknowledges that administrators are also in an ideal position to disrupt the molar parts of the education system—those very pressures on teachers' time. Continuing to discuss administration at her previous school, Azalea continued:

> Administrators are some of the best—or, they're capable of being some of the best people to intervene and to disrupt operations that so often feed teacher burnout. I remember one time the last year that I taught. It was a hybrid year (because of the pandemic). I was "friends" with one of the administrators, on Facebook or something, and I posted just, you know, "Look out for your social studies teachers; we're doing our best!" and you know, I meant that genuinely. I wasn't even trying to get their attention or trying to say that you're not being supportive. I guess I was broadly just saying I need help, or I need support or just some love, right? But within minutes, they had messaged me, like, what can we do? We're going to give you two days off. Do you just want to get caught up on grading? We're going to find you the sub. And we had this quiet apartment attached to the school building that was for housing-insecure people that are at the school—like, if you need somewhere to be—a safe place to stay. But that's a space where a lot of educators will (also) go if they need some quiet—like, I want to be away from home. It was like, if you want to work here, you can work here. We'll bring you coffee, snacks, all the things, and I'm like—I will never hesitate to post on social media again! Because I didn't expect that overwhelming of a response—like, let me intervene. Let me do what I can to support you. Literally if they had been like, we love you, just commented on (my post)—that would've meant the world, but then I got caught up on my grading, and I got a lot more planning done and without feeling

like I had to double up on a lot of other responsibility at the same time. So, you do have a lot of power to intervene, disrupt, and support educators in different ways.

This experience of having been supported materially clearly stood out to Azalea. She recalled it as a moment in which she experienced administration at her school doing something tangible to disrupt her overwhelm. And, because the school had already invested in a different kind of equity work—having an apartment available on campus for school community members experiencing housing insecurity—there was a space available on campus where she could go to work in a quiet, relaxing environment. Her administration's bringing her snacks and coffee and arranging a substitute for her for two workdays clearly went a long way in alleviating her overwhelm and also took away the extra work usually required of teachers in order to have a substitute teacher. Frequently, teachers weigh the trade-offs involved in taking time off work because they not only have to arrange for having a substitute but also have to provide substitute plans and grade any work done during the days on which they are absent. This can present an onerous burden that can often prevent teachers from taking time off to rest or catch up on grading and planning even when they need it. Certainly, I experienced this myself and saw this scenario play out with colleagues across all ten years of my own K-12 teaching career.

Also, what led to this coming-together of events to support Azalea as a teacher in that moment was itself an emergent assemblage. It entailed the specific arrangement of the stress of a hybrid school year during the pandemic, social media, Azalea's decision to make a general post on social media crying out for moral support, her administrator's noticing of her post, the availability of the apartment on the school's campus, her administrator's ability and willingness to arrange a substitute teacher for her for two days, the care put into providing her with coffee and snacks, the coffee and snacks themselves and the ways in which those were entangled in global production and supply chains, and undoubtedly more factors not discussed or captured in our interview.

The role of administration in teacher well-ill-being, therefore, is neither inherently good or bad, neither inherently or always helpful or always detrimental to teacher well-being. The devil, as they say, is in the details—and in the particularities of events and material environments and distributions of resources with which they entangle. Azalea called it "this complicated equation of the people and the community that make up this whole institution [of the school]."

Azalea told me that this particular school "even had a planning day every single week, like every Friday. But students who felt they needed to be away from home could contact the school building if they needed internet access." With such supports, one might think that Azalea could have been retained in the profession, yet she still decided to leave after the hybrid school year for a job in the non-profit educational world. She talked about

> How frustrated [she] would get hearing that "take care of yourselves" tagline—right? Like "take care of yourself," you know, but then every effort that I would make to make that happen was frowned upon. You're not dedicated enough; you're not doing your job right if you do that.

She discussed this frustration in reference to common discourse during the pandemic—which was not unique to the teaching profession—but here, a global pandemic also entangled in the assemblage of teacher well-ill-being in complex ways. The pandemic and its a/effects also became a refrain that percolated throughout teachers' stories—unavoidably so, as these interviews were conducted in spring 2023, just as the "main" three years of the pandemic were finally winding down.[33] Azalea discussed during "the quarantine phase of the pandemic,"

> How hard it [was] to even get your basic needs met or protect your *basic stuff*, like—I know at least March through the end of the academic year there was general support of virtual

[33] I also acknowledge that even while the worst of the pandemic has passed, COVID-19 is still with us. The pandemic may never truly be "over."

schooling, and a lot of people across the nation on social media expressed their support, like, "Oh my God; these are our heroes! Thank you for doing this! I had no idea all the demands!" And all the love, all the hero worship. But then, maybe by early July when there were questions about whether or not we would be returning to the school building, and there was still no vaccine, but people no longer wanted to be masking—there were genuine concerns around literally just mitigating risk as much as possible. Mitigating exposure, mitigating the infection, being as distant as possible. And I think about how much the script flipped from March of 2020 to early July. That, to me, was like, you truly don't care. You don't care about my physical well-being, and of course mental well-being. Of course mental well-being is also part of the physical body. Let's not separate the two. And you don't care how much I don't want to—[34]or at least want to mitigate as much as possible. So I think about well-being, and I mean at that particular phase it became abundantly clear to me how little value was placed on that. And how little value was placed on my life, my livelihood, my career. As if my well-being wasn't already hard enough to protect. This felt like the easiest bar to clear…. Virtual schooling certainly had its drawbacks—I would never say that it didn't—but at the end of the day, well—the nation itself did not respond well to the things that we could have done to prepare… and everyone's paying the price for that. Or a lot of people are. It still feels like that. It was just like, you want it all. And you want educators to be the ones paying the price. Or, educators, students, anybody that is part of the school. It became even more clear to me how little regard there was for teachers' lives and livelihoods. It wasn't unreasonable to say I would rather not risk this right now, and I don't think I should be made out to be a villain because of it.

[34] It's impossible to say for sure exactly what word or phrase Azalea skipped here. But I think it might have been "die," or at least "catch COVID."

Once again, the discourses of teachers as either heroes or villains—both during *and* before and after the pandemic—becomes an important piece of the teacher well-ill-being assemblage. However, the trajectory of the pandemic, the U.S. public's impatience for a "return to normal" that involved in-person schooling, the disregard for teachers' lives and livelihoods, how quickly the public seemed to forget their collective realization of how much teachers actually do on a day-to-day basis, all of these combined to further contribute to Azalea's push-out. Not all of these factors are racialized. Many are factors that happened to nearly every teacher in the profession during the pandemic. The point in Azalea's story, however, is that all of these factors that contribute to general teacher attrition and burnout contribute to the *total amount* of entangled factors pushing on Black teachers such as Azalea. Furthermore, some of these factors push on Black teachers in *particular ways*. To illustrate, Azalea also talked about an experience prior to the pandemic involving the police killing of a Black man in the southeastern major city in which she lived.

> [Name], I believe it was, who was killed by the [local] police. And I remember being in my classroom, and I wasn't teaching at the moment; it was like a study hall type of thing and I was grading. And some of the students were sort of looking for the video footage, looking for the stories about it. The middle schoolers are very curious. And the head of our school—he's the one that I often cite as the person who was punishing me for my politics and for taking him to task for, like, "Do what you say. Do what you say." So I remember him saying something along the lines of, "Well, let's look at the whole story." In the first place, we should never have to. [The police] should have never done that. Certainly not for those reasons…. How do you as the head of the school call yourself someone committed to diversity? They want people to—for students to walk away with values like leadership and service and all these things, but you won't even take a political stance—one that should be easy, to me. Somebody was killed. We don't need to trouble it with all these vague

> statements that placate more conservative families at the school. You don't need to placate that. There is no question—this shouldn't have happened….

Again, Azalea experiences the contrast between the stated value of commitment to diversity and leadership that the school espouses and its actual stances on substantive events that involve, in this case, a police killing of a Black man in the local community. For Azalea, the head of school's refusal to take a stand in this instance was an unnecessary placation of more conservative (white) families and directly contradicted the school's stated values. She goes on to explain what she meant by the head of school "punishing her for her politics" by explaining that "If and when I spoke up, I was either disregarded or called into his office to have a private talk. It was always unplanned. It wasn't like, hey, let's agree on a time for us to meet or do a performance review. He would come and grab me from my classroom or ring me and then give me vague feedback." Unplanned and sudden one-on-one meetings called by administration are, unfortunately, a common fear-instilling tactic used by administration against teachers, which I have also experienced, and have witnessed colleagues experience, in my teaching career. These types of meetings are also used to assert administrative authority; administrators can call for immediate meetings, but teachers cannot. They also demonstrate a disrespect for teachers' time and planning by assuming teachers can and should be able to drop whatever they are doing at an administrator's demand.

For Azalea, ultimately, it was not a single or singular instance that pushed her out of the K-12 classroom. It was the total assemblage, the total arrangement of factors--both general and racially specific--that created her pushout. As she put it, "All these things are kind of tied up with one another." She continued:

> It was shortly after that when I started the school year in 2015. I remember noting that it was going into the presidential election cycle. Back in 2008, or I guess it was 2009 when they went to see Obama's inauguration. I guess they couched it as a very historic event. We

> brought a group of about 20 students—eighth graders. They went and I guess they made it kind of a ritual for a specific class who would go; the eighth-grade class would go. But I remember, they were saying there was so much tumultuousness around the election cycle [in 2015-2016] and the election of Donald Trump. And there was a question around whether the school would support that trip to the inauguration. The head of school took the stance that this is a historic event, and we've still got to go, regardless of how we feel about this guy personally. But I know I voiced that it's not historic. It's another white man who got elected under—at best—questionable circumstances, and deeply illegal at worst. And on top of the heinous things he said; so, how can we, as an institution, put money towards this? How can we put our time towards this? And they said this is just our ritual; this is our thing. This isn't the same thing. You know, it's just so—not comfortable to me, right?

The election of Donald Trump, a global pandemic, the public's disregard for teachers' lives, a local police killing of a Black man, administrative apathy, silence, and/or intimidation tactics—all of these exist alongside of and with administrative decisions to provide two days of support for Azalea to catch up on grades and planning, with the school's apartment for people experiencing housing insecurity, with Azalea's relationships of joy and connection with her students, with general placations for teachers to take care of themselves, with Azalea's positionality as a Black cis-woman who grew up in poverty with a brother who had autism. There is no one factor that can be pointed to that can be conclusively said to be *the* cause of her pushout of the profession. Yet, Azalea still works on educational issues from the nonprofit world. Clearly, there are still reasons she stays close to education. These likely include the joy of students and their futures, the potential she sees in the ability of administrators to support teachers even while she also sees the potential for contributing to burnout, her specific experiences growing up experiencing multiple types of oppression, and her passion for education. The total moving assemblage of Azalea's anti-racist teacher well-ill-being

involves "all these things tied up with one another." The fact that there is not a clearly determinate factor, ranking of factors, or a teleological process that inevitably led to Azalea's pushout does not indicate that the phenomenon of complex and multi-faceted Black teacher pushout is somehow any less *real*.

In climate change science, there is a conundrum in which it is nearly impossible to attribute any *one singular* weather event to human-induced global warming (although, as weather events become more and more extreme, the ability to name human-induced global warming as a contributing factor becomes easier to do). However, it *is* possible to look at overall trends. *And*, there are important and specific lessons in *each single* event. Hurricane Katrina certainly taught the larger society a great deal about the ongoing devaluation of Black lives in America. Hurricane Sandy on the east coast and many of the California and Oregon wildfires of the 2015-2024 era have taught us much about our overall lack of preparedness for these kinds of events as well as government and corporate incompetence and irresponsibility in response. Analogously, there are important lessons in Azalea's story.

One is that Black teachers committed to anti-racist work have deeply personal investments in their work, and these deep personal investments also make them subject to a potentially higher risk of burnout when their experiences, insights, views, and commitments are not listened to, taken seriously, and/or drawn upon for the improvement of the school community--especially when they have been led to believe that their viewpoints will be informative and/or important. Another is that tangible support on the school level from administration matters deeply. When Azalea was given two days to catch up on her work with administrative support, a substitute teacher, a quiet and comfortable place to work, and coffee and snacks, her morale increased exponentially. But one-off fixes like this are not enough to sustain teachers like Azalea in the profession long-term if such supports exist alongside administrative disregard and/or disdain and discipline. One-time instances

of support, no matter how robust, are insufficient also against the ongoing societal onslaught of disregard for teachers' lives and livelihoods in global crises such as a pandemic as well as the ongoing onslaught of racialized instances of brutality against BIPOC generally and Black people specifically. When teachers are given time, rest, and the opportunities to lead and to be with their students in joyful relation, they are revitalized and sustained.

Emilia

Parts of this story discuss sexual violence. Please take care of yourself as you read.

Emilia is currently an EdTech coach, and taught for 18 years previously. She detailed two moments that brought her to a career in education. In her senior year of high school, her senior English teacher asked her what she wanted to do after high school. At the time, she said she wanted to get married and have kids, but her teacher asked her if she would consider going to college. At high school graduation, her teacher continued to encourage her to go to the local community college, even if only for a semester. She attended, and there she got involved with MECHA, an organization for Chicano student movement, and she decided she wanted to become a teacher because she did not, in her prior experience, see any teachers who had looked like her. She started taking courses at community college, and she got accepted for secondary education and Chicano studies. The Chicano studies program ended at the community college, but Emilia still persisted in becoming a teacher.

Concerning aspects of her identity and experience that shaped her into an anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher, Emilia shared, as the interview began, that in fourth grade, she went through a "serious bout of depression and anxiety." In retrospect, she recognized that she was missing her old school. She went to Catholic school from 4^{th} – 10^{th} grade but hated it. During our interview, Emilia noted that this insight was something she had never spoken aloud before, but she realized that she had been locating the problem in herself—as *her* depression—but during our interview, she was able to recognize that the problem had been that she was unhappy because she had been involuntarily moved between schools. At the new Catholic school, she also didn't feel the clothes she had were good enough, and she described the Catholic school as "the first place she realized she was Mexican." She also described herself as "very intuitive," and spoke about her experiences of seeing "capitalism, money, and wealth" as "very difficult for [her.]" When she would see other children

bring back souvenirs from trips to Paris and other similar places, she said she felt "inadequate" because "we couldn't afford to do those things."

Butler (2008) states that "When the 'I' seeks to give an account of itself, it can start with itself, but it will find that this self is already implicated in a social temporality that exceeds its own capacities for narration; indeed, when the 'I' seeks to give an account of itself, an account that must include the conditions of its own emergence, it must, as a matter of necessity, become a social theorist" (pp. 7-8). Emilia became a social theorist in the (multiple) temporality[35] of the interview; a child upset in the fourth grade may have been framed in the past as "depressed;" colloquial understandings of depression generally understand a "depressed state" as a state of prolonged sadness that exceeds what might be "justified" by the circumstances.[36] Emilia had, apparently, internalized this narrative—that the depression was *hers*—but in the moment of verbalizing this part of her story, she was able to re-theorize the conglomeration of factors that had "made" her depression. The Catholic school atmosphere, which caused her to feel both "inadequate" and "Mexican" had racist, classist impacts on her.

The next point that Emilia brought up involves sexual violence. At this point in her story, relatively early in the interview, Emilia shared that at the beginning of 8th grade she was raped, and she had shared that experience with a best friend at the time. However, the best friend went on to tell many of the other children, and Emilia was asked intrusive and traumatic questions about whether she was pregnant, had had an abortion, or if she had any STDs. This experience, among others, made her both very aware of and critical of oppression of all kinds since she was very young. She described these as "some struggles that she could finally use to help others." She also described herself as, to a certain extent, just "born that way:" aware of and sensitive to causes of justice and

[35] As I will go on to argue, not only are teachers' well-ill-beings assemblages, but the temporalities entangled in them are multiple (phrase inspired by Mol (2003)).
[36] This is merely a colloquial, not an accurate clinical or theoretical understanding of depression.

ameliorating oppression. One thing that is perhaps salient here is that Emilia did not give this part of her story any additional "closure;" she simply moved on. This experience clearly informed her subjectivity as a teacher working against many forms of oppression, and perhaps she ever so briefly created a "redemption" story with the phrase "some struggles that she could finally use to help others." She also did not create a story of irreparable damage and victimhood. This is salient because, in making this brief statement and then *simply moving on*, Emilia both briefly reiterated and also refused a common "American Master Narrative" (Hammack, 2008; McAdams, 2006, as cited in Delker et al., 2020): that of redemption following traumatic experience. Delker et al. (2020) explain that in the field of narrative psychology, a

> central focus… has been on understanding how the stories we tell inform (and contribute to) psychological health and well-being…. McAdams (2006) has argued that the redemptive story is American and rooted in historical events and texts (e.g. Protestant work ethic, slave narratives), as well as contemporary influences such as *The Oprah Winfrey Show*…. McLean and Syed (2015) argue that this emphasis on redemption and agency in the United States creates a strong scaffold for how to story trauma, but a scaffold that comes with repercussions if the template is not followed. That is, if one does not experience growth and resolution in the wake of a traumatic experience, that story will be hard to tell and will be harder to be heard, because it does not fit with cultural narrative expectations. (p. 247)

Emilia indicated that her past trauma informed her standpoint as a teacher; however, she did not engage in an at-length recounting of the trauma, and although I was certainly very attuned to her telling of this story both in the moment and following, she indicated that she simply wanted to continue the rest of the conversation about teaching. In this way, this part of Emilia's story and its role in her teacher subjectivity nodded toward the trauma-redemption "master narrative," but also refused (Tuck & Yang, 2014) to indulge it.

Emilia next described her family growing up as "poor," but also stated that they did not have a lot of outside needs. She said that she identified with kids who were struggling. As she became a teacher, she began to recognize that now she did have more money than many others. Adjusting her beliefs to accommodate occupying a position of relative privilege was not an easy transition. She went through a period of

> consumption, over consumption, over consumption, and then realizing, this is not what I want; this is not who I am; how do I basically detox myself… it's all connected; it's really like addictions. I struggle with my weight, so these addictions that we have… [are] ingrained, stereotypical. I'm always learning places where I'm like, "this is addiction." I would say my grandparents were an example of a family that was able to make it through [alcohol addiction] and infidelity, whatever that means… I feel like I'm always learning about a topic, and then realizing my participation in that topic, and then trying to learn how to unlearn it.

She also described the first "ten years, maybe seven, maybe eight" of her teaching career as being years when she taught in

> Savior teaching mode… where it was like everything was for my students. I stayed long hours. I did… all this stuff. And then I realized, this is perpetuating the not-sustainable cycle of teaching.

This savior teaching mode is also described by Aguilar (2018) both as unsustainable and also as damaging to students, communities, and to teachers themselves. It is, similarly to the American Master Narrative of redemption, rooted in Christianity (both Protestant and Catholic) and positions teachers as the saviors of students and communities, who are concomitantly positioned as "at a deficit," perpetuating deficit mentalities, particular about students and communities who already experience marginalization. Emilia concluded on her own that this was a deficit mindset that was also perpetuating burnout for her as an anti-racist teacher.

Emilia participated, as a teacher, in many student clubs and organizations, and mentored students, and she describes these activities as things that helped her heal and also taught her that

> what I [previously] thought was being helpful was maybe shaming [the students]… It sucks, thinking about that stuff. But I used to take them to give them experiences that I thought they wanted, which of course they did want, but if I were to do it again… I might still take them to do [some of] the things, but I definitely wouldn't do some [other activities]. I just think that I messed them up… but they're really great kids. I still keep in contact with almost all of them that I have close relationships with.

In this instance, while Emilia does not elaborate on exactly how some of these experiences may have shamed her students, she is rhetorically drawing back to the way she felt shamed as a child for having "inadequate" clothes and wealth. Emilia's experiences as a young person, feeling shamed, feeling "othered" as a Mexican female child from a poor family in a wealthy, patriarchal space give her a particular sensitivity to the ways in which oppression is perpetuated. She also went on to discuss how race has impacted how she was viewed and treated in the world; she said she has "had multiple experiences where people thought I was the cleaning person as a teacher." For Emilia, this particular sensitivity to the ways in which people are othered shows up in the ways she has learned to examine her own thinking and behavior and the contrasts and the disjunctions she has lived (between growing up poor to the relative financial privilege of teaching, between being a working class Mexican female child in a wealthy, white, patriarchal Catholic school space, between being a victim and survivor of rape and being shamed by fellow students for her victimization). These contrasts and disjunctions, while they are not experiences that one would ever wish upon a young person, gave Emilia insight as an adult into the ways in which other young people may feel "inadequate" in certain spaces and experiences. She also recognized the type of (white) "savior" complex that many educators are often prone to as something she herself has struggled with, even as

a person who is not white. Whiteness and the white savior complex, in other words, show up in the formation of subjectivities in a white supremacist institutional space (Castagno, 2014), as internalized racism in the subjectivities of people who neither identify as nor pass as white (Speight et al., 2016).

Emilia also stated that she "perpetuated a lot of stereotypes as well." In one instance, she told a student, "Well, you don't want to work at McDonald's for the rest of your life…. And then one of my students [was] like, but my mom works at McDonald's; like, that's a good job." Emilia experienced chagrin in the memory of this instance. And following that anecdote, Emilia brought up how one of the most difficult instances she faced as a teacher was

> when I was pregnant, deciding whether or not I was going to pretend I was married. Because how I got pregnant was not a pleasant experience. And so I went through my whole pregnancy alone. Not alone-alone, but not with this significant other…. And I remember when I had first told people that I was pregnant, someone came up to me and asked if I had been artificially inseminated because they knew I wasn't with anybody, in front of my students…. I [also] didn't feel the need to identify a gender prior to birth. [I said] I have a child. I tried to always say, I have a child. My child's name is… I tried not to personally identify [their gender]… I didn't want to put that on him. I wanted him to find that; I remember one day where he was like, I'm a boy.

This was a complexly gendered moment in Emilia's story. Emilia did not specify what type of unpleasant experience created her pregnancy, and as the interviewer, I chose not to pry into any details that she did not volunteer. Yet, the pressure to falsely claim a relationship status (marriage) collided with the gendered image of the teacher/mother/upright woman. Particularly in the position of teacher, those assigned female at birth and/or those who present femme are and have historically

been held to standards of moral purity aimed particularly at womxn's sexuality[37]. Even as Emilia resisted the pressure to gender her child, she experienced an entire matrix of gendered expectations on her (pregnant) body.

However, to return to an above quotation, Emilia also dwelled on the positives of her relationships with students; she stated, "I still keep in contact with almost all of them that I have close relationships with." In terms of relationships with colleagues, she also talked about the sense of isolation that comes with

> being one of the only Brown teachers and especially being one that [speaks] out--and I do--and sometimes my friends will come to me after a meeting, and they'll say, I'm sorry I didn't say anything in the meeting [after Emilia had spoken out in that meeting]. I was like, well, you need to stop saying that, and just say something [during the meeting] because it's not

[37] Grumet (1981) detailed how the teaching force became feminized over the course of the late 19th and early 20th century. The move to industrialization took many of the males who had taught during the winter months in order to temporarily pay their bills or finance their further education into full-time industrial jobs, and simultaneously, much industry replaced the domestic labor (weaving, etc.) females had done in homes. The teaching profession, as it feminized, became a way for females to bridge the economic span between their adolescence and their becoming wives and mothers. As more immigrants came to cities, the demand for cheaper teaching labor (females were paid significantly less than their male teacher counterparts) increased. Frequently, female teachers were to board with the families of pupils and their activities and morality were therefore highly surveilled. Furthermore, even prominent figures in education during the mid-nineteenth century (Horace Mann, Catharine Beecher) argued for the lower payment of female teachers. For example, Beecher is quoted as writing to Congress that "to make education universal, it must be moderate in expense, and women can afford to teach for one half, or even less the salary which men would ask, because the female teacher has only to sustain herself; she does not look forward to the duty of supporting a family, should she marry; nor has she the ambition to amass a fortune" (Sklar, 1973, p. 182, as cited in Grumet, 1981, p. 170). Grumet goes on to explain that female teachers were "employed as… low salaried, temporary pedagogue[s], hired to proclaim and maintain the order and the innocence of that vanished [pre-industrial] household in the face of industrial urbanization and the centralization of authority in the state" (Grumet, 1981, p. 170). It is no wonder, then, that even while codified rules and contracts that stipulate women's sexual behavior and/or marital status have become passe in (written) practice (with the exception of "catch-all" type clauses stipulating vague morally appropriate behavior in teacher contracts), the principle and/or the expectation that women who enter the teaching profession will be morally conservative and sexually "pure" has generally remained. There is much that could be said connecting this morally conservative, sexually "pure" image of the (white) woman as teacher to Leonardo and Boas' description of (white) female teachers as the "foot soldiers of coloniality" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021), which I will return to in the conclusion chapter of this dissertation—and this image clearly has the capacity to impact people in the teaching profession other than white women themselves. While particular teachers may be Black, Latinx, Indigenous, male, non-binary, etc., the general *image of teacher* remains white-female, and *teachers* are generally compared with and held up to that imagined standard. And, that standard has been and remains one of the ways in which settler colonialism works to maintain the moral and political order of a (post)industrial, capitalist, property-centric settler colonial society with a racial caste system (Wilkerson, 2020).

> helpful… Just because you think about saying something, it doesn't help make it better. You still sat there and did nothing.

Emilia's well-ill-being collides with white supremacy here; in much white liberal culture, oftentimes, intention and impact are conflated. And, it is important to note that just because the general *image* of teacher is white/female (see above footnote), this does *not* in any way negate the racialized experiences BIPOC teachers are regularly subject to. Any given individual teacher is and can be subject to both the general positioning of the profession within society and their own intersectional positioning via the "hierarchy of bodies" (Taylor, 2018) this society enforces.

Emilia also called herself "a person that is seeking justice and equity. That's who I am." In terms of factors that keep her in the profession, she said that "being able to do things outside of teaching that are related to my work… being able to have those opportunities where we got to take on some new aspect of our work, while still doing our work…. What sustains me as a teacher is taking on new things and learning new things and unlearning."

This learning and unlearning that sustains Emilia becomes part of what one might be tempted to call "her identity," although it is a premise of this work that a static, unchanging identity is neither desirable nor possible. It is not desirable because any stasis becomes a basis for what Deleuze and Guattari call "the molar." As Conley (2010) explains the concept of "molar":

> Molar entities belong to the State or the civic world. They are well defined, often massive, and are affiliated with a governing apparatus. Their molecular counterparts are micro-entities, politics that transpire in areas where they are rarely perceived. (p. 176)

Conceived of in this way, Emilia's learning and unlearning, her having "opportunities… to take on some new aspect of our work, while still doing our work" can be conceptualized as Emilia's becoming-molecular continuously against the molarizing forces that also co-constitute with her. The way Emilia compares "work" with "*work*" ("some new aspect of our work, while still doing our

work") implies a molecular work/molar work contrast. The "new" aspect of her work could be "unlearning" or addressing, thinking through, or divesting of some form of privilege, as Emilia discussed previously. The "things outside of teaching" that Emilia mentioned (learning more about equity, learning new technology) that sustain her in the profession imply a molecular intellectual-physical-affective labor that contrasts with the (potentially) molar forms that everyday classroom life can often take on. Had I done more theorizing in the moment of the interview, I might have asked Emilia to expand upon what these "new aspects of the work" have specifically entailed for her, though I got some sense through the comments she had made earlier concerning unlearning privileges.

Using this lens, Emilia's colleague's statement that they "wished" they had said something during a meeting in which Emilia experienced racism can be conceived of as an operation of the molar in the larger hidden curriculum of a school institution. Emilia was one of the only "Brown" teachers in the room and "one that speaks out." Emilia identified herself as someone who speaks out, particularly against racism. Emilia's directive to her colleague to "stop saying that [that they wished they had said something to support Emilia when she spoke out] and just say something [in the meeting itself]" can be seen as a molecular political injunction—a directive that shifts not only Emilia's relation to her colleague but also the relation of subjects to statements in the "hidden curriculum" (Kentli, 2009) of ongoing teacher education as well. In making this statement to her colleague, Emilia shifts the subject-statement relation. This relation had been one in which Emilia's colleague merely performed questioning the status quo by talking to Emilia (the "Brown" teacher in the room who spoke out). Emilia's directive shifts the relation via her directive to "stop" and "just say something" in the meeting itself where racism occurred. This move positions statements as needing to be directed to those who need to hear them, who have the power to change the enactment of racism. Emilia's statement therefore creates the (potential) conditions for actually

shifting the pre-personal (and in this case, racist) substrate of the institutional dividual[38] character. Her statement was to an individual colleague, but in Emilia's repeating this story in the interview, and in its (always ontologically different) repetition here, the story becomes a directive that travels, possibly to other white teacher colleagues elsewhere and elsewhen.

In response to the question, what would make you feel more supported as an anti-racist and anti-colonial social justice educator—what would you want to see changed? Emilia stated:

> Outside facilitators that are brought in that are actually anti-racist and pro-LGBTQ here to show how to create supportive environments. And then I would want to see administrators making a concerted effort, because you can talk all you want about recruitment and retention. We had a six-week process every day, where we met for two hours to talk about how we retain people, and the biggest things that we talked about were all about BIPOC educators and diverse partnerships. And then when everybody related everything, it didn't even make the list of the top 12 things we'd spent time talking about. And then I said in the meeting, this is ridiculous! I can't even believe that we're doing this. You literally saw that we spent the majority of the time doing this, talking about this, and you're not even including it. And he's like, Ok, well, we'll make sure we embed it. And I was like, as soon as you say we are going to embed it, that means you're going to forget about it…. So we have to have somebody checking…. But even if you check, how do we prove it? Because it's just like when the human and civil rights people go to prisons and ask if you're being treated fairly, then people are slipping notes out in their hair into people's hands to tell them how it is really.

It is notable that Emilia connects the environment for teachers—particularly BIPOC teachers in schools—to the environments in prisons. While scholars often talk about the school-to-prison

[38] The term "dividual" will be addressed in this chapter shortly.

pipeline in education research, not much theorizing has yet been done to connect BIPOC and anti-racist teacher pushout to the prison-industrial complex, and/or to the disciplinary technologies of the school, prison, and mental health system as Foucault described (Foucault, 1977) in *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison*. I described the embodied impacts on teachers of disciplinary technologies embedded within standardized testing and school report card policies in South Carolina, particularly along school demographic lines in past work (Adkins-Cartee, 2014).[39] Here, though, Emilia nods toward the ways in which even systems created for specifically racial justice accountability can continue to function in normative/normalizing, hegemonic ways. There is still the "official" and the "unofficial" discourse—what is said verbally to an auditor versus the note passed via "hair" or other means, the clandestine note that contains the "real truth" of the conditions under which teachers—particularly anti-racist BIPOC teachers—labor. This is similar to the way in which Foucault describes the "incitement to discourse" of sex starting in the Middle Ages in "The Repressive Hypothesis" (Foucault, 2010). Foucault describes how "in order to gain mastery over it [sex] in reality, it had first been necessary to subjugate it at the level of language, control its free circulation in speech, expunge it from the things that were said, and extinguish the words that rendered it too visibly present" (p. 301). In other words, to gain mastery over sex, it could not be talked about openly; it became reserved for metaphor and the confessional. Something similar may be said of talking of race and processes of racialization. In white culture, race is often not talked about openly (even though it is frequently talked about amongst non-white people) (DiAngelo, 2018; Irving, 2014; Kendi, 2020; Oluo, 2019). This helps maintain white supremacy's power. If

[39] In that work, I described how hierarchical observation, normalizing judgment, and examination(s) (Foucault, 2010a), of the kind deployed in administrators' observations of teachers, accreditation agencies' observations of schools, the normalizing judgment deployed in observation rubrics and metrics, standardized testing and its attachment to school report cards, etc. all deploy affects of stress, pressure, despondency, rage, and despair, and attach to teachers' bodies. Some teachers reported weight gain, others exhaustion, burnout, and a feeling of constantly surveilling oneself, knowing one would be surveilled. The impacts were more pronounced in teachers teaching at schools that served lower-income and minoritized populations.

racism and manifestations of white supremacy (in everything from interpersonal interactions to policy decisions and laws) cannot be named or discussed openly, if these conversations are reserved only for private talk after the official meetings are over, they cannot be openly addressed and actors cannot be held openly accountable.

Emilia also points out the ways in which even *establishing* official processes, with outside consultants and/or auditors, to ensure inclusive environments, can and often do become performative. Even with extensive time investment (two hours a day for six weeks), those in charge of summarizing the conversations that took place left out the main topic of conversation: retention of BIPOC educators. Emilia—like many other anti-racist educators—accurately perceives that the discussion leader says he will do one thing ("embed" the discussion of BIPOC educators in the written summary of the discussions), and intends to do another ("forget it"). What Emilia *seeks* in this moment is a kind of "unrepresentable justice" (Rosiek, 2021) that beckons action "in ways that have beneficial consequence, however contingent the grounds are for that action" (p. 241). In this way, what Emilia seems to seek—and what I seek via this research and this writing—is a tangible commitment to both process and outcome in educational anti-racist, anti-colonial praxis. The "invitation to [a futurity] worth having" (p. 242), here, is an invitation to a future when there *are* open and materially accountable discussions of racial (and LGBTQ) justice in schools, but also when external monitors and BIPOC educators themselves are not the *only* ones who take up a deep sense of responsibility for creating inclusive environments. Administrators, internal discussion leaders, teachers themselves as an entire faculty would take up these causes. This is also, therefore, the work of shifting institutional cultures, but therein lies the rub: institutional cultures are made up of not only human individuals, but also of affective backgrounds, environments, policies, "dividuals," (Appadurai, 2016; Bruno & Rodríguez, 2022; Deleuze, 1992) and more.

The Dividual Character of Changing the Hidden Curriculum of Ongoing Teacher Education

The concept of the "dividual," originally discussed by Deleuze (1992) in his "Postscript on the Societies of Control" gets at the way in which the (specifically) humanistic individual has ceased to operate as the most relevant unit of analysis in contemporary society.

> Individuals have become '*dividuals*,' and masses, samples, data, markets, or '*banks*.'… The old monetary mole is the animal of the spaces of enclosure, but the serpent is that of the societies of control. We have passed from one animal to the other, from the mole to the serpent, in the system under which we live, but also in our manner of living and in our relations with others. The disciplinary man [sic] was a discontinuous producer of energy, but the man of control is undulatory, in orbit, in a continuous network. Everywhere *surfing* has already replaced the older *sports*. (pp. 5-6)

Deleuze relates the concept of "dividual" to "floating rates of exchange" untethered to a "gold standard," (p. 5), but this "floating" character of modern capital can also include many of the operations of the modern global financial system, including financial derivatives (Lee & Martin, 2016). It is the "continuous" element of the network, the "surfing" as opposed to "sports"—in other words, the non-discrete ontology of becoming "dividuals" rather than "individuals" that is important here. Likewise, the phrase "masses, samples, and data" gestures toward the *aggregate* character of "dividuals" as opposed to their independence as "variables." Relatedly, Appadurai's (2016) discussion in "The Wealth of Dividuals" foregrounds the *pre-personal* character of the concept of the dividual. As Appadurai puts it:

> I am referring to a more radical and less visible process whereby the broad social canvas in which the Western individual… dominated society has been eroded and thinned out in favor of a more elementary level of social agency, which some have called the "dividual." The dividual is not an elementary particle (or homunculus) of the individual but something more

> like the material substrate from which the individual emerges, the precursor and precondition of the individual, more protean and less easy to discern and to name than the individual, which is one of its structural products. (p. 17)

The part of Appadurai's discussion relevant here is the concept of "material substrate from which the individual emerges, the precursor and precondition of the individual." In other words, the dividual is pre-personal, and both material and abstract ("precursor," "precondition"), or what would be in Deleuzian terminology called "virtual." Therefore, when we discuss culture change within and surrounding institutions such as schools, it is not merely "individuals" we are out to change. It is the pre-personal, aggregate, continuous, non-discrete *dividual* character of institutional communities that is at stake, and which must change. This is perhaps one reason why systemic change often feels unwieldy and difficult if not nearly impossible; it truly is hard to "know" where to start if the starting point is a continuous, pre-personal, aggregate process already underway with no definitive lever or obviously most important point to which to attach.

This is not, it is important to emphasize, a form of hopelessness. This is to emphasize the imbrication of the concept of *dividual* and the Deleuzoguattarian concept of *assemblage*, which also warrants unpacking because I have been describing teacher well-ill-being as an assemblage. Here, Buchanan's (2021) work is elucidating, in that he cautions against using assemblage as an "indefinite and undecided" concept; he points out that to think of assemblages as indefinite and undecided, *and* to think this is "the best we can hope for… [makes] the end point of thinking identical to the starting point, which amounts to a defeat of thought" (p. 2). He further cautions that "if any and every kind of collection of things is an assemblage, then what advantage is there in using this term and not some other term, or indeed no term at all?" (p. 3). One of Buchanan's emphases in this work is to urge careful readers to return directly to Deleuze and Guattari. While an exhaustive reading of all mentions of assemblage and every related concept within *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand*

Plateaus is far beyond the scope of the current work, it may be useful to dwell on just one example—that of the *book* as assemblage—from the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) here:

> A book has neither object nor subject; it is made of variously formed matters, and very different dates and speeds. To attribute a book to a subject is to overlook this working of matters, and the exteriority of their relations. It is to fabricate a beneficent God to explain geological movements. In a book, as in all things, there are lines of articulation or segmentarity, strata and territories; but also lines of flight, movements of deterritorialization and destratification. Comparative rates of flow on these lines produce phenomena of relative slowness and viscosity, or on the contrary, of acceleration and rupture. All this, lines and measurable speeds, constitutes an *assemblage*. A book is an assemblage of this kind, and as such is unattributable. It is a multiplicity—but we don't know yet what the multiple entails when it is no longer attributed, that is, after it has been elevated to the status of a substantive. (pp. 3-4)

A book is not just one of any/every kind of "collection;" a book is a worlding that unleashes new ontologies while it is also formed by them. As Jackson and Mazzei (2023) put it:

> Writing has no other aim than 'to unleash becomings.' What is it to unleash becomings in a thinking with, plugging in technique? Deleuze and Guattari conceive of 'three virtues' that are related in becoming: the indiscernible, the imperceptible, and the impersonal. These 'virtues' are about movements and passing between—of staying in the middle. As mentioned above, these movements occur along lines, bringing *relations* (not things or points) into shared proximity. (p. 135)

Because these movements—the kind of movements implicated in assemblage—unleash becomings, they—and assemblages—are *agentic*. Their agency is *pre-personal and pre-individual*. This does *not* mean that the humans involved in them are not *accountable*. This is not a conceptual eschewing of

responsibility; it *is* understanding responsibility differently. It is to conceptualize responsibility "in terms of the generative dynamics of human and nonhuman agency" instead of "in terms of individualized agency and based on intention, will, and free choice (which would be a liberal notion of agency)" (Murris, 2021, p. 9). How we "plug in" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2023) to such generative dynamics is a matter of linking up, and the capacity to link up to and join movements is a matter of what many have called "attunement"—"attunement to happenings and formations in and of the world" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2023, p. 135). Attunement is a mode of intra-action (Barad, 2007) congruent with an ontology of movement and process inasmuch as one "attunes" or "tunes" an instrument. To tune a guitar string, the tension must be adjusted such that the string can both pick up and reverberate vibrations of a specific frequency when plucked. While the "researcher" is always the instrument of research, the research is also a harmony of vibrational movements that emerge in a research assemblage that is always also already more than the researcher themself.

To attune to anti-racist and anti-colonial work, to work in and on the hidden curriculum of the institutional workplace that develops a deeply and meaningfully inclusive environment, then, is to *attune* to an entire institutional assemblage's "environ(mental) health" (Mcphie, 2019). To reiterate once again, Mcphie defines environ(mental) health as:

> Not bounded solely within a brain or even within a body. 'It' is not merely a *thing* that can be isolated, categorized or essentialized within a subjective self in order to fix, mend, or normalize. Mental health and wellbeing is… a process spread in the environment—an emic-etic process that weaves through a permeable, a-centered self—hence the need to create a new concept: *environ(mental) health.* (p. vi)

If well-being—particularly anti-racist teacher well-being, and particularly BIPOC anti-racist teacher well-being—is not merely a question of the well-being of the individual, but of the "environ(mental) health" *of* the dividual "substrate from which the individual emerges," the unit of analysis for well-

being is indeed entangled among the pre-personal and the transpersonal, yet still agentic—both agent and that which is acted upon. Manning calls this phenomenon "individuation." She puts it:

> Individuation happens at the surface, not of the skin, but through a surfacing multiplicity…. When the skin becomes not a container but a multidimensioned topological surface that folds in, though, and across spacetimes of experience, what emerges is not a self but the dynamic form of a worlding that refuses categorization. Beyond the human, beyond the sense of touch or vision, beyond the object, what emerges is relation. (Manning, 2013, p. 12)

The humanist, atomized individual becomes not only a myth (both in the colloquial sense of "falsehood" as well as in the sense of "culturally foundational narrative") but also simply an incorrect focus for a theory of change focused on the dividual and affective character of institutional collectives--in this case, of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being. It is important to note the emergent *relations* that enact such an "assemblage" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) of well-ill-being. And, it is crucial to note that none of these (the elements or the relations) are stable; they are also always becoming. Environ(mental) health of anti-racist, anti-colonial praxis in schools, then, depends on much more than the anti-racist or anti-colonial attitudes or intentions of the individual humans within them--and yet these attitudes are nonetheless still crucial.

Dividual Embodiment

If the hidden curriculum of (ongoing) teacher education[40] impacts primarily the dividual milieus of schools, institutions, and collectivities, then how might we still account for the differential embodiments and embodied impacts that teachers experience—particularly in racialized and/or colonizing ways? Here I want to turn briefly to the work of Manning and Mol, writing from the

[40] I am conceptualizing ongoing teacher education--particularly its "hidden curriculum" as the unspoken norms learned in professional development meetings, in mundane and quotidian workplace interactions, in policy directives, in the assumptions of colleagues and administrators, in the actions taken and not taken and unable to be taken within the microcosm of each school and within the macrocosm of contemporary societies.

posthumanisms. Manning and Mol give language to how (teacher) embodiment might be conceptualized dividually.

To begin, it is necessary to give more explicit language to teachers' "selves." As I have stated previously, a strict enlightenment epistemology of the atomized humanist individual simply doesn't do the work needed in this instance to conceptualize the relation of the teacher/teachers in the study to their differential, yet collective embodiment.

> Singularities such as *emergent selves* are co-constituted in a field of experience. They reach-toward in a worlding that becomes them. This worlding is intensified by vitality affects that themselves tune to the world, calling forth landing sites. These landing sites are less a specific node of space-time than the conditions for the propelling of the event's actualization. (Manning, 2013, my emphasis)

Teachers' emergent selves can become landing sites, using this language, for vitality affects—not all of which are necessarily positive or morally beneficent. Racializing and white supremacist affects land on the sites of teachers' emergent bodies, as do sexist and gender-binary-producing affects. In Emilia's story, Emilia's body was repeatedly the landing site of patriarchal, gendered affects (the question of whether to claim to be married if pregnant; the lure of over-work and the savior mentality,]; the violent, embodied impacts of both the crime and violation of rape as well as the material-discursive traumatic impacts of being subsequently questioned about pregnancy, abortion, STIs, etc. as a young person; and the ways in which all of these form and continue to inform Emilia's embodied teacher subjectivity). Emilia's body was also the site of racialized and white supremacist affects—experiencing racism and marginalization in meetings; the aggression[41] of a colleague being willing to offer apologetics for another colleague's racist actions privately to Emilia

[41] I choose to avoid the term "microaggression" in this work because, as many activists have stated, often there is nothing "micro" about these experiences for the people who experience them.

but not in public to the offender; the disappointment, indignation, and discouragement of engaging significant discussion time around discussions of BIPOC teacher retention and institutional racism only to have that labor entirely erased and discarded in the write-up which was still in the charge of a white man.

Mol's *The Body Multiple* (2003) gives an ontology of embodiment that is helpful here. Mol describes the way in which medical practice *does* embodiment such that multiple ontologies of the body are not only *possible*, but *actualized*. She states: "even the lived experience of one's own body is mediated. It is not that just any form can be plastered into it. But neither is it the case that the *modern Western body* preceded medicine—subsequently to be objectified by it. They both have a history. These histories may well be intertwined" (p. 26). Similarly, *a teacher's body*, as we see with Emilia, is also mediated by histories of *the* (collective) teacher's body. These histories are racialized, gendered, and material. They are both pre-personal and transpersonal.

Instances such as Emilia's multiple "experiences where people thought I was the cleaning person as a teacher" are personal to Emilia, and tragically common aggressions experienced by BIPOC people in a white supremacist society where, historically, and to some degree still today, service roles were/can be the only work available to BIPOC people. Because of the racial caste system (Wilkerson, 2020) (whether overtly named as such or not) that has co-constituted with the association of BIPOC people and service work, there is both a dividual character to this aggression as well as a personally enacted and individuated character.

Similarly, Emilia's need to unlearn certain "savior practices" such as engaging in over-work and a concomitant martyr syndrome are both personal to Emilia as well as deeply mediated by the gendered, patriarchal, white supremacist, colonial history and contemporary realities of schools. To give one illustrative example, in Aguilar's (2018) book *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* (mentioned previously), Aguilar discusses the origins and dangers of the "martyr complex"

that is often "seductive, particularly to new teachers" (p. 155). She discusses how "martyrdom can converge with racism and classism" and has roots in "famous educator saviors—[such as those in the movies] *Stand and Deliver, Dead Poets Society, Freedom Writers,* or *Dangerous Minds*" (p. 155). To reiterate, Aguilar connects martyrdom in teaching with racism and classism by explaining that "implicit in a martyr complex can be a deficit mindset about students and their communities—that the children and parents can't and haven't helped themselves, so they need an outside savior" (p. 154). And, martyr syndrome impacts much more than just the teacher(s) engaged in it: "Martyrs can also undermine the health of a staff community. A martyr, by definition, thinks that he or she is in some divine way superior to others. Martyrs make this known to colleagues by detailing their sacrifices and suffering, and holding their own actions as exemplars" (p. 155). Because martyr syndrome is pervasive enough in the teaching profession that it warrants specific explication in Aguilar's work (and other work), it can be conceptualized as part of the dividual character of the hidden teacher education curriculum as well--and it connects specifically to the ongoing hidden curriculum of being/becoming an anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher in that such teachers often find themselves positioned as the only, or one of a very few, teachers actively pursuing anti-racist, anti-colonial work in schools. Therefore, to do justice to these causes, these teachers experience immense pressure not only to serve their students more justly but also to educate their peers, serve on diversity committees, advocate for students and families of Color, and more.[42]

[42] Certainly, as a teacher I experienced several of these factors frequently myself. I frequently felt a sense of inadequacy and pressure to work even more in the presence of colleagues whose teaching practices I deeply respected. At one point while teaching high school, I actually surveyed the English department where I worked and found that *on average*, the members of my department were working approximately 60 hours a week. To be frank, I was not. I hovered around 50 most weeks and still found myself feeling like I was a "lazy" teacher, even as I was frequently exhausted. My survey of my department helped me understand why this was happening, and also validated both how many hours my colleagues and I were working as well as the sacrifices made in the name of the profession. I also asked questions on that same survey about how many hours of sleep, sunlight, leisure, exercise, etc. my colleagues were getting—how many glasses of water, how much time with family and friends—other ways I could think of to try to "measure" our well-being. On the whole, we were overworked and on many fronts under-nourished, to no one's surprise. It is because of these experiences, as well as the experiences of teachers like Azalea and Emilia that I undertook this work, and it is also because of these experiences that I still question statements such as Aguilar's that "Teachers can do amazing work and transform the lives of kids and also have their own families and hobbies and eight hours of sleep every night" (2018, p.

While I deeply appreciate Aguilar's framing as well as her (often very practical) tips around self-care, community building, looking for the positive, cultivating compassion, and more (these are all good and helpful things to continuously practice as teachers, no doubt), I am skeptical of the way in which resistance to the mechanisms of white supremacist patriarchal embodied socialization in the teaching profession (the ongoing "hidden curriculum" of teacher education) is still individualized, or is aimed at individuals and individual school communities and districts at best. This work, in concert with the work BIPOC educators are already engaged in, invites imagination concerning possible agentic cuts and interventions that might address the dividual substrate and affective, immanent, pre-personal character of teaching in anti-racist, anti-colonial ways that change the trajectory of teachers' embodied individuations on mass levels.

Shifting the Dividual Teacher Education Hidden Curriculum

It is here that I want to make a tentative connection to some Indigenous studies scholars—both Indigenous-identifying and settler-identifying—because the question of "so what" or "what might we do" to change the trajectories of dividual substrates and teachers' embodied individuations still hangs in the air, as it were. As I have written about before (Rosiek & Adkins-Cartee, 2023), it is not possible to take up a position of "innocence" as a white settler colonial academic, trained first and primarily in the European continental and posthumanist, feminist materialist philosophical traditions, and who chooses to cite Indigenous studies literature. Again, as Ahmed avers, we must assume our own complicity (Ahmed, 2017) in the systems we also seek to overthrow. In this case, I assume my own complicity in either appropriation or erasure (or both) of Indigenous thought. I continue to choose to err on the side of risking appropriation because I believe it is important to cite the contributions of Indigenous studies thinkers to the kind of change work and healing work that

155). I think in some (rarer) cases that may be true. This was not true for most of the colleagues with whom I worked. It is not true for the cooperating teachers of many of the teacher candidates I currently teach at the university level.

this exploration of the dividual, more-than-human character of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-being entails.

I have learned and been influenced by Indigenous studies scholars such as Carlson-Manathara; In *Living in Indigenous Sovereignty* (Carlson-Manathara & Rowe, 2021), Carlson-Manathara and Rowe describe how

> Traditional academic researchers often conduct studies individually and make sense of the information their studies yield on their own…. Relational accountability features prominently in Indigenous methodologies, and it recognizes that each researcher's perceptions are shaped by the many relationships through which ideas have been shared with them and emphasizes the importance of remaining connected and in dialogue with communities impacted by the researcher…. As a settler researcher, I knew that my values, priorities, and practices remain heavily influenced by settler colonialism, even if against my wishes. (p. 60)

Although this dissertation sought to engage both anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers, most of the dialogue in the interviews focused on anti-racist work and also connected to topics of gender and sexuality at times. That said, at least one interview featured anti-colonialism as prominently as anti-racism (Case Study 4).

However, de-weaponizing practice (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016) is still quite applicable to the work that teachers such as Emilia are engaged in, and this work *has* a character that can be called dividual and pre-personal in important ways. Even using the language of identity, identity reformation is never done in isolation, either from the thoughts of others or from relationships with others, both human and other-than-human. Emilia's story demonstrates profound relational accountability. She demonstrates a fierce and unwavering commitment to justice for herself and others, and is consistently willing to critically interrogate her teacher subjectivity. When she finds

that she has embodied any of the various narratives of sexism, patriarchy, gender binarism, capitalist consumerism, white saviorism, classism, or any other -ism that forms and informs what is at base a settler colonial white supremacist society, she does not spend her energies entrenched in shame or self-flagellation, even as she allows temporary chagrin to redirect her actions. She in fact relishes the opportunities she has for "learning and unlearning." This practice is fundamental to the sustenance of her well-being, to her sustaining joy in the work and in the profession. When she attunes to the potential ways in which her co-optation by savior narratives may have devalued her students' families work (the mother of the student who worked at McDonald's), or may have shamed her students (by putting them in experiences where they may have felt out of place or experienced classism or racism they were not fully prepared to counter the narratives of), her personal history, the histories of racism and structural white supremacy on these lands, the white savior history of the teaching profession, and Emilia's attunement to the gendered and patriarchal narratives of the white settler colonial feminized teaching profession all collaborate with everyday classroom practices, students, and the pre-personal, "dividual" character of the (often hidden) curriculum of ongoing teacher education. Emilia's practice is both hers—personal—and also deeply political. It is "dividual" in the sense of being *more than* hers. It is also co-constituted with histories and narratives and practices. And, when Emilia engages with this larger "hidden curriculum" of ongoing *teacher education* as process with others, the agential cuts produced impact much more than just "her" as an "individual."

One can imagine the potential impact Emilia may have had on the colleague she advised to start speaking up in meetings. One can imagine that even if Emilia was unable to change the outcome of a white man who erased an extended conversation about the retention of BIPOC educators from the summary produced, her publicly noting this erasure likely impacted colleagues present--and her noting it in the interview opens additional possible horizons. Certainly her story

impacted me and has further attuned me to the ways in which I am also responsible for speaking up in similar situations. Her words will continue to generate possible impacts—possible worldings—for those who read this dissertation and any additional publications that may come from it. What future spaces and instances of white supremacy and settler colonial whitewashing might become (increasingly) disrupted by those who read these words?

Similar to the stories that Carlson-Manathara recounts, it is *also* "my hope that these stories [in this dissertation] be read as the narratives of those who have imperfectly traveled a challenging road and have been willing to share their mistakes, learnings, insights, and journeys with others who wish to consider, initiate, or deepen their own decolonial engagement" (Carlson-Manathara et al., 2021, p. 62). In this way, although I do not claim to be conducting research using Indigenous methodologies, this is certainly work that aspires to some of the *values* espoused in Indigenous methodologies. Relational accountability is one of the values that this work partially and imperfectly aspires to. As Wilson (2008) puts it in *Research is Ceremony*:

> Our [Indigenous] axiology and methodology are based upon maintaining relational accountability. With a deeper understanding of these concepts, I hope that you will come to see that research is a ceremony. The purpose of any ceremony is to build stronger relationships or bridge the distance between aspects of our cosmos and ourselves. (p. 11)

Once again, while as a white settler academic I certainly do not claim to conduct my research as an Indigenous ceremony, I do see the ways in which relational accountability is a guiding principle of the work of ~~exploring~~ ~~rethinking~~ □ unlearning revising diffracting worlding building unleashing becoming moving[43] that helps dislodge the various logics and narratives of the white supremacist

[43] I use the strikethrough for the first two terms that were written because of the implicit settler colonial logic of "exploration" as well as the insufficiency of merely "rethinking" if the demands of *thought* can never be a repetition of the same, only ventures into difference itself. I hope to demonstrate that the following terms help to unlearn, revise, diffract, world, etc. and that these practices double back onto the logics of "exploration" and "rethinking" in ways that—I hope—unleash different potential becomings and attempt to enact the kind of praxis this work avers.

settler colonial state and its manifestations in the *ongoing* education of teachers that extends throughout teachers' lifetimes and across varied and intersectional teacher subjectivities.

Methodologically, teachers such as Emilia enact the seeds of a kind of "radical forwarding… *towards* actual decolonization" (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016, p. 44, my emphasis), and these seeds grow *them*. Emilia's story, like other stories in this study, demonstrates a "confound[ing of] the logic of origins and causality" (Kirby, 2011, p. 10) in a deeply generative way. In a sense, then, the singularity that is Emilia within the dividual, hidden curriculum of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher education acts "as a stroke in which an entire field of energy rewrites itself" (Kirby, 2011, p. 12) among personal, cultural, and political histories, multiple bodies, discourses, and space-times.

Tristan

Tristan was a relatively new teacher; he had been in the classroom four years and taught sixth grade language arts and social studies in a relatively rural town in the Pacific Northwest. He went directly through an undergraduate degree in social sciences with an emphasis in teaching, and then immediately transferred to a Master of Teaching and teacher certification program the year following his graduation from his undergraduate degree.

Tristan described himself as a white bisexual cisgender male, 27 years old, middle class, no diagnosed disabilities. He said his family while he was growing up was "lower, or less-than-lower class." In the midst of Tristan's 4th year teaching, he described his teaching career this way: "This has been a really tough school year. I was actually just talking with a coworker earlier today about how I feel a lot less excited about coming to work every day than I did my first year teaching. But, when I remind myself of the reasons I do it, and the joys that I get from teaching, I'd still say that I'm satisfied with my teaching career."

Tristan said that social justice, anti-racism, and anti-colonialism are "some of the reasons I got into teaching." He also stated that "I don't feel like my K-12 experience did much in terms of anti-racist, anti-colonial, or social justice-oriented learning." However, he said, "I do consider myself a social justice-oriented teacher, and I'm teaching sixth grade social studies as my main focus and subject area. I try to be an anti-racist and anti-colonial teacher and build that into my curriculum where possible." This orientation to teaching, and his lack of personal experience with the type of education he envisions, along with many elements of his personal background, formed much of Tristan's reason for being in the classroom.

Tristan's background, similar to many of the other teachers in this study, informed his stance as an anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher. Not only did he identify as bisexual, but he was also raised in a family where his stepfather was Mexican and Black, and his stepmother was Thai. Through them, he

both witnessed acts of racism and was sometimes an indirect victim of racism as their stepson. Through his step-parents, he gained sensitivity to issues of race and racism, and so when Tristan joined the speech and debate team during his undergraduate years at a Pacific Northwest regional university, he was "able to hear experiences and research topics that [were] related to social justice or anti-racism or anti-colonialism, and it made me interested in learning a lot more about those issues."

Furthermore, Tristan said that he had "negative experiences in [his] own education and learning," and additionally, "one of [his] first experiences with a teacher [he] worked with [as a student teacher] was a pretty negative one." Therefore, "[he] knew what [he] didn't want to do, and so [he] was seeking out [a teacher education program in the Pacific Northwest known for its equity focus] and other learning as ways to figure out what [he] could do to do better for students."

Specifically, concerning the first teacher Tristan was assigned to during student teaching, Tristan had to witness this teacher making

> some pretty flagrant remarks and comments to her students. The one that stands out to me the most was [when] she was teaching students about the continents and was like, "Oh, well, Europe is the one that maybe looks like a dragon. And Asia, I remember that one because that's where people with squinty eyes come from." And I was like, whoa, you're telling this [to the students]—like—this is just not okay. I brought it to the attention of my professors, and they had me record some other observations from that teacher, and I eventually found a new teacher to work with myself, and was able to get transferred.

Tristan witnessed a teacher reinforcing a stereotype that has both historically and contemporarily been used to insult and dehumanize people of Asian and Pacific Islander descent. He also indicated that this was not an isolated incident with this particular teacher. Tristan's commitment to justice caused him to speak up to his supervisors in his teacher education program. While he was able to be transferred to another classroom, he also knew that this teacher was still in her classroom teaching

her students these stereotypes. While Tristan said that "this is what I don't want to do," he also said that "it's definitely not the worst experience that I've had to witness [in general]," although he did not elaborate on other (worse) incidents, and I did not probe that statement further at that time.[44]

Tristan named one of the biggest challenges he faces as an anti-racist, anti-colonial educator as "trying to get other staff on board with [an anti-racist, anti-colonial] mindset." He explained, for example:

> When we did have a focus group [on diversity, equity, and inclusion at the school where Tristan worked], I remember mentioning and feeling some sense of solidarity with other teachers that have the same kind of experience of trying to be on and start an equity team at our school and in our building. What was meant to be a focus on helping staff be more equitable—like maybe create some professional developments and things like that—ended up being more, "Let's celebrate multiple cultures for students, and let's celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and Native American Heritage month. Let's make some monthly lessons to do in class. They [the lessons] were very surface level, and then teachers didn't take them very seriously and complained that they were too much work to do.

Tristan found this experience demoralizing both because of the way in which an equity-focused group so easily transitioned from an intention to cultivate a deeper equity mindset in staff to a surface-level multicultural celebration and lesson-planning committee. However, even that surface-level work did not get good buy-in from other staff, who found even these surface-level lessons to be "too much work." The idea that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work is "too much work" while continuing and reinforcing the traditional (white, Eurocentric) curricular cannon is generally not questioned as being excessive labor is yet one more manifestation of white supremacy in

[44] Perhaps I should have. I think that, at that moment, I wanted to allow him to share what he was comfortable sharing. I did not want to dwell overly much in pain narratives of experiencing--personally or via bearing witness--racism.

schools. However, given that time is often officially allocated for planning for a more traditional curriculum, and DEI work is often considered to be an "extra" activity not given officially sanctioned time or resources, there can be some truth to this complaint only inasmuch as teachers are often expected to do it without pay, credit, or allocations of time.

Tristan gave another example of an

> eighth grade U.S. History teacher [who] has been teaching for—I think this is their 34th year at our school. And so he has a vast amount of experience, but he's also very much, "This is what I teach, and these are the units I teach," and he made a comment one time about having to completely skip the Native American unit or the Slavery unit because the Constitution was just taking too long. It was the same kind of experience that I had growing up that I wanted to avoid. So I recommended and gave him a couple of books. I think one was a *Rethinking Schools* book about teaching abolition and the other was *Teaching Critically about Lewis and Clark*. I remember him giving them back to me at the end of the year, saying "Thank you, but they sat on my desk, and I didn't really get around to them."

Tristan found this kind of mentality in colleagues not only frustrating but also discouraging. As an early career teacher, he was already recommending resources to veteran teachers and serving on an equity committee (both duties beyond those required for his own classroom), and yet he was meeting with either resistance or denial from more senior colleagues.

Tristan was a white teacher and so there is potentially something to be said for the possible role of white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018) here—the way in which whiteness carries with it an expectation to be listened to the first time we speak, the way in which white "allies" too easily give up if early efforts are not met with success. Yet, Tristan was only a fourth-year teacher, and he was attempting to educate much older, more experienced colleagues. He was also very aware of the ways

in which both his whiteness and his cisgender identity (as well as his ability to pass as heterosexual) informed many aspects of his experiences as an early career teacher. He explained:

> For a little while, and in my student teaching, I did feel some uncomfortability in being the cis white male social studies teacher that is teaching the same systems of history that I want to make sure I'm avoiding the harmful aspects of…. I struggled a little bit with, "Who am I to be teaching about all of these intricacies of different Native American tribes when I'm myself not—and how accurate am I really being?... It was actually a fellow [student teaching] cohort member in the [Indigenous teacher education] program who said to me, "No, if you're trying your best and you're trying to do the right thing, don't worry about who you are. We don't need one more person deciding not to teach what they should be teaching just because they feel uncomfortable with it. I have to feel uncomfortable every day—deal with it, basically." That helped me a lot.

In this case, an Indigenous member of Tristan's teacher candidate cohort helped him to name and "deal with" his white discomfort around whether or not he was the "right person" to be teaching about Native American tribes and cultures. While Tristan may have learned to lean into discomfort around his identity in this instance, there were other ways in which aspects of his identity also informed his commitments to justice, but perhaps were less publicly visible. Tristan was also the sponsor of the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), and he said that he had

> never told [his] students that [he identifies] as bisexual, or anything other than heteronormative. I wear a lanyard that has rainbow pride on it, so I've had students ask me, "Are you gay?" before, and I've told them, "Well, I have a wife." But that has been more because in the GSA I want middle schoolers, especially 6th and 7th graders, to focus more on their gender identity, if that's something they're struggling with, than their sexual identity for a whole range of reasons.

This was a complex moment in this interview that in many ways I wish I could return to to ask several follow up questions. I wonder now in retrospect how much Tristan's cisgender male identity could be at risk for a perception of threat and/or pedophilia if he were to express any non-heteronormative sexuality in a middle school teaching setting. To be perfectly clear: homosexuality/bisexuality is not at all correlated with pedophilia, but much anti-LGBTQ+ media—particularly in the United States—has frequently used a false connection between LGBTQ+ identities and pedophilia to drive fear-mongering tactics aimed at suppressing and vilifying the LGBTQ+ community, and so ambient fear of being out while working with children also forms part of the dividual character of ongoing teacher education curricula, as discussed in the previous case study.

Tristan's answer to questions about his sexuality with the sentence, "Well, I have a wife" is reflective of what many bisexuals/multisexuals in the workplace do for a number of reasons, which may include safety and job security. This decision—to simply "pass" as heterosexual (if they are in primary opposite-sex relationships), even if this passing means that they/we are not "out" in a way that furthers LGBTQ+ visibility, pride, or recognition—has been a source of tension between the bisexual/multisexual communities and the lesbian and gay communities, as the ability to take advantage of "passing privilege" does often confer significant safety and other privileges—including, prior to the legalization of same-sex marriage, the privilege of legally marrying at all. However, the gendered performativity of this statement ("Well, I have a wife") relies on cis-male passing privilege as well as presumptive heterosexuality as being the default position in society. Tristan's statement allows him to be hailed as (Butler, 2006) heterosexual without having to actually announce a sexual identity.

That said, all teachers interviewed for this study identified as holding some non-dominant identity, even if for two of the nine participants, the only non-dominant identity they held was being

a cis white heterosexual woman. Tristan, like Emilia, often did not know exactly how to handle a multisexual identity in a monosexual dominant culture, particularly in schools. There is also potentially much to be said about bisexual/multisexual erasure and stigma and how it may have factored into Tristan's decision not to be out at work. Bisexuals/multisexuals[45] are often erased (or at least given less attention and public discussion) than other members of the LGBTQ+ community, and concurrently, there are often multiple types of stigma that go unaddressed for the multisexual community. These include (but are not limited to) stereotypes that multisexuals are more promiscuous than monosexuals[46], that multisexuals are more prone to cheating[47] than monosexuals, that multisexuals are less ethical than monosexuals. These stereotypes and stigmas can certainly work against a teacher in a workplace that, as stated in the previous chapter, is still often built on implicit or explicit norms of proper "moral conduct" in and outside the workplace—a phrase vague enough to allow for defining *improper* moral conduct as anything that goes against hegemonic norms.

Multiple aspects of Tristan's positionality often seemed to cause him different forms of discomfort, although he also did not allow that discomfort to deter him from equity work. He stated:

> While I was a part of the Equity Team last year, sometimes I did feel like I had the most experience with a certain issue or certain topic, and I didn't want to be the first one to speak or to take up too much space. And so sometimes I felt like maybe I should have [spoken] when I didn't because I didn't want to push into that experience for others [who] might not always get the same voice that I do…. I don't know if that comes off as sounding

[45] From here, I will continue using the umbrella term "multisexuals" to include the bisexual, pansexual, and omnisexual communities.
[46] Monosexuality refers to the sexuality of anyone attracted to only one gender or sex—homosexuals and heterosexuals.
[47] Cheating here is understood as anything that would violate pre-established boundaries or norms around sex or sensuality within a relationship. This is a broader definition than much of monogamous culture utilizes; monogamous cultures usually define cheating as any sexual/sensual physical or emotional activity with anyone beyond the (only) partner.

> pretentious or something. I'm really not trying to [sound pretentious] at all…. So I think that that, if anything, has been one of the biggest barriers. I want to sit back, and let other voices be heard. But sometimes I feel like some other voices are not being as equity focused as maybe they should be in a moment, and I'm not afraid to stand up and interrupt, but I also don't want to be the one to do that every single time.

Tristan experienced tension between presenting as a cis white male, passing as heterosexual, and being an outspoken advocate for various equity causes including anti-racism and anti-colonialism. He was aware that white and cis male (passing) privileges often mean that white and/or cis male voices *are* both better received *and also* frequently more apt to speak up and take up space in group settings, and so he wanted to be mindful and give space for others to speak. Yet, he was also aware that if no one else is speaking up and nothing was said concerning an aspect of equity, silence acts as complicity. Tristan was also aware that holding a marginalized identity in itself does not automatically confer critical perspectives on issues of race, colonialism, class, gender, sexuality or aspects of equity. Furthermore, even if people who represent different perspectives and identities do speak up, cis white male (and heterosexual) voices are also more likely to be taken seriously, even on topics intrinsic to the lives of those who do not share those identities.

A complex entanglement emerged here: of whiteness, cisgender male privilege, heterosexual passing privilege, anti-racist understanding that white voices often ought not be the first to "take up space" in conversations about race, concurrent understanding that silence is often a form of both complicity and violence when whites do *not* speak up against racism, and acculturation to whiteness as niceness, as Castagno (2014) discusses in *Educated in Whiteness: Good Intentions and Diversity in Schools*. Tristan navigated when it was more important that he leave space for others to speak vs. when it was necessary that he spoke up if no one else did or had the expertise he had. This is the kind of "imperfect navigation" that Carlson-Manathara and Rowe (2021) speak of in the leaving of

trails that others can follow—in Carlson-Manathara and Rowe's context, in anti-colonial/decolonial work. They state that

> It is [their] hope that [the] stories [they share] be read as the narratives of those who have imperfectly traveled a challenging road and have been willing to share their mistakes, learnings, insights, and journeys with others who wish to consider, initiate, or deepen their own decolonial engagement. (p. 62)

Similarly, it is my hope that in sharing the stories shared in this dissertation, both these teachers'—as well as my—mistakes, learnings, insights, and journeys may inspire others to continue the work of fostering anti-racist, anti-colonial, and equity-focused educational justice.

That said, it is also a truism in anti-racist work that any work done by white people, no matter how problematic, often is lauded under an ostensible banner of "at least they are trying" (Doyle, 2020). I am reminded here again of Ahmed's (2017) words, that we (anyone with privilege, and in this particular case white privilege) must assume our own complicity from the beginning—and assuming complicity does not exculpate us. Tristan stated, "I want to sit back, and let other voices be heard. But sometimes I feel like some other voices are not being as equity focused as maybe they should be in a moment, and I'm not afraid to stand up and interrupt, but I also don't want to be the one to do that every single time." In many ways, as a white person, I related to Tristan's conundrum, and am just as potentially complicit myself in this writing. I want to sit back, and to let other voices be heard—whether teachers' or scholars. I also am "not afraid" to stand up and interrupt—via the writing of this work—but I do not want to take time, resources, attention, etc. from the work of BIPOC who are already making similar points. And, I have chosen to do this work anyway.

I will continue, in the interlude that follows this chapter, to think with this conundrum, because this is something that came up in the initial phases of seeking participants in the first place as well.

Poverty

Another element of Tristan's background--poverty--became salient in his narrative of becoming an anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher. He discussed being part of the equity team the previous year and working specifically on a project and lesson plan about awareness of world hunger. Tristan said he "volunteered to help build that lesson—in part, because the other person who volunteers for everything volunteered for it as well."[48] However, in his experience working with this person, it became clear that

> She was really set on doing a food drive. I shared that in my experience as a middle school student, I felt really uncomfortable when our school had food drives. [For]one, I couldn't really participate, and a lot of that food went to my house. It felt really awkward to see my friends bringing in cans or boxes of food that then might be coming home with me. And I also felt really uncomfortable rewarding certain classes for bringing in the most. We have a really wide range of SES [socioeconomic status] levels at our school, and a random class of students might be able to bring in a whole lot more than another random set of students…. So I tried to push back against that, and she was really, really set on it. And even while we were planning, just her and I, and I had expressed all of this, and tried to be vulnerable about my experience, she was like, "Well, I still think we can just introduce kids to this food bank

[48] There is also more that could be said here, perhaps in two regards. Tristan is aware that he should not allow the burden of all the equity work to be put upon a person who "volunteers for everything." However, it could also be said that trying to take on more work in order to alleviate someone who is potentially buying into the teacher martyr complex (Aguilar, 2018), as discussed in the last chapter, is acting as a martyr himself in this instance. There is no option that is totally morally satisfactory here.

idea where we donate to this food bank, and they come and pick it up from our school. And I think I am just going to sign our school up for this anyway."

In this instance, Tristan's personal history with poverty collided with plans for a lesson about equity and food and class and world hunger. "Tristan" emerged as an equity-focused educator in this collision of personal history, large-scale inequity (in this class, socioeconomic status), Tristan's involvement with a DEI committee, a lesson on world hunger, a collaboration with a colleague, common middle-class-centric discourses of charity/philanthropy and the commonplace-ness of food drives conducted at schools. In this instance, the focus was on world hunger and not specifically anti-racism or anti-colonialism. However, both worldwide and on Turtle Island, people of Color and colonized peoples are over-represented in both poverty and hunger, and thus while Tristan advocated for a more nuanced approach to learning about hunger (not doing a food drive where some students might feel shamed for being the ones taking home, instead of donating, the food), the horizon of possible consequences for which he advocated also likely would disproportionately benefit students of Color and Indigenous students.

Entangled Agencies

Once again, I draw on Mcphie's concept of "environ(mental) health" (Mcphie, 2019) to think with the way in which Tristan's subjectivity became entangled with the chemical-agricultural-industrial-government-complex that subsidizes the food systems that create the food that will be purchased and donated, the food donated via NGOs to "developing" nations, large-scale agribusiness, government food subsidies, the creation and maintenance of gendered, racialized, and colonial wealth inequity (Hernandez Kent & Ricketts, 2024). Tristan also grew up as a student whose family was poor and who was the recipient of food from school food drives. Tristan's story helps to illustrate a point made by Barad (2007) concerning intentionality, causality, and agency; namely, that:

> Perhaps intentionality might be better understood as attributable to a complex network of human and nonhuman agents, including historically specific sets of material conditions that exceed the traditional notion of the individual. Or perhaps it is less that there is an assemblage of agents than there is an entangled state of agencies…. The very notion of causality must be reconsidered, since the traditional conception—which presents only the binary options of free will and determinism—is flawed. But if causality is reworked, then power needs to be rethought. (Power relations cannot be understood as either determining or absent of constraints within a corral that merely limits the free choices of individuals.) Agency needs to be rethought. Ethics needs to be rethought. Science needs to be rethought. (p. 23)

In Tristan's case, it is not that Tristan, as a completely individual, self-conscious, fully autonomous agent makes a "decision" to push back against a well-meaning colleague's call to implement a school food drive. Tristan's embodied history, which includes his queerness; his family's lack of access to food; the systems within which he was raised that made it possible for his family to experience poverty while he was growing up; the stigma attached, in U.S. society, to poverty; the pervasiveness of meritocratic ideology in U.S. society that stigmatizes poverty as always the victim's fault; the pull of the pervasive educational "undertow" (Michie, 2022) of teaching for surface-level multiculturalism over deeper equity work—all of these are arranged in an entangled set of agencies that is not possible to discreetly disaggregate. In other words, once again, it is not possible to assign to each factor a "percentage" of Tristan's agency in his pushback against his colleague's insistence on a school food drive. Nor is it possible to assign 100% of agency in the instance Tristan describes as "his." As Coole and Frost (2010) put it: "If such patterns of organization are not predictable or determinable, this is in part because there is no longer a quantitative relationship between cause and

effect…. These are non-linear consequences that are non-reducible to the very many individual components that comprise such activities" (p. 14).

Nonetheless, it *is* possible to conceptualize Tristan's agency as an entanglement of multiple agencies, each of which is also a multiplicity. And, conceptualizing "Tristan's agency" is also an agential cut, and a cut that—via this writing—produces a concept of Tristan's—and other teachers'—agency that is neither totally constrained nor totally free. Drawing on Coole (2005), it could be said that an element of Tristan's agentic capacity for "bodily knowing" via his history of childhood poverty allows Tristan to become "*motivated* in [his] relationship with [his] environment…. Although [his] choices and innovations will be circumscribed by the accumulated structures and sedimented habits that lodge within [his] lifeworld, there is scope for an *extemporization* that brings *change*" (p. 129). In Tristan's speaking up, in his becoming part of an equity team in order to make change in his school community, there is an iteration of the embodied extemporization Coole describes. In Tristan's imbrication with the discourses of both white saviorism as well as white silence/complicity, and in the sedimented habits of cis men "lodged within [Tristan's] lifeworld," as well as the collective lifeworld of the school in which he works and the society in which he lives, we see the circumscription by accumulated structures Coole describes. It is not that Tristan's agency shifts between a polarity of extemporization vs circumscription; it is that "his agency" *is both and more all at once.*

The takeaway here is that if we want, via initial teacher education or ongoing teacher education (in any form, hidden or overt curriculum), to impact teachers' agencies for anti-racist, anti-colonial, and equity-focused work for justice in schools, teachers' agencies must be understood as *always both and more all at once.* For, as Coole also puts it, there are several "constituent capacities that have typically been conflated under the title of agency (or subjectivity): individuality, freedom, reflexivity, interiority" (p. 132). These concepts would generally be classified as forms of

extemporization; it is the role of elements of circumscription in agency that are generally ignored in ongoing teacher education and professional development. Thus, if it seems that sometimes I err on the side of discussing the circumscription of teachers' agency (although I do not wish to dwell there exclusively), it is because this is, as I have experienced as a teacher for ten years myself, the more commonly excluded part of the conversation. I aver, however, that if we discuss possibilities for extemporization aimed at anti-racist and anti-colonial change work without facing the ways in which agencies are circumscribed, we will continue doing more of what has been done: surface-level multicultural work (which is sometimes/often ignored because it is "extra" work); giving time and energy to deeper equity work but having that work thwarted by both administrators and entrenched hegemonic structures at district, state, national, and international levels; having teachers who represent marginalized identities pushing for the bulk of deeper change work, and burning out/becoming pushed out of the profession.

Responsibility/Response-ability

Just as much self-help literature and professional development directed at teachers tends to take a highly individualistic tack, much of the discussion of how to foster more anti-racist, anti-colonial educators also tends to take an individualistic tack. It would seem, based on some of the more popular literature in this genre, that if one would just engage enough "courageous conversations about race" (Singleton & Linton, 2006) on the individual, or at least on individual school level, that equity could be achieved. If one could merely remember to practice all the available suggestions to foster teacher "resilience" (e.g. Aguilar, 2018), one might avoid the most detrimental elements of teacher burnout. While I do find quite a bit in these, and other similar resources, to be genuinely of value, the problems of anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher burnout and BIPOC teacher pushout have still proven fairly intractable. This would indicate that there is more going on than individualistic solutions can address.

To take an analogous set of circumstances as potentially illustrative: in Lenz Taguchi and Palmer's (2013) study of "A more 'livable' school? A diffractive analysis of the performative enactments of girls' ill-/well-being with(in) school environments," the authors report that "the preventative programmes [sic] and treatments aimed at girls with stress problems are, without exceptions, self-treatments, putting the responsibility of change and well-being on the girls themselves" (p. 674). What happens when we instead understand teachers' agency and intentionality in both anti-racist/anti-colonial activity and in their own resilience in such activity as "something distributed that emerges from a complex network of human and nonhuman agents, including historically specific sets of material conditions, thus exceeding the notion of being assigned to an individual who produces intention that pre-exists an activity" (p. 676)?

Exploring the analogy between Lenz Taguchi and Palmer's study and this one further, the high-achieving girls in the Lenz Taguchi and Palmer study, for the most part, are described as both suffering from stress and as not managing stress well. The girls "should not be so fixated with becoming a lawyer, doctor, or any other high-achievement vocation" (p. 682). However, what this mentality produces is the idea that "the good-girl syndrome needs to be cured with girls getting to be even better at enacting an even more self- and brain-controlled subjectivity. If you cannot do it [become less fixated on high achievement and properly perform self-care while still achieving at a high--but not too high--degree], you can only blame yourself" (p. 683). Teachers generally, and anti-racist/anti-colonial teachers specifically, are often represented as both needing to avoid "martyr syndrome" as "toxic" to their own and other teachers' practices and sustainability within the profession (Aguilar, 2018), and also as not always—or even usually—doing enough to resist white supremacy and settler colonialism in schools, curricula, and their own embodiment. They are also simultaneously represented as needing to slow down, more properly take care of themselves, and sustain their work better--in other words, they are blamed for their burnout and pushout.

Importantly, Lenz Taguchi and Palmer also draw attention to the ways in which their own female subjectivities as high-achieving academics who experience pressure to work "60-80 hour weeks seven days a week" (p. 681) diffract with the over-achievement of the girls in the study and with a still overwhelmingly patriarchal and white supremacist culture. While they do not say much beyond naming the relevance of their own subjectivities and the similarities between their own and these girls' situations, one can infer that the choice of study topic was almost surely influenced by these authors' own experiences as high-achieving female students (who are now professors). Similarly, while none of the four teachers whose stories are centered in this study identified as white cis-females, the profession of teaching is still largely dominated by white cis-females in the United States (and Canada) (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020). The teaching profession at large is also still subject to many similar stressors: the pressure to over-work and the ways in which overworking can be viewed as a kind of "badge of honor" for many teachers, while, simultaneously overworking preached against by the same administrative teams that continue to expect even more. The same can be said specifically in circles of teachers who care deeply about enacting anti-racist/anti-colonial, equity-focused practices. Many conversations in activist organizing in general, and in equity-focused educator circles in particular, will admonish activists and teachers to make our organizing and education practices "sustainable" because we will be no good to the movement/to our students/to education if we burn out. However, there is also a kind of pressure to be constantly engaged in movement work. This pressure can circulate, at times, via statements such as Dr. Love's (nonetheless crucially important) question, "What are we willing to give up?" (Love, 2020). Such a question is extremely important when privilege has gone un- or under-questioned, un- or under-divested-from. Such a question *could* become twisted into pressure for only more—are anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers to give (up) more effort, more sleep lost, more hours, more emails, more physical and emotional labor—if we are not extremely careful.

All in all, anti-racist/anti-colonial teachers' well-being and sustenance is, like girls' well-being in schools, "a multiple phenomenon" (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2013, p. 684). "One material-discursive practice of doing schoolwork and studying might evoke ill-being in one situated context, but it might also evoke a sense of well-being, control and even a sense of emancipation for the same girl in another situation" (p. 684). Likewise, teachers' anti-racist/anti-colonial practices may also become practices of ill- or well-being in different situations. This potential ambivalence and contextual nuance is evident in Tristan's feeling of not being sure of when to speak up or step back in equity-focused conversations, in the ways in which he experienced a kind of negative foreclosure in his initial conversations about a school food drive with his colleague, in the way he was later able to refocus the world hunger lesson, in the ways in which he felt overwhelmed and isolated in his school community, and in the ways in which he was pulled multiple directions as a new father and as a teacher.

Tristan later stated that "[he] struggled with [his colleague's insistence on a food drive] a lot. [He] ended up being able to refocus the lesson [they were designing] around food, heroes, and things that people were doing around the world to fight hunger, but [he was fairly sure his colleague] still did go ahead and try to sign up [their] school with the food drive and try to do that as like, a secondary [activity]." Even as he struggled with his colleague's decision, he was able to lend a different focus to a poverty lesson whose focus might have otherwise gone unquestioned.

Rethinking Tristan's agency this way also *does* require, as Barad suggests, a rethinking of ethics. If it is not merely that "an" individual decides, under a given set of circumstances, to push back, to make a different choice, to speak up, not to speak up, to donate, to work overtime, to rest, or any number of other actions we might consider "ethical," then the responsibility for the ethics of a particular moment both maintain an attachment to human individuals yet also exceed the Western

enlightenment epistemological conception of the human. It is because of this agentic excess that Caputo writes "against ethics" and in favor of "obligation," which "happens" (Caputo, 1993).

It is important to note here the debates within and surrounding posthumanist literature about the utility and appropriateness of posthumanist theorizing of agency, ontology, humanity, personhood, etc. In this and similar cases, much has been written—particularly by authors of Color (see Rosiek et al., 2024, p. 3)—concerning whether or not posthumanist conceptions are appropriate inasmuch as the Eurocentric, white humanist epistemology of the "human" has never, in fact, included those considered "Other" (whether because of race, gender, or other factors). It could also be argued that to conceptualize Tristan's agency as a force that exceeds "his" individuality detracts from recognizing the difficult work Tristan does: the emotional labor of sharing a vulnerable childhood experience of poverty with a colleague, engaging the discussions that both led to the development of this lesson on world hunger in the first place, the discussions that led to re-framing the lesson later, the time Tristan invested in this equity committee in the first place.

I argue that conceptualizing Tristan's agency as a force that exceeds "him" does not take away from the power in these actions. Rather, it understands power as a material-affective force that entangles "a" human individual and which "a" human agent becomes analogous to a pound lock[49] system directing a flow. The lock is not the water; nor is it the boat carried by the water; nor the cargo in the boat; but the water, the boat, and the cargo, which precede, exceed, and will post-cede the pound lock, travel through and are directed by—the directing is made possible by—the pound lock system, which is itself made possible by physical materials, material extraction, the labor of many, the energy extracted and input into machines to build it, and the environmental forces that

[49] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lock_(water_navigation)

wear it down over time. In this sense, "Tristan's agency" itself might be conceptualized as a Baradian apparatus. It is worth quoting at length Barad's definition of apparatus here to clarify:

> (1) Apparatuses are specific material-discursive practices (they are not merely laboratory setups that embody human concepts and take measurements); (2) apparatuses produce differences that matter—they are boundary-making practices that are formative of matter and meaning, productive of, and part of, the phenomena produced; (3) apparatuses are material configurations/dynamic reconfigurings of the world; (4) apparatuses are themselves phenomena (constituted and dynamically reconstituted as part of the ongoing intra-activity of the world); (5) apparatuses have no intrinsic boundaries but are open-ended practices; and (6) apparatuses are not located in the world but are material configurations or reconfigurings of the world that re(con)figure spatiality and temporality as well as (the traditional notion of) dynamics (i.e., they do not exist as static structures, nor do they merely unfold or evolve in space and time). (Barad, 2007, p. 146)

Under this definition, "Tristan's agency" as an anti-racist, anti-colonial educator is truly "more than the sum of its parts" and meets the definition of Barad's apparatus. Tristan's agency becomes, in this sense, *agencement* in Deleuzian terms: a specific material-discursive arrangement of entangled agencies. "Tristan's agency" produces differences that matter: a lesson plan re-organized not primarily around the curriculum of a food drive, but around world hunger "heroes": others/others' agencies who are making differences that matter in highly material terms—literally putting food in contact with human bodies. "A" teacher's agency is also an open-ended practice which is a material configuration/reconfiguring of the world—its force is expressed via a body that *matters* and *makes differences that matter*—that reconfigures spatiality and temporality.

A body in this sense is not—has never been—static. As Manning, who also draws on Deleuze, puts it:

> "The body" is a misnomer. Nothing so stable, so certain of itself ever survives the complexity of worlding. And yet we inevitably use the concept as shorthand—how else to talk about issues of agency, of identity, of territoriality?... A body is always more than one: it is a processual field of relation and the limit at which that field expresses itself as such. (Manning, 2013, pp. 16-17)

A teacher's body, and embodied agency, is exactly "a processual field of relation and the limit at which that field expresses itself as such." Tristan's body and embodied agency are the field of relation of a particular childhood spent in poverty, a queer body that is often hailed as (Butler, 2006) straight, the relation of Black and Brown bodies to his via his childhood, past experiences and incidents of racism, a commitment of his body to work in schools, to try to form relations with children the system does not serve well, to try to form relations with other faculty and staff in the service of anti-racist and anti-colonial, and more broadly equity-focused work. But it is not as if each of these is an "element" of Tristan's embodied agency that can be separated out into discreet strands for examination under a microscope. Here, (English) language is only ever a partial stand-in for a worlding that occurs via Tristan's embodied agency. Manning goes on: "The question here cannot be limited to the body 'itself' as though the body weren't active in co-constituting the ecology at hand. If that ecology tunes to categories such as color or gender, these aspects of the field will continue to be foregrounded. The issue is not to deny this but to ask *how* these ecologies come to co-constitute a body in this or that way" (Manning, 2013, p. 17). In Tristan's case, the ecologies of bisexuality, material poverty, non-white stepparents, experience with a racist cooperating teacher, and more came to co-constitute Tristan's embodied agency as a teacher.

Tristan further explained that he was motivated to "[build] positive relationships with students that don't always have a positive relationship with an adult in the building." He said of going into teaching, "I told myself that I really wanted to focus on helping the kids who struggle through school, or who might not be graduating on track, not because of academics, but because of just learning to hate school because of the way the systems affect them." Learning, here, is also a relational ecology. And teachers' learning *as praxis* is part of the curriculum students learn.

Currere, "to run the course," is nothing if not relational movement. It is strikingly (a)kin to Manning's "movement moving." It *bodies*. The *ongoing teacher education curriculum* that Tristan—and the other teachers in this study—both encounter and embody *is* anti-racist, anti-colonial teaching praxis. Tristan embodies/Tristan becomes bodied by "the curriculum as an encounter" where we might "imagine the pedagogical relationship as a singularity, and not, as much theorizing in the field today would presume, as the representation of a *prior* model" (Wallin, 2010).

Tristan continued to talk about what keeps him in the work:

> And beyond the relationship building, when I do get to teach social-justice oriented lessons and anti-colonial or anti-racist lessons, and have kids say, "Wow, I've never learned about this before," or have some of those epiphanies like, "Wow, that wasn't fair the way that happened," or, "Wow, that's really cool the way this person from this culture that I don't know did this," or, "Wow, I really liked learning about that." Those moments really help me stay in it.

Such moments do not have a *prior* form or formula to follow. For Tristan, as for the other teachers in this study, it is the *encounter* of the pedagogical moment—its unpredictability in precise terms—that gives teaching life. That said, this does not mean that teachers cannot or do not learn skill sets that help increase the likelihood of producing those moments. This is not an argument for teaching

devoid of training. It is an argument, similar to Lenz Taguchi and Palmer's (2013), that "school-related ill-/well-being can never be an individual affair; it is rather a collective and distributed phenomenon that engages multiple performative agents that are collectively responsible for counteracting practices as well as prevention" (p. 684). It is so for teachers like Tristan. Ultimately, the well-being teachers like Tristan, and like Emilia, and like Azalea enact is a well-being that is something *different* and something *more than* an individualistic well-being, and *different* and *more than* a concept of well-being as merely individual happiness, satisfaction, or lack of stress. In Illing's interview with philosopher Setiya (Illing & Setiya, 2024) on the podcast *The Gray Area*, Setiya put it thus:

> I think what we should be aiming for is to live the way we should. All of the things that matter in life come into that. Living the way you should is being responsive to all the kinds of reasons there are not just to worry about your own feelings but about other people, the world around you, injustice in the world around you, the needs of other people. And so when we reconceptualize the goal of self-help from just feeling happy to living a good enough life, living as well as we can, it starts to look much less narcissistic, and also it looks like sometimes the answer to the question of "what's the best way I can live in these circumstances?" Well, it's going to involve a fair amount of unhappiness. And I think grief is one case that many of us have experienced in which it seems clear that a certain amount of sadness is not in opposition to living the way we should…. That where the pain of grief is not something where it would just be better if we just didn't have [it]. It's not like the ideal scenario [would be] when people we love die, we just feel nothing. [Grief is] part of something we deeply value, namely, loving attachment to others that we have to go through this. Again, that's just a more concrete illustration of the contrast between a kind of

> happiness as a positive state of mind and living well as responding to the real world we're confronting in the kind of ways that it calls for. (Illing & Setiya, 2024)

In other words, well-being, when conceptualized as living as best we can, collectively, under the circumstances in which we find ourselves, becomes something other than striving merely to feel good on an individual level. It does not discount the individual, but acknowledges that living in relation, and understanding that many of our present entangled relations—to humans, to other-than-humans, to the earth, to land—are presently and historically painful, is to live in, with, and through varying manifestations of grief.

In this way, the ongoing curriculum of becoming an anti-racist, anti-colonial educator involves collective responsibility that engenders grief as both affective background and as *process* of response-ability. Equity-focused educators are educators who not only act through grieving, but who grieve the world via acting. They do not aim at their own comfort while they also do not discount rest as being necessary. Frequently, they mourn the fact that neither may be possible under circumscribed agentic arrangements. *"Freedom and comfort are two different things. To aim for liberation is to transcend the limitations of comfort." (Owens, 2023, p. 61)*

Interlude

As part of this project, two focus groups occurred. Here, I highlight a particular moment in the second of two focus groups, between Tristan and Emilia, discussing a particular challenge Tristan is experiencing in his classroom at the very end of the school year during which this project took place. I first reproduce a section of the transcript, then provide commentary.

Tristan: Something that's been really eating me up the last bit of this school year is, I had two students transfer into my class: one from Washington and one from the Chuuk Islands. And they're cousins. The Chuuk islands are a really, really small group of islands in the Southeast Pacific. And there's 40,000 speakers [of the language] worldwide. It's not on Google Translate. I can't look up the language and translate things. And I have been given zero resources to help them. They sit in my class and put their heads down because we're reading a novel in language arts. That is the curriculum I have to teach. And I do my best. When we do a quiz and things like that, I'll say, "Here, just tell me what you can remember or just practice writing." Because one of them just really needs basic language skills and should not be in my language arts class. But I get no support, and then I see kids walk up to them and assume they're Hispanic and speak Spanish to them, and then [they're] angry when they can't speak Spanish back. Or I see them picking up elements of language—but they're picking up nasty comments that kids are saying to each other, and then they say them, not knowing what they are. They've already been jumped in the bathroom twice, and I just got a "handle with care" order from the police department that I don't even know what happened. But something happened last weekend that involved both of them. And it's just like—[a frustrated pause]… And I've emailed administration, and I spoke to the people that are supposed to be our language support people. And it's like, you went on vacation for two weeks and you just don't answer my emails.

Emilia: Are there community members—are there community organizations that you could connect them with that you could learn from?

Tristan: And that's the other thing. Then I eat myself up about how I'm not doing better to serve them. But then I also don't feel like I have time to reach out to family or do more research on my own, which I should do. Because then, if I'm saying, well, I just wish we could change the system so that these kids could get some better support, and then I'm not doing my part. So you're right.

Emilia: I'm sorry, I didn't meant to say—I think the system is fucked up, and I don't think that I was, when you said that I was like, oh, I think partially that this system needs to just fail. But you can still be kind and loving to your kids. And so that's still going to sustain them more than anything. They're really not going to get any new language in the next three days. But you can love them and show them kindness, right? And then like, maybe we could talk to the counselor and say, like, could you reach out to this person, or this community organization, because that is their [the counselors'] job. It's not your job, but it is the job of the community liaison. Or it is a job of somebody else—there's got to be somebody that can do that part and if there isn't, maybe on your break, or whatever, you might Google two or three [organizations] and then maybe check two or three, and then know that you did as much as you possibly could.

Tristan: Yeah, yeah, that's a really good point because I need to do at least my basic effort. It was actually [a colleague] who [turned me onto this project]. [My colleague] has worked with [these two students] a little bit, but she also does not have the time at her district office position now working with elementary, middle, and high schoolers to work with them as closely.

Emilia: Can you put the name of their island in the chat?

Tristan: Yeah, it's C-H-U-K or C-H-U-U-K. [My colleague] did give me a couple of articles about their culture and helped them put together a slideshow presentation to try to show our class just as a way to celebrate their culture and hopefully get kids to learn a little bit more. And I did offer them the option—I said, look, I'll make every kid do this same project that you've already done, so that you're not the only ones doing it if you'd like to, or if you want, I'll let you present this any day that

you want to, and try to get that opportunity, but they're scared to. They don't want to get up in front of the class. And so I asked, would you like, if it's finished, would you like me to present this? They said no, because we don't want that to be this singular thing when no one else is presenting, or you're just presenting it for us. So it's been tough with that.

[Emilia drops a link in the chat.]

Tristan: I'm going to open that link before I have to go so that I make sure not to lose it.

Emilia: Ok, so I just shared two things. The first one is mostly me. I put most of this stuff together. They're called "choice boards;" that's what we call them, and there are other people who call them other things. But the second one is specific to Oceania and Australia, and I made it because my son is in Montessori, and they studied the seven continents. And I really had no idea what Oceania was until my son came home and told me what it was, and then I decided I was going to make a choice board about it. It's probably not things specific to your students, but it is information about the area. And then the other thing is that we just went to a lei-making class at the children's museum, and we actually have a pretty strong Polynesian/Micronesian group of people in Arizona. And so I would like to look into it because that is my forte. I do love looking for resources, and so it is not anything extra or anything that I wouldn't like. It is literally—if you were in a group, and you're like, "Okay, who is going to do the research?" I would be like, I'll put some stuff together in a list, because that's what I love to do. Obviously, you do not have to feel obligated to do or take anything, but I do love looking for information, so I'll see what I can find, and maybe I can find some organizations in your [geographical] area.

[Some chatter ensues about exactly where Tristan is located.]

MaryJohn: That's amazing—yeah, that's a great connection! Thank you all. And certainly, yeah, I'd be willing to see if I can also look at what's available. If there are other organizations in [the state] that you could be connected to. And even if it's just like, "Hey, push these to the counselor and ask,

can you look into these?" Because it's not something that's on my schedule right now, and I can't—or, I don't have capacity, but we need to [look into this]. Then even that much might be something. So.

Emilia: Okay, and do you have an Asian Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian group on your campus or in your school district or at any of your schools?

Tristan: Potentially at the high school. But another complaint about my district is that the middle school and high school since way before I started teaching here have had this weird feud where the teachers don't share a lot of information with each other. And it's really, really disconnected. So I know there's a Hispanic Heritage Club at our high school, but I don't know if there is an Asian Pacific Islander Club. But—

Emilia: Do you know a couple of friendly teachers that you could reach out to and find out?

Tristan: Yeah, maybe that's another lead.

MaryJohn: Yeah.

Tristan: I really appreciate the helpful starting points. Because when we're reading this novel, [my colleague] and our other school language specialists came in, observed one of my classes, and were supposed to give me some resources about how to help these students, and—no offense to [my colleague] whatsoever, but the one suggestion was, the language expert said, "Well, have you thought about getting a graphic novel version of the novel you're reading?" And I said, "Sure, do you have the money or time to find the graphic novel version and buy it for me?" I actually didn't say that; I thought that. But it's like, yeah, that would be excellent, but I don't have any funds to do so, and I doubt there's a graphic novel version of the book that we're reading, but I'd be so happy if you found an alternate version of the book and purchased it. But that didn't happen either.

Emilia: The last thing that I will say about doing the research for this specific [situation] is that what I am realizing is that as difficult as it is to find literature for the Latinx community or the Native

American community and tribal groups, it is like nine million times harder to find stuff on Micronesia. It is like, their voice is literally unheard. So my thought would be to find your local Polynesian groups, all of those, because Micronesia, Polynesia, they're all part of [that larger community]. And this is going to sound wild, but there's like, kayaking groups—not just regular kayaking but the traditional boating and kayaking groups that are specific to Native groups. Any Native group would probably [be a possible lead] because they're [also] Indigenous, right; like the Micronesian—the Chuuk Islands—is Indigenous land. So it would be more closely related to if you could find Polynesian. But you don't have to find Polynesian. There might be a way to go about—like, Native American cultures may understand more about how you might be able to find out.

Tristan: Hmm, yeah, I appreciate all the suggestions. I think that coming to this group is one of those things where, like just, in my personal experience, I tend to get overwhelmed with my work and then say, I don't have time for something like that; I can't [even] make time for myself. And it's so important to come to groups like this with like-minded folks that care about the students and just want to make a difference. So thank you both for that.

Commentary

This was a complex moment. A moment that initially, I lauded as I presented in job talks and initial analyses of the data. Re-reading the transcript from this moment, I am not so certain. Elsewhere (Adkins-Cartee et al., 2023), colleagues and I have discussed the disproportionate emotional (and physical) labor frequently put upon BIPOC teachers, which the pandemic both highlighted and exacerbated. It has unfortunately been documented consistently that BIPOC teachers are often called upon to advocate for, console, discipline, and otherwise emotionally "manage" students of Color and their families who are both victims of over-disciplining and discrimination in schools and who are also frequently misunderstood by white teachers. BIPOC teachers are also often, in these circumstances, emotionally managing white teachers and

administrators as well. As Mosely (2018) documents, "These [in this case, Black] teachers were never publicly acknowledged or compensated for their time or skill in being an advocate for families and/or a liaison for the school. A teacher in her eighth year shared, 'I just want them to stop taking me for granted and recognize that this is work, especially when I disagree with what the school is doing to the child'" (p. 278). Among the recommendations implicated by the Black Teacher Project (Mosely, 2018) is to "provide opportunities for Black teachers to share their expertise and compensate them accordingly" (p. 280). Black teachers' expertise includes how to effectively educate students of Color and also includes subject area expertise and more.

In this particular moment, it was salient that Emilia was responding to Tristan's sense of despair with a multitude of professional suggestions as Tristan processed his ethical obligation to two students who were from the Chuuk Islands (one of whom had been living in Washington State prior to moving to his current locale). Tristan fluctuated between feeling overwhelmed and frustrated ("I get no support;" "It's been tough with that;" "That didn't happen either;" "I can't even make time for myself") and shame ("I eat myself up about how I'm not doing better to serve them;" "I need to do at least my basic effort") and feeling grateful for the new directions Emilia points him in ("You're right;" "That's a good starting point;" "I really appreciate the helpful starting points"). It is hard not to read both new teacher overwhelm *and* white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018) into this medley of responses.

For her part, Emilia did not demonstrate the same sense of overwhelm or despair Tristan at various points evinced. While it also may generally be easier to see alternate approaches from outside of a situation, and as a more experienced anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher, it is also notable that Emilia, who identifies as Latinx, took up the emotional labor of thinking differently about the circumstances of the students from the Chuuk Islands, and was able both to give Tristan, who identifies as white, a number of other possibilities to try. She also persisted in her suggestions in the

face of what might be read as Tristan's initial resistance. Tristan seemed to come around to Emilia's suggestions, however, and thanked her for them.

Emilia's suggestions also included the following: "Any Native group would probably [be a possible resource to try to contact] because they're [also] Indigenous, right; like the Micronesian—the Chuuk Islands—is Indigenous land. So it would be more closely related to if you could find Polynesian. But you don't have to find Polynesian. There might be a way to go about—like, Native American cultures may understand more about how you might be able to find out." Emilia, who, again, identifies as Latinx, points Tristan (who identifies as white) toward finding and consulting with Indigenous groups. Neither one of them identified as Indigenous. Emilia's thinking seemed to be that any Native American group might have additional insight concerning how to go about finding more information about Chuuk Islanders and their culture and needs and language. It could be possible that there is indeed merit in this suggestion. That said, it is possible that this would entail requesting additional—likely unpaid—labor from Indigenous people that, potentially, non-Indigenous people ought to be doing for themselves/ourselves. There is, also, the risk of making Indigenous cultures seem "pan-Indigenous," ignoring important distinctions and differences among very different Indigenous cultures in and from different lands.

In this particular moment, before Tristan has attempted any of the potential paths for action Emilia is suggesting, the ethics of Tristan's initial resistance and then gratitude and Emilia's various suggestions is indeterminate, and ontologically so. This moment contains both seeds of the past and seeds of what may be to come in the prior work Emilia shares with Tristan, her suggestions for action, and Tristan's potential responses to the situation his two Chuuk Islander students face.

This particular moment contains settler colonial violence that is multi-layered, also, in the two times these two students have already been "jumped" twice at their new school as well as in the ways they are shunned for not speaking either colonial language (Spanish or English) spoken within

their new school. Given this atmosphere of violence, it is painfully understandable why these students may not want to feel "singled out" by having their culture explained to the rest of the students through a brief slideshow (which may or may not do justice to aspects of their experiences as Chuuk Islanders).

The ways in which settler colonial violence, which also has a long and continuing "wake" (Sharpe, 2016)—not, in this way, unlike the long and continuing wake of the Atlantic slave trade that Sharpe describes—continues to form and inform this moment indicates a kind of "cross-temporal imbrication" (Rifkin, 2017, p. 172) that co-constitutes the ontological and ethical indeterminacy of the moment.

Is this a moment in which Emilia, a woman of Color, undertakes undue emotional labor due to Tristan's white male resistance? Is this a moment in which a frustrated early-career Tristan is initially overwhelmed but becomes open to and grateful for new possibilities for action generated in conversation with a mid-career colleague with more experience and tenacity than he currently has? Is this a moment in which Emilia and Tristan together discuss a generative possibility of reaching out to Pacific Islander groups and/or other Indigenous groups for assistance in how to approach two young and vulnerable Indigenous students from the Chuuk Islands? Is this a moment in which Emilia and Tristan together, as two non-Indigenous people, consider outsourcing their labor onto Indigenous bodies? Is this a moment of pan-Indigenous erasure of the specificity of Chuuk Islander Indigeneity? Was I, the interviewer, complicit in all this? All of it can be true at the same time.

Did my implicit desire for a hopeful narrative of new anti-racist and anti-colonial teaching possibilities generate a veneer of uncomplicated teacher cooperation layered over a complicated and potentially unethical moment?

In what ways did the seemingly positive affects generated (Tristan's gratitude, Emilia's insistence that research is what she enjoys doing) open potentials for new and different becomings

in spite of, or in addition to, the potentially unethical aspects of this moment? Emilia's various suggestions, despite her being a woman of Color helping generate possible actions for a cis white man, could lead to contacting organizations that could help provide translators, context, and support for these two Chuuk Islander students. Whose well-being was served in this moment? Emilia states that "[she does] love looking for resources, and so it [was] not anything extra or anything that [she] wouldn't like." She said, "It is literally—if you were in a group, and you're like, 'Okay, who is going to do the research?' I would be like, I'll put some stuff together in a list, because that's what I love to do." It is also important that I, as a white author, not dismiss or downplay Emilia's (entangled) agency and consent to this work for anti-racist/anti-colonial action.

Tristan also stated, "I think that coming to this group is one of those things where, like just, in my personal experience, I tend to get overwhelmed with my work and then say, I don't have time for something like that; I can't [even] make time for myself. And it's so important to come to groups like this with like-minded folks that care about the students and just want to make a difference. So thank you both for that." Tristan was also a young parent at the time of the focus group and interviews, and he had also stated that he had gone straight from teaching that day into our Zoom focus group, and had not gotten to connect with his wife and son yet. Soon after he gave this thank you, he logged off to be with his family. Tristan's statement that "[he couldn't] even make time for [himself]" is unfortunately all-too-common in the K-12 teaching profession, let alone for early career teachers and teachers who are parents of young children. Tristan's well-ill-being, and his frustration and white fragility, are all entangled with the material realities of an underpaid, overworked profession that leaves far too many educators feeling powerless against overwhelming student and community needs.

Further, Zoom technology itself was the material-discursive apparatus that connected all of us in this moment. Our subjectivities became "cyborg" (Harraway, 1991) with Zoom, and it formed

us and enabled action and conversation not otherwise possible. First of all, Tristan and Emilia were in two very different geographical locations—nearly 1300 miles/2000 km apart—and would not have been able to talk and consult with one another (or with me) without Zoom software, the internet, and the attendant materiality of the computers (including mined metals and rare earth elements[50]) which we used to speak to one another. Further, Zoom also acted as a material-discursive "apparatus" (Barad, 2007); the interface's chat feature allowed Emilia to ask Tristan for the name of the islands from which his students came, and allowed her to directly give him a link to a presentation she had previously prepared on Oceania and Australia. And, albeit not directly a part of the Zoom interface, the existence of the mega-corporation Google allowed Emilia to ask all of us if we could "Google" Pacific Islander organizations in Tristan's local community—and/or further afield—who might be able to serve as touch points, liaisons, or resources for these students and their linguistic and cultural needs. The fact of having the focus group on Zoom also allowed Tristan to attend right after his school day, and then immediately log off and attend to his wife and child in the evening.

Here, I conceptualize what took place as a kind of gathering and planting of seeds of possibility—albeit possibility fraught and entangled with settler colonial violence of many kinds. This instance bore resemblance to Mark Rifkin's (2017) analysis of seed gathering in the novel *Gardens in the Dunes* by Leslie Marmon Silko. Rifkin asserts that "the past does not so much recede as itself potentially function as a horizon for unfolding dynamics of being and becoming" (p. 171). This does not make possibilities for the future which may come from this moment determined, or determinate; however, "Not knowing 'what would come' of this moment means that seeds exceed a particular reproductive economy in which the goal is the transmission of the same…. Instead, they

[50] Which, of course, may be doing violence to local populations employed or forced into mining labor. And which are likely doing ongoing environmental damage in the locations in which mining is taking place.

allow for the emergence of something different from what came before, less developmental trajectory or exotic newness than a contribution to the diversity immanent within growth itself" (p. 173).

The relations and indeterminacies among temporality, settler colonial material-discursive formations and forms of violence, past horizons and future becomings, and the ontological indeterminacy of temporality itself co-constitute an ongoing becoming of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being curricula as these teachers learn, re-learn, and un-learn what it is to become anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers in ways that are not heroic, not valorized, but equal parts ethically problematic and ethically generative. The discussion of this temporal entanglement of histories, violence, teacher well-ill-being and possibilities for ongoing teacher becoming-as-curriculum will be the subject of more detailed discussion in the next case study as well.

Kay

Kay E. lives in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. She was born there. She and I knew each other for just over a decade before we did this interview together. It is important that I say this up front. I said, towards the end of our interview together,

> I think if I do write about some of this, it would make sense to say that you and I have known each other before this interview. But if you're not comfortable with me saying that, I won't, but I do think that we've been able to get [here] in this conversation, in part, because we've known each other before.

Kay responded, "Yeah, that's fine with me. I'm comfortable with it." In this way, this conversation reached back both into Kay's past, and mine, and our past together. Drawing on those shared and divergent pasts, a new emergence became possible between us in this conversation.

Kay began our interview by explaining that she had taught English for 26 years at the time of our conversation. She said:

> I did my education in Florida, so I also did my internship in Florida between high schools, and I observed at Jackson. I began in the U.S. Virgin Islands and then went to Florida, Broward County, which of course are two completely different school districts with different populations, and then from there I went to South Carolina, which is also a very different population, and from there I went back to the U.S. Virgin Islands. … I started with Future Educators of America, through a high school program. I went to FYBU on a scholarship/grant program kind of thing. … There were two things I wanted to be: either a veterinarian or an English teacher. I think it was a little expedient at the time, because my family didn't have a lot of money for vet school and that kind of thing, and then I wasn't sure if I even had the classes to do vet school, and if that was going to go easily. And so, English was a good fit for me.

Kay also stated that she was "extremely dissatisfied" with her career at the time of our conversation. She explained,

> There have been many changes with respect towards teachers and respect towards the profession. I think the pandemic was a strange dynamic where at first, we were heroes, and then we turned into villains, like almost overnight, and now we're on the back end of it, where we're still kind of like in Pandemic mode, with lighter grading. Now in our school district we get 50 [percent, as the lowest grade that can be assigned to students]. They can't get zeros. So, we are mandated to put in a 50 for a zero for something that a student has never done. So not very satisfied. For instance, yesterday was graduation and there were students who failed my class—like, failed; it was not even close. And the grade is changed, and they walked.

This was a complex moment as I began an interview with a long-time friend and fellow teacher. I happen to know Kay as a teacher dedicated to anti-racist and anti-colonial education and I have always deeply respected her practice. However, this statement reflected a common mentality in education that students will not be "motivated" if they are not penalized (by zeros) for missing work. The larger issue, however, may simply be the way so many grades are assigned in school in general. In *Grading for Equity,* Feldman (2018) states,

> The message when everything is included in the grade is clear: You are always being judged and must show your absolute best performance in every respect—academic and nonacademic—every day. If you make a mistake, or even are just having a bad day, it's going to count against you. There is no room for error, no safe place to make mistakes. (p. 58)

Feldman details that it is not merely that students will not be motivated if zeros do not seriously penalize their grades. By late elementary school, students are taught that the only tangible motivation for learning is contained within the extrinsic motivation of grades themselves. Therefore, not even

grading for completion truly circumvents this issue (let alone grading with zeros); the problem is incorporating continuing opportunities for intrinsically motivated learning beyond late elementary school when numerical grading takes over and prevails (Feldman, 2018).

All of that said, I retain Kay's statement at the beginning of our interview in part because it surprised me and because it adds a layer of complexity to her nuanced anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher becoming. For each teacher interviewed—in various ways—being/becoming anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers has not been a journey towards a perfected ideal of what a/the anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher "ought" to be. It is a nuanced, layered, often-imperfect journey imbricated with the circulation of power, knowledge, bodies, affects, more-than-human relations, and subjectivities. Discourses of deficit sometimes exist alongside material-discursive moves toward liberation. These are, after all, stories of (some of) the real lives of real teachers.

I asked Kay if there were other factors impacting her lack of satisfaction. She said that "a lack of connection" between "the classroom, and what can we do to help our students understand who they are in this world? Given that we do have many people in our community who understand that connection." Kay's current and first community is the U.S. Virgin Islands; however, in the context of our conversation, Kay has also worked for such connections in Florida and South Carolina communities as well. Kay continued,

> We work for that connection. There is a disconnect between knowing, and understanding that what we're teaching our students is a colonial curriculum. And to actually make any changes to decolonize it. So yesterday, as a matter of fact, there was a forum about what emancipation means because we're getting ready for the 135th anniversary of the 1848 Emancipation Proclamation. We were Danish before we turned it [the U.S. Virgin Islands] over to the Americans. It's not like real emancipation. It's still kind of like part of the Department of Interior, and you are still waiting for Washington to do anything.

Kay had more to say about colonialism and its connection to racism than many of the other teachers. Perhaps this is because in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the history of slave plantations is directly connected to the establishment of sugar plantations on the islands and the colonization of the islands by a series of European and then North American states.

Kay's sense of her identity was also different in certain ways from the other teachers interviewed. She said,

> We [in the U.S. Virgin Islands] are in two worlds, in a sense. I don't think I really thought of myself as an American until I was a teenager. I'm part of the Caribbean, and then my identity is rooted in Africa. They're very Afro-centric in some ways…. It's a strange dynamic, because even though I say that, there's still the question of colorism; there's still the question of racism. Self-hatred that comes from slavery… so, it's not as clear as it seems. But definitely, if I were to say I'm an American, it would be simply to satisfy an understanding from a different point of view that I would call myself that.

For Kay, growing up in the U.S. Virgin Islands, being rooted in the Caribbean and Afro-centric ways of being came before an understanding of being part of the United States as a nation or as a culture. Although this is a different dynamic from growing up in the U.S. mainland, as Kay describes, colorism, racism, and internalized racism still play roles. She went on to say that she identifies as:

> Female. Black. Not necessarily African American. That has a different idea to it as well, understanding that we do share a history. We're on a different leg of the same journey. We are one people, but I think that through history we have developed a little bit differently in some aspects. So I don't necessarily see myself as African American.

Kay described how the Caribbean has a history of migration similar to the history of the Great Migration from the American Southeast to the Midwest, Northeast, and West Coast. She explained:

> The Virgin Islands has contributed to the Harlem Renaissance and different things, but a lot of people don't know about that. So when I think about being 50 [years old], I think of coming from people from that era who were very much into Pan-Africanism—the idea that you have to create your own space, and I want to create that space. And then coming out of the Civil Rights era, and now being in a strange place where you have Black Lives Matter and what seems to be lynching coming back. And not having an MLK, a Marcus Garvey, and different people to follow in our community, who can galvanize people around a common cause…. So, again, the whole "American" thing is kind of strange, because locally I would be considered a Crucian. (Me: What is that word?) C-r-u-c-i-a-n. Which basically is like the adjective for St. Croix. And so that means something different as well, because we do have a Danish background, and then the Americans coming in. It adds a kind of tension between us and other islanders like the British islands and the French islands. So you began to see how, even though all of these islands have divested their colonial background, some more than others—for example, in Barbados last year, they got rid of the Queen as the head of State. Antigua is about to do so. Jamaica is about to do so. So, even though that push is there the concept of being different and a lot of the weird tensions between European powers like English and French, etc. exist between the people. And then the Danes came in late into slavery. So it makes us different in a sense. So other people are moving, trying to get to the United States, through the Virgin Islands like a stepping stone. But we're different from those people, and it breeds tension that shouldn't be there.

Kay's description of the history of the the U.S. Virgin Islands echoes points made elsewhere by theorists of colonialism and temporality. Many scholars of settler colonialism have pointed out that there is no such thing as "post-colonial" in settler colonies where European settlers came and stayed. In the case of the U.S. Virgin Islands, as Kay describes, the history of Danish occupation and

enslavement was distinct from the history of the French and British occupation of other Caribbean islands. Her description of the role of the U.S. Virgin Islands in the Caribbean is thick with the imbrication of multiple space-times that are usually conceptualized by U.S. and Western theory as linear and discrete, but which come together in her story rhizomatically. To explain, it is necessary to look briefly at Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) description of the rhizome. Deleuze and Guattari describe the characteristics of the rhizome this way:

> 1 and 2. Principles of connection and heterogeneity: any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. … 3. Principle of multiplicity: it is only when the multiple is effectively treated as substantive, "multiplicity," that it ceases to have any relation to the One as subject or object, natural or spiritual reality, image and world. … A multiplicity has neither subject nor object, only determinations, magnitudes, and dimensions that cannot increase in number without the multiplicity changing in nature… 4. Principle of asignifying rupture: against the oversignifying breaks separating structures or cutting across a single structure. A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines. … 5 and 6. Principle of cartography and decalcomania: a rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure. (pp. 7-12)

The imbrication of space-times, not only for Kay, but for teachers oriented to social justice throughout this study, becomes rhizomatically. Times and histories connect up to one another. Kay spoke of the Harlem Renaissance, and how the Virgin Islands contributed to that literary and artistic movement. However, the contributions of Virgin Islands writers—or Caribbean writers generally—to the Harlem Renaissance is not something I ever learned about in my own K-12 education, nor in my English major for my bachelor's degree, nor when I was teaching from various American Literature textbooks about the Harlem Renaissance during my own K-12 teaching days. Certainly

the migration of people from the Virgin Islands and the Caribbean facilitated that influence and an influence on other aspects of U.S. culture that are often unacknowledged. The influence of these Caribbean writers on the Harlem Renaissance connected to Kay's current becoming and her awareness of the exclusion of the contributions of Caribbean writers. Kay, being 50 years old at the time of this interview, also spoke of her ancestral past, the people she came from, and the Pan-Africanism that influenced those who raised her. That longer ancestral past impacted her perception of not having a leader like an "MLK, a Marcus Garvey." She expressed uncertainty about the future given the Black Lives Matter movement and "what seems to be lynching coming back." At the same time that we had recently (less than three years) lived through witnessing the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery (when this interview was conducted), Kay commented on how being in and from the U.S. Virgin Islands was like being part of the United States, but also not at all part of the United States. She described herself as "not necessarily African American…. We're on a different leg of the same journey." She used the metaphor of legs and journeys to reference the cross-Atlantic slave trade which brought her ancestors to the Caribbean and enslaved Africans to the United States' mainland.

Furthermore, Danish colonization of the (now) U.S. Virgin Islands impacted the U.S. Virgin Islands differently than other places in the Caribbean, and the differences politically and culturally between the U.S. Virgin Islands (colonized by the Danes) and the Caribbean islands that had been colonized by the British or French produced ongoing tensions, differences, and influences. The influence of Jamaica, Antigua, and Barbados removing the Queen of England as official head of state was enough that Kay brought it up in the interview. And the context in which she understood and understands colonialism is a Caribbean context where multiple waves of colonial occupation continue to produce differences that matter. Through Kay's words, connectives are generated among colonization, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Black Lives Matter, the Civil Rights movement,

her personal and ancestral history, the Queen of England, the Harlem Renaissance, people using the U.S. Virgin Islands as a "stepping stone" to get to the United States' mainland, the contributions of U.S. Virgin Islanders being erased from the histories told on the U.S. mainland. There is no clear *hierarchy* or *linearity* of connections; they all matter in establishing the (not-so-"post"-) colonial context in which Kay teaches and continues to become an anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher. There is not a strict "genetic axis" or "deep [arborescent] structure" where we can definitively establish which elements of history matter "more" than others in Kay's anti-racist, anti-colonial teaching journey. They all become salient at varying points in the rhizome, sometimes unexpectedly.

Kay's connectivities with/in multiple space-times is also a site for temporal racial and colonial theorizing. Here, I also think with Sharpe (2016), who also discusses the ongoing impact of the trans-Atlantic slave trade in her book *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. She thinks with the slave ship itself as a site of theorization, and defines the "wake" this way:

> *Wake: the track left on the water's surface by a ship; the disturbance caused by a body swimming or moved, in water; it is the air currents behind a body in flight; a region of disturbed flow.* (p. 3)

In thinking the ways in which the enslavement of Black people in North America continues *as* present (not just "in the present"), Sharpe uses the language of "disturbed flow," which here indicates the ontological disturbances created by disaster. Citing Blanchot, she further explains the concept and impact of disaster:

> "The disaster ruins everything, all the while leaving everything intact…. When the disaster comes upon us, it does not come. The disaster is its imminence, but since the future, as we conceive of it in the order of lived time belongs to the disaster, the disaster has always already withdrawn or dissuaded it; there is not future for the disaster, just as there is no time or space for its accomplishment." (Blanchot, 1995, pp. 1-2 as cited in Sharpe, 2016, p. 5)

In stating that the disaster *is* its imminence and that "there is not future for the disaster" (p. 5), Sharpe conceptualizes disaster as something that takes place *on the level* of ontology, and on the level of ontology that touches *all* space-time, including futurities. Because it already touches all possible futurities, there is "not" future for the disaster. In its ontological phenomenal occurrence, it *immediately* touches past, present, and future all at once. This is what Sharpe refers to as "the wake." One might imagine an instantaneous pulse of electricity that flows through all points in a rhizomatic structure to conceptualize the wake as well. If one conceptualizes an event like the trans-Atlantic slave trade and all its attendant horrors as both spatio-temporally singular *and* as the kind of Deleuzian event that touches everything at once (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 21) it becomes possible to understand the ontology of disaster as a kind of wave-function (just as wakes are made of waves) that can both collapse into the specificity of its point in linear space-time *and* can remain ontologically indeterminate, reverberating throughout multiple spacetimes as a continual disturbance of the immanence of spacetime itself. It exists as both profoundly material and profoundly virtual, to continue to draw on Deleuzian language.

In Kay's example, the combination of trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonization of the Caribben become an event on the order of Sharpe's "disaster" in that they continue to produce "tension that shouldn't be there" among Caribbean peoples who have inhabited islands formerly colonized by different European powers. However, movements against colonialism, which include actions such as removing the Queen of England as the head of state, have begun in some Caribbean nations and are also spreading.

In calling attention to the ontology of disaster, Sharpe introduces the wake as a "problem for thought." "I want to think 'the wake' as a problem of and for thought," she writes; "thinking needs care… and… thinking and care need to stay in the wake" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 5).

In many ways, Kay's story of being/becoming an anti-racist, anti-colonial educator *was* a staying-in-the-wake. In response to the question, "What does it mean to you to be that [an anti-racist, anti-colonial and social justice educator]?" Kay responded,

> I think I always have been… but the first experience I had which made me say, "Oh my God; what am I doing?" is when I was teaching *A Midsummer Night's Dream* here in the Virgin Islands. I taught it as part of my practicum in Florida. So I didn't notice certain images and whatnot because I was teaching in a different context where it was just like, "Oh, yeah, you know." But it just goes [along] because the population [in Florida] was mostly European…. But I remember reading a line. I forgot the character's name—and just the way she was described. One of the two characters is blonde, and the other one has dark hair. And she's called an "Ethiope" and all these other denigrating words because she's ugly and everything, and I remember us reading it in class, and one of my students is reading this thing about her being an Ethiope, and that's Ethiopia of course. And here, we have a huge Rastafarian population. And I'm looking at these kids like, these connections are strange for them. And then also, it made an impact on me that I really have to be careful about what I present to Black, Brown, and Latino students.

Kay had acknowledged colorism in addition to racism as a force present not only in the U.S. mainland but also in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and here, she describes the dissonance created by having taught Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in two different locations—one in Florida with a mostly-European/white population, and one in the U.S. Virgin Islands with a mostly students-of-Color population. In teaching a Shakespearian play that uses the word "Ethiope" as a derogatory term along with other denigrating words that equate darkness of complexion to ugliness, Kay realized that the equation of darkness and ugliness could do harm to her students. Given that Kay is a Black woman herself, internalized racism and colonialism played a role, and Kay, like other

teachers in this study (e.g. Emilia) faced moments of realization that perhaps a practice she had been engaged in could be harming her students. As described by Taylor (2018), the "hierarchy of bodies" set up under a system of enslavement and genocide has been perpetuated and internalized in various ways by nearly everyone in this society. We are taught from birth to value whiteness, thinness, maleness, able-bodiedness, cisness, and so forth—and to see all of these as beauty standards as well. This racialized caste system (Wilkerson, 2020) has been, to paraphrase Kendi (Kendi, 2016), "stamped" into our society "from the beginning," and while it impacts people differentially and intersectionally (Crenshaw, 2019; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016), it is so thoroughly interwoven into the fabric of society that no one is immune from its impacts.

Also similar to other teachers in this study, Kay's family history impacted her as an anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher. Kay described how her mother read a great deal because she regretted not having the monetary means to attend university. She said her mother imbued in her the

> Idea that there was something to reading that [was] different from what [I was] getting in class. I remember her—I went to private Catholic school, and I remember her seeing my [book] list, and her saying that there [were] no Black books on this list. I don't think if she wouldn't have said that, that I would have thought that there are no Black books on this list, you know. And so that's my mother, and she came from a background where you don't question the teacher. But [her saying this to me] was enough to put it in my mind that there is something different between the books I read [in school] and other books that have something else in them. And so I was always wrangling with the book that I have in front of the students, and what do I do with those books.

Kay went on to describe how the books available via schools and school districts' adopted curricula were "very Eurocentric" and so she became very cognizant of the lenses through which she taught and which identities, racial and otherwise, her students held. Her "wrangling" with the texts she was

given to teach was also her learning to wrangle and struggle based on the critical consciousness her mother imparted to her. Kay gave another example, prefacing with the statement that she "was always waiting for somebody to complain" about her teaching, while laughing a bit ironically. She described how, when teaching Miller's *The Crucible* (Miller, 2003), she shared a particular connection with the character Tituba who is from Barbados (another Caribbean island). She explained of Tituba's character that she

> Is like a caricature. So I would talk to the students about what it means to have Caribbean characters in movies, like Pirates of the Caribbean, and what that looks like, and how it's framed in the piece, and why [Tituba] looks like that. And Arthur Miller, I didn't think was racist in a sense, but he is a white man in a very racist society at a [particular] time period, and so, whether or not he was aware of it, those ideas definitely got into the character of Tituba. And so what you get is almost this laughable person who was whipped [for "casting spells" with the young girls of the preacher's family], but the only way she could say how she feels is through these ridiculous curses. If you don't read it the right way—or what I would say is the right way—you could almost say that she deserved it [being whipped]. You can almost say, "Well, she deserved it," or "She's silly" or something like that. …I think one negative aspect of being a Black teacher in white spaces is the idea that you're saying that you think *I* did this. While, if I were a white person—or a person who didn't make any mistakes—then they would see—white students would see me as, "Well, that's a possibility." You know. "That's a good person." But it was detrimental because I'm a human being, you know, and we should be allowed to have flaws and not be considered not a good teacher.

Kay describes a tragically all-too-common phenomenon of not being taken seriously by white students and families as a Black teacher, particularly when she shares insights on race and racialization in the [white male] literature she teaches. DiAngelo names this as one type of "white

fragility" (DiAngelo, 2018); namely, that white people tend to hear things better and differently from other white people, even if they are the same messages and insights that have been being shared by BIPOC. Kay was all too aware that in instances such as critically interrogating the portrayal of a Black character in a work by a white man, she might not be taken seriously *on account* of her race. Kay also describes the way in which Miller's portrayal of a Black Caribbean character reinforces stereotypes of Black Caribbean women as over-exaggerated, silly, laughable, deserving their own victimization. Even while Miller offered an important critique of the dogmatism of the McCarthy era of U.S. mainland politics, particularly the "witch hunt" of the Red Scare, he did not question his internalized racism and paternalism in the development (or, at times, lack thereof) of Tituba's character. There is also, here again, a convergence of temporalities that works against a strictly (or traditionally) linear understanding of the operation of time in anti-racist, anti-colonial educators' becomings. Anti-Blackness has a long history—a long wake—and Kay's authority not only as a teacher but also as a human being with lived experience as a Black Caribbean woman can and will be called into question by white students and parents. She is not considered to be, by white students and their families, the authority of her own experience nor of elucidating a Black female Caribbean character written by a canonical white author in the mid-20th Century. She describes Miller as someone she "didn't think was racist in a sense, but he is a white man in a very racist society at a [particular] time period, and so, whether or not he was aware of it, those ideas definitely got into the character of Tituba."

Kay's personal history and history growing up in the U.S. Virgin Islands also entangled with her understandings of the (white) canon of literature commonly taught in U.S. schools. She went on to explain:

> I was aware that I was living in a segregated society…. It's really only now that we're having white people living in my neighborhood [in St. Croix]. So, that was strange. They would live

along the coastline, and I never thought anything of it. We do have white people—some white people who stayed over from colonial times who are here and are part of the society, and you can hear them speaking to you, and you're like, "Oh, that's a local." But that racism is still there. But I don't think that anyone explained it to me in depth at that time when I was a child. The only thing I remember my mom saying—because I was fascinated by the tour buses. There's a huge—it's much bigger now—but there is a big hotel right down the street from where I lived. And the tour buses in the [nineteen-]eighties would go by with—packed with white people. You know, like Zora Neale Hurston, you would see the white people go by, and I would wave to them, you know, I would wave to them. I think my mom got scared with me thinking the world was wonderful, and the nice white people would wave to me and treat me fine. One day she said, "You know, Kay, not everybody's going to like you." I didn't know what that meant; I was like, "Oh, okay… I mean you love me."

Kay continued,

> It wasn't until I was 16 or 17, and I went to Florida. I was living in Homestead, Florida. It had a very big migrant population—Mexican people who pick the tomatoes. And a Black population, and white redneck [sic] and white upper class. I had two family members who were Black Muslims, so I did understand that there was something with race out there in the world that is kind of messed up, and kind of antagonistic towards me. I learned about apartheid from my aunt, who was a little overboard, and she explained to me a massacre and how all the kids were killed and all this stuff…. I knew about the American South. I never experienced it [at that time]. …But I remember going to one of my classes, a home economics class, and there was a student, and he was white, and he was talking about going to [KKK] rallies. I was like, "Ohhhh, that's what I read about in 9th grade." We had read [the novel] *Roll of Thunder Hear my Cry*, and… he was talking about going to these rallies, and what

> a great time it was! And I just remember feeling really angry. But it was in class, so I can't say anything. Nobody said anything. And the teacher didn't say anything. I don't know if she heard. This was all around the time that Malcom X was big, and the Spike Lee movie was out and everything. And the kids weren't allowed to wear their "X" shirts. They banned them at school because they said that it was too radical or something like that. They painted Malcom X as being racist. But this boy comes in, and he is wearing—I remember it was like a green shirt. And there were shackles on the shirt. And it said "racism, subservience, and slavery" on the shirt. And I'm thinking on the islands we don't have bounded chains. All our images are broken chains. So there was something going on there, and again, it just kind of bewildered me that he could wear that. I don't think they could have worn Confederate shirts, but I know they definitely have, maybe some. And those are like experiences that especially when I was in Florida and when I was in South Carolina, I thought about, what am I doing? Because even if they can't wear the shirts [at school], it doesn't mean they're not wearing the shirts at all. And it doesn't mean that someone is not talking to them about what it means to be me, from their perspective. So it's always—I guess it was stressful in the sense that you're always thinking about perception, and you're always thinking about how you come across, and at the time, at the same time, you're also thinking that you are still in a situation of subservience—not subservience, of subversiveness where, whatever you teach, and the literature you teach, and the writing assignments you teach, you're doing it in such a way that perhaps you can change someone's ideas without just coming out and saying, "This is what's wrong with this society."

For Kay, the personal and societal past combine with elements of the present, and school-assigned literary texts, and school expectations, and differing communities to form an ongoing curriculum of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher education. Part of what has taught Kay, and continues to teach Kay,

are experiences of segregation that entangle with others' narratives similar to her own, such as Zora Neale Hurston's autobiographical story, *Dust Tracks on a Road* (Hurston, 2006), in which Hurston describes her younger self, growing up in Eatonville, Florida (the first incorporated all-Black municipality in the United States), waving at white people in cars when they passed by on the road. Hurston describes in *Dust Tracks* how she would ask white people if she could ride "a little piece of the way" with them; Kay described how the impression she got of white people on tour busses headed to a nearby resort hotel, waving back at her when she waved at them, worried Kay's mother. Kay's mother--older and more experienced with racism at the time--told Kay that "not everyone was going to like her," although Kay did not seem to understand that what her mother was referring to at the time was racism. Later, however, Kay would understand.

Later, Kay's experiences in Florida--having Black Muslim relatives, attending a school where a classmate attended Klan rallies and wore t-shirts valorizing enslavement, attending a school where this was permitted but Malcom X t-shirts inspired by the Spike Lee movie on Malcom X were banned as "too radical," having previously studied the novel *Roll of Thunder Hear my Cry* (Taylor, 2004), having a teacher who did not say anything when Kay's classmate told other classmates about attending Klan rallies and having a "great time"—all these experiences entangled to form a curriculum of Kay's understanding herself as existing in a continued position of "subversiveness," where she could not openly tell students what was wrong with the society in which they lived, but where she could teach them about literature in ways that might impact their consciousness of power dynamics and oppression in society. She drew attention to how intentional her teaching became when she talked about how the literature she taught, the writing assignments she gave, and the way in which she taught and interacted with students were always done with the understanding that someone would always be talking to her white students "about what it means to be me, from their perspective." She knew from these experiences and histories that swirled around and through her

body and subjectivity that she was constantly facing the perception of (white) others. Kay's description echoes what Fanon describes in *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon, 2008): the double-consciousness of colonization. Her description is also strikingly similar to the experience of double-consciousness that DuBois describes (2014)—always seeing oneself simultaneously through one's own eyes and the eyes of the white supremacist world one is surrounded by. One must be doubly conscious for safety; the gaze becomes part of one's becoming.

Kay's ongoing anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher education curriculum, then, is one of affects of fear and subversion, courage and double-consciousness. It is a curriculum of strategy, and a realism about what white students' perceptions of her will be, and will be informed by, in the society that surrounds Kay. It is a curriculum of juxtapositions—the U.S. Virgin Islands and the U.S. mainland Southeast; Kay's family experiences (including with books) and her school experiences. The dissonance created—these zones of friction—incite an anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher who questions her own assumptions and experiences on an ongoing basis so that she might also continually interrogate her teaching practice and give students insight into both what is wrong in society as well as what might go differently in the future.

Kay's story entangles multiple space-times throughout. In addition to being a kind of wake-work (Sharpe, 2016) in process, Kay's story acts as a kind of manifestation of the kind of temporality Barad (2018) describes in "Troubling time/s and ecologies of nothingness: re-turning, re-membering, and facing the incalculable."

> According to quantum physics… a diffraction pattern is a manifestation of a superposition. Interestingly, although linearity is a prime target of temporality analyses, superpositions are in fact based on linearity: not a linearity of moments or events evenly distributed in time, but a linear combination of (different) times. Hence, while contemporary rejections of linearity abound, especially in discussions of temporality, this story does not eschew linearity but

> rather opens it up to its radical potential. So, despite the fact that linearity – in particular, linear time – has been fingered as a particularly pernicious idea integral to Enlightenment thinking, the handmaiden to an ideology of progress and associated notions of the unidirectionality of time and temporal successionism, I am arguing that (even) linearity is susceptible to radical reworkings from within. This troubling of the assumed problematics of linearity and the associated quantum reworkings of the classical notion of time operate in concert with, not as a rejection of, an array of recent critical reassessments of temporality that for various reasons trouble the linear conception of time and suggest alternative conceptions of time that include temporal multiplicity and other configurations. (Note that quantum physics' notion of temporal superposition suggests a phenomenon that is far more subtle, that is to say, more complex and far stranger than multiplicity per se). Any suggestion that the notion of the linearity of time is unsalvageable and ought to be replaced with a new, arguably superior, notion of time would be ironic, since it would be to fall into the logic of progress and supersessionism. What is needed is an understanding of temporality where the 'new' and the 'old' might coexist, where one does not triumph by replacing and overcoming the other. Quantum superpositions and, relatedly, quantum entanglements open up possibilities for understanding how the 'new' and the 'old' – indeed, multiple temporalities – are diffractively threaded through and are inseparable from one another. (pp. 68-69)

My contention is that Sharpe's (2016) conception of disaster (as described earlier) is euphonious with both Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the "event" (1994) and with Barad's (2018) conception of quantum superposition temporalities. For Kay--and for the other teachers in this study--time--personal time, familial time, societal time, historical time, political time--exist in a state of diffraction and superposition. The wave function may collapse temporarily as one or another time becomes relevant given the specific circumstances of a singularity that develops according to agential

cuts that happen; however, all these temporalities are inseparable from one another on the level of ontology.

There was more. This next section--it was written, and then due to a complicated save error, it was erased. In what follows, I attempt to re-create commentary on what happened next in Kay's and my interview. But first, it was worth reproducing a larger section of the transcript. In this way, Kay's and my relationship comes to the fore. Kay interviewed me in return, and because I had oriented this work toward immersive cartography, and because I also believe in relational accountability, I wanted to lean into this moment. I do wonder, in retrospect, if I did so too eagerly; perhaps I took up more space than what Kay was asking for; perhaps I spoke when Kay wanted space to reflect or to be listened to. Nonetheless, as a form of relational accountability, I want to reproduce some pieces of that part of our conversation here so that the reader might also see the ways in which I was a participant in this conversation in particular. This piece of conversation also co-constitutes some of my positionality and history in ways similar to those of the teachers who participated.

Kay: Okay, now. So, Mary. I really do wonder what makes a white person say they want to do this work.

MaryJohn: A good question. I mean. I can only really answer it for myself, obviously. But there are big chunks of my story that made a difference. I mean, my father grew up in Pittsburgh or in the Pittsburgh suburbs during the fifties and sixties. He also went through Catholic school, through eighth grade, and then public high school. He wanted us to have the same experience. So I went to Catholic school in Ohio and Georgia, and that was predominantly, very white. But then he made sure that we went to a very diverse public high school in Metro Atlanta that, I mean there was no ethnic or racial majority at the time, and you would hear like ten languages going down the hallway between classes, and even though we were sometimes marginalized within the larger school district, as being, like, you know, a school sort of like "on the wrong side of town," or whatever. There was a lot of pride, I think, that the school community took in its diversity. I think that that really impacted me, and when I got to Furman in my undergrad, it was also a very white space in a lot of ways, but I think I noticed that a lot more because of where I went to high school. And I started working on this diversity building/prejudice reduction committee, as well as an interfaith community, because

there was also a lot of religious persecution and marginalization of non-Protestant Christian people. And, you know, I think I learned a lot, but I did not really interrogate my own positionality as much. Yet at that time I took classes in post colonial literature and Southeast Asian literature during my senior year at Furman, and I think that started--and you know, with some theory, I started interrogating how power circulates through language and discourse, and, like, hegemonic structures. And what does that even mean? And what does it mean for a system to kind of like, perpetuate itself within us? And then, I thought I was going to do postcolonial literature in grad school, but I then started teaching, and the Greenville area I was teaching at. I mean, you know the area; I started teaching at Berea. And I think it was there that I was like, these ideas all apply to everything I'm seeing, and I couldn't quite make sense of it yet. But I was getting a lot of push back around like even wanting to do an environmental club, and to do these extra things with the kids. There was a lot of pressure to raise standardized test scores. There was a lot of like, just violence. Not the kids--they were good kids, but like it was a violent environment, and it was like psychically violent in a lot of ways, and I couldn't quite make sense of everything that I was seeing at the time, but I knew that I wanted to make sense of it, and so that was part of how I ended up at UBC. And I learned a lot there, just interrogating my own positionality as a white settler colonial person, and even interrogating like, oh, maybe I came into this with a white Savior complex that came from my being raised as Catholic, and not having to question that. And even though I went to this diverse high school, I was able to move through that space in a way that made things easy for me because of my whiteness, because of being Christian, even though, like half of Christians in the Southeast get some push back.[51] But, so, I think, learning that all of these things are connected. I think I became really concerned about climate change in like 2006 when *Inconvenient Truth* by Al Gore came out, and that was not something I'd known about at that point, but becoming really concerned about that, But also the the deeper I got into it, learning how interconnected all these systems of oppression are to the larger climate crisis, to what is happening to our planet, to the continuation of violence against groups of marginalized people…. Just being engaged in this work and realizing that, like oh, it's actually--it is a personal journey, and in some ways I owe it to myself and to the larger world, not to hide what my investments are in this work…. I don't know if that's like a fair answer, but--[52]

Kay: Yeah. That's pretty good. I do wonder about that…. I think I know the answer. But I'm going to ask your perspective. Why do you think there is such back peddling in America? Advancements

[51] What was I saying here? Half the Christians in the Southeast get some pushback? I think I was talking about how Catholics in the Southeast get pushback from Protestant Christians--particularly Southern Baptists--but it's certainly not half.

[52] I wonder now if I said too much; did the typically white thing and took up too much air space. She did ask me my motivations; however, based on re-reading and re-listening to her responses now, I wonder if what was implicitly being asked was for me to hold space for her (and for the collective) grief over why, as a society, we continue to face so much injustice and over why white American society continues--in ways overt and subtle--to refuse to hold itself accountable for its violence.

that have in the sixties and seventies the white population might have been right there, right on, in the system; they were thinking about what's going on.

MaryJohn: Right? I mean, I think in the largest sense, you know, it threatened the power structure and the privilege structure that has always been, from the institution of the United States as an entity that was founded on both slavery and genocide and white supremacy. And I think that any time the core elements of such a system are questioned, you know, people may give lip service to, "Yeah, that's right. And it should change." But then, like when, like you were saying, with actually returning the land or money from stolen labor that has been passed down generationally, that really challenges people; like, Can I actually give that up?[53] What if that means, you know, either I'm going to lose out on a vacation or I'm not going to have enough money to feed my family, or--or I just don't want to, or whatever, right. And it also requires giving up, I think, some things--I'm not sure if the right word would be like psychologically, spiritually, subjectively, into personally, but like, what I've come to understand through a lot of the reading that I've been exposed to, and for a lot of the experiences that I've had, is that I do think there is something in white culture that fundamentally does not value human beings for being human beings. And I think that in--and by no means am I saying this is the same as internalized racism that people of Color experience--but I do think that there is an internalization of the concept that we do not have fundamental worth and value just for being. And so that leads to reinforcing this idea that, well, I've got to be better than somebody else in order to have value, which obviously is immensely destructive. But I do think that there is work for white folks to do in terms of understanding just the baseline intrinsic value of everybody in order to be able to let go of some of that like psychic privilege too, right? And I think that there's also been a concerted effort on behalf of people who have a lot of money in power to keep these structures in place, and I know, like one of the things that a friend of mine taught me about is the Lewis Powell Memo--which I hadn't heard of--in the nineteen-seventies. Lewis Powell. Do you know about this with the Supreme Court Justice, who just kind of dashed off this memo that was meant to be, I think, is meant to be private? He basically said, like what's going on with these social movements is fundamentally threatening to the structure of capitalism in America, that destination was founded on, and, like we need a concerted effort in governments and media education, etc., etc., to push back on this. And this was circulated at the time.[54] And I think that, you know there was a cultural push back. And you know you think about, like, Ronald Reagan and Reaganomics and the so-called war on drugs that became really a war on people of Color and mass incarceration. And all these things, like, it has been both individual and governmental and systemic and political. And I think that whenever a power structure is threatened it's not going to give itself up without a fight. And I kind of just see these latest iterations as being--maybe it feels more obvious. But I don't think it's

[53] Inspired by Love (2020)

[54] My friend had learned about this memo from Hartmann (2014)

anything that's fundamentally new. I think it's an intensification in some ways, but I don't I don't see it as being something new. But I appreciate your drawing me out on this.

Kay: I often worry about--I wonder about these things. I try hard myself to understand that Europe is not all this; Europe has a pagan past, much like all the other Indigenous places. And that--just there are a lot of white people who are not all the same. And they are--well, I guess what we say. Why, it sounds more like America. In Europe, it would be I'm a German. I'm going to tell you that I'm Irish. You know, I don't understand why American whites can't see the value in their own an Indigenous background. Like when we talk about appropriation, why is it that they feel that they need to appropriate Indigenous culture, and there are European Indigenous cultures, and they're beautiful. So why don't they hold on to those things?

MaryJohn: Yeah, no. I mean. I appreciate that question, too, because, like even on a personal level, I grapple with that some because I've also kind of dabbled in, like, European paganism a little. Not that much, but I have had curiosity, because I don't identify as dogmatically Catholic anymore, even though I was raised that way. The most that I seem to be able to easily find is like Celtic-type, traditions and/or Western European paganism. But my roots are Eastern European, like Polish, Slovak, and I haven't really properly done enough digging to find exactly what the more Indigenous religions to that region would have been. But I do think that--well, let me be very clear. There are big issues of white supremacy in parts of the neo pagan community also, especially as it concerns some of the Nordic and Scandinavian neo-paganism. It is sometimes heavily associated with the white Nationalist movement. But I do think the more I've learned about cultural appropriation, the more I've learned about a settler colonial mentality of white entitlement to like not only land, but also *everything* right? Like, I think a really deep part of whiteness is just entitlement to any and everything.[55] So I think that because we're steeped in that, like, people don't necessarily actively think about it until they're taught to, and I was certainly taught to. It is not something that I was thinking about as a teenager. I know that I messed things up in college. I think that entitlement is a big piece of it. And I also think that there is a kind of spiritual seeking going on at the same time, for, like something that would give us a sense of internal fundamental worth and worthiness. And I think a lot of us have not found it in Christianity or in monotheism. And so I think there has been a search for, like, what else? Or where else, or whose else could it be? But that has obviously not always been a very mindful search. And I think the ways in which we sometimes exercise the impulse to search are still steeped in whiteness and settler colonialism. And then, I think you know, there's always a possibility that some folks just don't care. But I would like to think that there can be a shift. But yeah, I mean, it's an important and powerful question, and I do think that we probably don't talk enough about the intersections with religion and spirituality of doing this work, because I think a lot of times, like white Western European academic discourse sets up a binary between spiritualism or--

[55] "The problem with white people is they think and behave like they own everything. —Dennis Benjamin Moreton (personal communication, April 10, 2005)" (Moreton-Robinson, 2015, p. xi)

well, first of all, we like, glom spirituality and religion together, right? That's another thing I've learned. And then also it sets up religion versus science as a binary. So, I appreciate that because I feel like that's an area I haven't really pushed on yet, but I do think it's absolutely enmeshed in all of this as well.

Kay: It's a lot.

MaryJohn: What do you think about the religion--that and anything else that you asked.

Kay: Oh. The religion always fascinated me because it just seems as if there's no understanding what a white now seems to not understand. My question is, how do you not understand the same for you, you know--for replacing a religion, and taking it--not the extent; it's not the same. You know. But how could you not understand? I think that support, too. That makes things difficult to deal with at this time.

MaryJohn: I agree with that.

Kay: But at the same time I don't understand how a white person would say, I don't understand what I've done to you and your family. And so much of that, I don't say like, you hurt me. I get what you've done to me when it's kind of like you, it's in your culture. Are you the fabric of your society? And so this even today, like you've heard me. I'm gonna go back, and I'm gonna--I don't get that. I also don't get the idea of not loving--I don't--I don't know how to say this nicely, but--

MaryJohn: You don't have to.

Kay: Of you, not having enough love for your own children not to inflict that kind of psychic horror on them. Because it's like what Frederick Douglass said. You think that you're beating me and you're hurting me, but you're hurting yourself and your soul. And I don't understand, once again, the concept of what you do to another person is ruining who you are and ruining your children. And this blindness--let's just say, the random violence of shooting masses of people. And I look at it as the idea of things come back; you know, in the sense of reincarnation. All these people who are gone, and things don't go *away*; a grandparent who does this horrible thing comes back in the form of a child who does horrible things. And I don't see why there isn't some force in white culture--white American culture that says, maybe our children are behaving this way, and committing these horrible horrors. *Let's not talk about Chicago. Our* children are doing horrible, horrible things, and where is this coming from? And why don't we take stock and say it's really not cool for one of our children to go into a school, or into a mall and just shoot people down indiscriminately. It's--it's baffling to me as well. And time and time and time again. And I guess the way I look at it--maybe if I try to understand it, is that if I've done something like that to someone, maybe the horror is actually looking at in the same way and not being able to face that. But then the "why are we weird?"

part about it is, you open that book[56] every Sunday, you know, and things are not jiving; they're not fitting together. So I guess the only thing is that it's an insanity. Not seeing--that that comes back, and it just seems like nothing is being done to stop it and make America this "dream." America will just always be a dream. But it's not going to be a reality. Because there is no stoppage of this terrible horrible thing.

MaryJohn: I think you're spot on with, whether you want to call it insanity or sickness. That just brought up that--I can't remember who said it. But there's a quotation about like if you feel fine in a fundamentally sick society, you're not well, right? And I think that is. And what you said also about like, what we do to others impacts us. It impacts our soul. It impacts our spirit. It impacts our well-being. And I think that's the deeper part of this work for me--is that, like, if you really want to be well, you have to be willing to face horror also, and even especially including horror that maybe I myself have inflicted, right, because not not to face it is not to be well. And I know that like for other people that's gonna look differently, especially people who are not white, right? But all along everybody who's not white has had to face that horror regardless. So, yeah to me, I mean, you've touched on like the deeper level of what I think I'm trying to get at when I'm trying to talk about well-being is that it doesn't necessarily mean just feeling good. It doesn't necessarily mean just feeling happy. It means being in touch with reality and with the reality that what we inflict on others, we also inflict on ourselves. And you also reminded me of this TaNehisi Coates quotation about American dreamers.[57] And like how, fundamentally, I think he talks about white society as dreamers. Like this all is a dream. It's never been an actual reality….

Kay: Yeah, I don't know. I think that's when you ask what makes it difficult, I think that's another answer to what makes this work very difficult. Because it's not work that only we can do. I was talking to another classmate in this library program, and that was my question, like we can't--Black women can't do it on our own; Black people can't. It has to be done--like, white people have to do the work, and they have to do some serious work, you know. And I would think that for the love of children they would do it. But things just don't seem like it--it goes together, you know. And forcing women to have children, and it's like all this. It's just it's all this terrible replaying. You know, forcing women to have children. And of course I'm talking about the abortion repeals and everything. It's--It's the same kind of trauma on the body. There's no love there. You know. So you have children, or force them to come into the world to satisfy some idea in your head. But what kind of world are they coming into?

MaryJohn: Right.

Kay: I don't know. But, Mary--

[56] The Christian Bible
[57] (Coates, 2015)

MaryJohn: hmm.

Kay: They are good questions, I think, if anything. What I think is that you have to keep asking the questions. And that's part of it. So when I want to give up, I just say, you know, you have to keep doing it; that's part of your life. It's part of living, you know.

In re-reading this part of our interview, I have questions for myself--some of which I have indicated in footnotes. I wonder to what extent one can be both deeply invested in the conversation and its content as well as self-consciously performative. However, I include this piece of Kay's and my conversation in part because part of feminist interviewing is refusing the myth of the "view from nowhere." I had, and have, investments. This piece of the interview included Kay asking me to name them. In this way, Kay also subverted the traditional academic interview dynamic of "interviewer-interviewee." She also interrogated my knowledge, story, and positionality. There were additional ways in which Kay also described working against, around, and subverting systems of white supremacist power.

One of those ways was also in Kay's choice to leave the classroom after the school year during which we spoke. Her plans were to become a librarian. I said, "So you mentioned, you're moving into library science. So to whatever extent you feel comfortable, can you talk about what has led to that move for you?"

Kay: The approach to teaching in the Caribbean, and even across the United States, is how hateful people are being towards teachers, you know. Here it's a little bit different. I've given a lot of thought to why there's such an anti-intellectual class here, and again I can link that to our past. Because if you had education, people were not trusting. It was like there's something in the book that you have that I don't have. And then if you have a certain education, some people used it against others who didn't, and I think a lot of that is still prevalent in our society. It's kind of sad and hurtful because you want to use it the right way; you don't want to hurt people. But with library science, I think it's a good move because I can step away from some of those pressures for a while and still work with literacy and still work with getting the knowledge out to people. In particular, young people. In one of my classes, we did one class about "decolonizing the stacks," and it was fascinating. It was talking about the different cataloging systems. and how the cataloging systems are

racist in themselves with the tags that are in there. And so, different libraries are trying to re-order and rename things. There's a lot of naming things…. So I wrote a paper on looking at the stacks for my history through the Danish archives. And I tried it out…. I put in my local names, and local heroes, and they never came up. But then, if I were to put in something else, it would come up, and the wording will be strange, or not something that I'm thinking of. The cataloging and naming is done for a specific perspective. So now what a lot of archives are doing is trying to go back and re-name. So I think all together in academia there is an understanding that there is a wrong not just in history, but actually in *putting down* the history.

MaryJohn: Yeah, yeah, that just--to me, it brings up the whole idea of categorization in the first place, and the power of naming to organize our mental structures and our ways of being and our ways of searching and our ways of doing, right?

Kay: It's a way of ordering the world…. When you look at it a certain way, and something else that I would consider important would be, and others, you can't get it. You can't find what you're looking for there. Or finding it would be difficult

MaryJohn: Right? The facility and the ease is made for a very specific hierarchy.

Kay: That's fascinating. So I guess the challenge would be how I would take what little I've done in the classroom and transform it into a library. I don't know if I've figured that one out yet.

MaryJohn: That's really cool. Do you feel like your school or your district is engaged in anti-colonial or anti-racist education at the school or district level?

Kay: I don't think so, no.

MaryJohn: And if you could change anything so that your well-being was better supported to do anti-racist and anti colonial education, what would you change?

Kay: PDs [professional development sessions]. I'd make them more focused on the strategic ways of using textbooks. I'd start with textbooks that we have, and then I would say, okay, this is how you can branch off, and this is what you can do; like connecting texts.

MaryJohn: Anything else--like what other kinds of PDs would you imagine an ideal world?

Kay: Working with student voice and how students see the world, and what's relevant and important there. It always amazes me. Kind of like the ball test, you know. But I also, when I tell students to like, write a story. And they're writing about snow, and they're writing about elm trees, and we don't have snow here. We don't have elm trees. And then when you talk to the students, it's not because they've been to New Hampshire and they've seen snow and elm trees. It's because that's what "makes a story." Because that's what they've seen. I was like, no! Write about the mango tree! Write about the tamarind tree! Write about Auntie! Auntie is important, you know?! Yeah, like *that's*

a story. That's what I would work on in the English Language space. And I'd work with administrators for them to understand how things impact students. Like I talked about dialect before. Dialect is home. Dialect is safe. Dialect is understanding; that's your first language. And to go to school and tell them you can't speak your dialect to me is synonymous with telling us that we couldn't speak our languages to begin with. In certain situations, students will say, "I wasn't writing right," and it bothers me. Or, "I didn't say that right." What? You said it right for that particular situation, and they just have to learn what that means. But some of our administrators are still very old-school. Like, "That's right. That's wrong." And the idea of what knowledge is and what knowledge can do. Because, like I said, there is an anti-intellectualism that exists, and I am feeling that I understand why it exists. But if we can reframe it in such a way that students understand that it's okay--that intellectualism is ok. And I really am thinking that it's coming from a place where it was used against us. Because when you talk to people--you could talk to someone--we have a corner in our community. And you can see a bunch of guys hanging out under a tree talking, or whatever. And you go and you talk to these people, and it's like, it blows your mind, the kind of things they think about, and the concepts that they have. And it's written in a book somewhere, but a lot of them will tell you, "I don't deal with books." But it's still deep thoughts and ideas that are in books. And the idea is, that is something that was used against us, even if they don't articulate it that way.

Kay also became pushed out of the classroom, but used library science as a means of continuing her work as an educator. She understood the ways in which colonial power and knowledge had been co-constituted with the kind of learning in books in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and she "[understood] why [anti-intellectualism existed" on the islands following colonialism. She knew and honored the intellect and brilliance in the people, instantiated in "a bunch of guys hanging out under a tree talking." She also learned, as part of becoming a librarian, the ways in which colonialism had impacted the very organization of knowledge in libraries, and she knew that to work with student voice--particularly in her context, the U.S. Virgin Islands--meant to teach students that "Auntie is important!" and that stories about "the mango tree, the tamarind tree" are as important as stories about elm trees and snow. Kay's beautiful subversion continues.

CHAPTER V: CONNECTIONS: ANTI-RACIST TEACHER WELL-ILL-BEING AND/AS CURRICULAR PRAXIS

> Remembering that our first pack, our family or systems of origin, passes along everything they have learned to survive, means remembering that we inherit a legacy of historical trauma and resilience along with language and recipes…. Movement work is healing the trauma and lifting the resilience that we have individually and collectively carried. It is messy and painful and time consuming…. It demands a deeper level of intimacy than any of us feel safe engaging with outside those we have already named as being like "us."... Work that centers on the deepening and growing of relationships is an honest and constructive way so that someone has our backs and at the same time call [sic] our shit without leaving us--this is where we start to shift the systems that we carry inside. And this shifting inside helps us to change the systems outside. One feeds the other. (Raffo, 2018, pp. 148-150)

> Oh, let the heavens hear it: the penitential hymn. Come healing of the spirit; come healing of the limb. --Leonard Cohen (2012)

Relationality has traditionally been conceptualized as being between discrete individuals or individual phenomena. It has assumed an "inside" and an "outside"--and a "spirit" and "body." What does relationality--and relational accountability--become when conceptualized under a monistic ontology, where there is no inside/outside or spirit/body division?

Beginning and Ending with Relational Accountability: Some Limitations Concerning White Supremacy and Affective Technologies

It is here that the question of "so what" or "what might we do" also still hangs in the air as we, dear readers, turn toward relational accountability. As I have written about before (Rosiek & Adkins-Cartee, 2023), it is not possible to take up a position of "innocence" as a white settler colonial academic, trained first and primarily in the European continental and posthumanist, feminist materialist philosophical traditions, and who cites Indigenous studies and Black studies literature. Again, I must assume my own complicity (Ahmed, 2017), in either appropriation or erasure of Indigenous and Black thought. I continue to choose to err on the side of risking appropriation because I believe it is important to cite the contributions of Indigenous studies

thinkers to my own thinking and to the crucial change and healing work that this exploration of the more-than-human character of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher ill-well-being-as-curriculum entails.

Again, I have learned and been influenced by Indigenous studies scholars such as Carlson-Manathara, who is a fellow white settler scholar also thinking with Indigenous sovereignty. To reiterate, in *Living in Indigenous Sovereignty* (Carlson-Manathara & Rowe, 2021), Manathara and Rowe describe how

> Traditional academic researchers often conduct studies individually and make sense of the information their studies yield on their own…. Relational accountability features prominently in Indigenous methodologies, and it recognizes that each researcher's perceptions are shaped by the many relationships through which ideas have been shared with them and emphasizes the importance of remaining connected and in dialogue with communities impacted by the researcher…. As a settler researcher, I knew that my values, priorities, and practices remain heavily influenced by settler colonialism, even if against my wishes.

This research has indeed been shaped by many relationships through which ideas have been shared--relationships, first, with the teachers who shared generously of their time, stories, and ideas. But also equally with others whose writing has influenced me since long before the inception of this work. I continue to be concerned with my ongoing relationships with the teachers in this study. I have learned from Indigenous people's example that relational accountability does not end when the academically-sanctioned research "ends."

One aspect of this work not noted in the introduction but salient to analysis is that, as I was recruiting teachers for this study, I was in contact with various organizations, one of which was a state-level teachers' union that had a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion coordinator who initially

expressed interest in this work. As she and I discussed it on the phone, she learned that I am a white researcher and had questions about my doing this work without a co-facilitator of Color. She told me that I would have concerns from teachers of Color who have had many experiences with white people trying to lead such work who have done so with unquestioned racism, or who have simply not "moved out of the way" for people of Color to take the lead on such work. She, and possibly some others, declined to participate in this work because of those concerns. This is an important and valid critique, and one that I hold as I continue to consider future work.

At this time and in this instantiation of this research, I did not recruit a co-facilitator of Color because I did not have the means to adequately compensate such a co-facilitator for their work. Emilia also expressed uncertainty as to whether or not she would continue to want to participate in the project because she also had had negative past experience with white people in anti-racist educator groups. By the end of the first focus group, she did express excitement about staying, and did so. However, this is not to give ethical carte blanche to myself or to the other white educators and scholars generally. As my interview and relationship with Kay demonstrated, there are serious and as-yet-unresolved concerns about whiteness (mine and academia's and the white supremacy of K-12 schools and teachers) that this dissertation raises. It is my belief that these concerns are both my responsibility and not unique to me as a white researcher who strives to engage anti-racist and anti-colonial work.

Also to reiterate, although this dissertation sought to engage both anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers, most of the dialogue in the interviews focused on anti-racist work, and connected to topics of gender and sexuality at times. However, in interviews such as Kay's, both settler colonialism and the history of plantation slavery became highly salient in the particular history and

present of the U.S. Virgin Islands. Further, Kay's reciprocal interviewing of me put the gaze back onto "the researcher" as well as whiteness, mine specifically.

And once again, while I take very seriously Tuck and Yang's directive that "decolonization is not a metaphor" (Tuck & Yang, 2012) and therefore do not claim to be doing *decolonizing* work with this dissertation, my hope for this work--and for what it enables--draws on Cherry McDaniel's concept of "de-weaponizing praxis" (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016). She states:

> As teacher educators, preservice teachers, and currently practicing teachers, we have the choice to continue our work in potentially dangerous ways, or resist assuming the position of cultural foot soldier for the colonizing state…. The work of identity reformation isn't akin to pseudo-decolonization. It is important and necessary for potential allies to have the opportunity to rearticulate our identities and agendas to reflect the role we play in either upholding or undermining colonialism. If we don't, then we run the risk of never preparing a generation capable of assuming radically new identities and forwarding plans toward actual decolonization. Who we believe we are determines what we believe we deserve, and what we are willing to fight for. (p. 44)

This work contributes both to more deeply illustrating the ways in which anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers do identity reformation work, and illustrating how that work differs across intersectional social locations as well as community, school, and personal contexts. None of the "levels" of that work can be disentangled from one another; they all happen together.

Cherry-McDaniel's work also relates, in this instance, to Leonardo and Boas' work concerning the specific subjectivity of white female teachers. In "Other kids' teachers: What children of Color learn from white women and what this says about race, whiteness, and gender" (Leonardo & Boas, 2013), Leonardo and Boas explain that according to a 2011 report from The National

Center for Education Information, over 80% of the U.S. teaching force has become white and female. Drawing on Omi & Winant's (2015) work, they emphasize that "White women's particular role in the racial formation becomes an important node of analysis, because it forms a basic architecture for the unique interaction between White women teachers and students of color of any gender" (Leonardo & Boas, 2013, pp. 313-314). More specifically, (and I quote at some length):

> For centuries, as the "caring gender," White women have occupied a space different from White men within the enactment of racism. From enslavement to colonialism, White women have done the work of White supremacy specific to their own place in the hierarchy, producing their own contradictions in the process. As part of an oppressed gender, White women have been relegated to reproductive roles--social and biological--in society. (p. 315)

Leonardo and Boas go on to explicate the historical role of white women "as caretakers and nurturers," exercising "four virtues: piety, purity, obedience to men, and domesticity" under Protestant Christianity.[58] These virtues as well as the historical role of white women, they argue, has become sublimated into the teaching profession. Furthermore, because "the U.S. education system, in fact, manufactures failure at greater rates than it does success… and if the U.S. education system is also an institution that supports whiteness… then students of color will be, by design, the failing demographic of the system" (pp. 319-320). Given this reality, then, white women are both positionally encouraged to nurturing roles such as teaching students of Color with "benevolent intentions" and also positionally set up to fail these same students of Color. "The White female teacher benevolently serves the nation through her good intentions of saving children of color. Her feminized whiteness is a kinder, gentler whiteness, an 'imperial feminism' of sorts, which allows her

[58] While Leonardo and Boas' argument is primarily about the culture of white Protestant Christianity as it pertains to white women's role in upholding racism and colonialism, there is also extensive evidence of the role played by white women as missionaries and nuns in residential boarding schools for Indigenous children run by Catholic nuns (and priests). The roles of various denominations of Christian, white, predominantly female missionaries in the formation of education as a racializing apparatus is the trajectory of personal scholarship currently in the planning phases.

to reproduce the White, patriarchal nation" (p. 320). This reproduction keeps students--and people--of Color in lower-caste (Wilkerson, 2020) positions within society. Of course, this "kinder, gentler" veneer simply masks the violence of white women's work as teachers, and as many have documented, "good intentions" serve a similar masking role for whiteness (Castagno, 2014). Leonardo and Boas further argue that white women's unique positionality in the white supremacist hierarchy produces them as "footsoldiers of colonialism" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021), performing "ventriloquist acts" wherein they speak on behalf of the state to students of Color and on behalf of students of Color to the state, both of which are framed as benevolent acts but which, again, are acts of violence. This is a "problem of speaking for others" (Alcoff, 1991) wherein white teachers are "participating in the construction of [others'] subject-positions. This act of representation cannot be understood as founded on an act of discovery wherein [white teachers] discover [others'] true selves and then simply relate [their] discovery" (p. 9). Rather, as Alcoff puts it,

> Rituals of speaking are constitutive of meaning, the meaning of the words spoken as well as the meaning of the event. This claim requires us to shift the ontology of meaning from its location in a text or utterance to a larger space, a space that includes the text or utterance but that also includes the discursive context…. Thus, how what is said gets heard depends on who says it, and who says it will affect the style and language in which it is stated, which will in turn affect its perceived significance (for specific hearers). The discursive style in which some European post-structuralists have made the claim that all writing is political marks it as important and likely to be true for a certain (powerful) milieu; whereas the style in which African-American writers made the same claim marked their speech as dismissable in the eyes of the same milieu. (pp. 12-13)

When white female teachers participate in rituals of speaking on behalf of the state to students of Color and on behalf of students of Color to the state, they constitute "others." Particularly when

they speak on behalf of students of Color, they can be understood to participate in "race-making [which] can also be understood as a process of 'othering'" (Omi & Winant, 2015, p. 105). They constitute a crucial piece of the "racial project" (p. 125) of the "racialized nation state" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021, p. 320). In assuming the power to discursively and materially constitute "others," "White women's positions of power persist in the racial order, and they continue to produce and support a discourse of rescue for those they aim to save" (p. 321).

This is why it is crucial to pay careful attention to the ontology of writing and the futurities it enables or disables. Jackson and Mazzei (2023) call this the "unleashing of worldings" that constitute "a departure from epistemology and method to *enactments of inquiry*. In other words, 'things' (i.e., method, objects, subjects, knowledge) do not pre-exist inquiry, ready to be represented; rather, they are constituted (and entangled) in particular conditions" (p. 134). These "particular conditions" are conditions of "material, institutional arrangements and cultural politics" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021, p. 322) that constitute the "racial project" (Omi & Winant, 2015) of othering and failing students of Color in schools. This is a national racial project of the settler colonial state that entangles white women's subjectivities in its vicious maw, and not only "unconsciously." White women's performative fragility (DiAngelo, 2018) is used to protect very material privileges. It is a racial project that also, as Kay aptly noted, tends to produce white students as race-ignorant and privilege-unconscious. It also produces particular kinds of possibilities and constraints for anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers. It also produces particular kinds of possibilities and constraints for anti-racist and anti-colonial researchers, particularly white female ones.

The Dangers of Knowing and of Avoiding Knowledge Claims

The claim that all writing is political can be heard very differently when said by European poststructuralists vs. Black writers working in fields such as Black studies or Critical Race Theory. It is also quite possible that making the claim that anti-racist and anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being is a

thoroughly racialized and colonial phenomenon that exceeds the bounds of individualistic subjectivity will be heard very differently when said by a white womxn researcher (me) than when said by researchers, scholars, writers, and teachers of Color--who have already been saying very similar things, as evidenced by the conversations I engaged with Emilia, Kay, and Azalea.

I was the one asking the questions, and I was the one making selections of which pieces of the interviews to write about. There is a bit of Alcoff's double-bind at play here: if I myself *was* indeed a burned out (white) teacher who self-identified as anti-racist and anti-colonial, in attempting to write about the experiences of other teachers who self-identify as anti-racist and anti-colonial but who do not share the same positionality I do, should I only write about other white teachers who identify this way? Or should I speak about--and thus also *for,* as Alcoff states-- "those less privileged than myself" so as not to "abandon my political responsibility to speak out against oppression, a responsibility incurred by the very fact of my privilege?" (Alcoff, 1991, p. 8). These statements smack of paternalism, but Alcoff also draws attention to the ways in which boundaries are demarcated--who counts as a member of the same group(s) as oneself? Certainly, this writing has been influenced by standpoint theory (Harding, 1997; Harding, 2004; Moreton-Robinson, 2013) and is accountable to and for the subject effects and worldings enabled by my writing from the positionality of white womxn.[59]

[59] While I use womxn and non-binary and gender-fluid rather interchangeably, I want to note that however I may identify my gender (non-binary/gender-fluid), I was assigned female at birth and have been raised, socialized, and gone through most of my life as a white woman with cis-passing privilege. This inevitably has constituted many of the ways in which "I" have come to view the world and society, however much I may also continuously interrogate those views and understandings. Further, while gender presentation inevitably also "does things" and can impact the way I am "hailed" (Butler, 2006), both the positionality of having been a teacher in the U.S. public schools (which has become a white-feminized profession as Leonardo and Boas (2021) argue) and now becoming a white AFAB researcher in education still position me as a white woman speaking for others. Part of the structuration of this is my having pursued a Ph.D. to discuss anti-racist and anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being *in the first place*, as well as the demands of my program to conduct "empirical" research in which I am required to generate new "data" via "empirical" methods. Part of this structuration is also the demand that I complete a dissertation in the first place, let alone the demands on my time and body during a Ph.D. program--all of which are thoroughly steeped in privilege within a settler colonial institution that I have chosen to be part of (however much I also trouble the notion of absolutely "free" choice). And, the particular conditions of the genesis of this dissertation include also a global pandemic, multiple cross-country trips both planned and unplanned (one of which took place as the pandemic broke out in March 2020), and over the course of the last year,

As Alcoff (1991) states:

> To say that location bears on meaning and truth is not the same as saying that location determines meaning and truth. And location is not a fixed essence absolutely authorizing one's speech in the way that God's favor absolutely authorized the speech of Moses. Location and positionality should not be conceived as one-dimensional or static, but as multiple and with varying degrees of mobility. What it means, then, to speak from or within a group and/or a location is immensely complex. (p. 16)

From Burnout and Pushout to Joy and Purpose and Back Again: Dreaming Immanent Futurities and Pasts-Present

The NPR podcast *Life Kit* recently aired an episode on "real self-care" (Parker & Lakshmin, 2024). As part of a growing national and international conversation about self-care and burnout following the pandemic, this work also contributes to specific inquiry concerning anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher burnout, pushout, and retention efforts. I quote the *Life Kit* episode at some length here as a means of situating in the larger cultural conversation that entangles and co-constitutes with this dissertation work.

> So the meditation apps, the bubble baths, the sensory deprivation tanks - all that stuff is kind of sold to us as the solution, but it doesn't actually fix any of the real external problems that have caused us to feel so terrible to begin with…. It's something to buy or something to do, right? And it usually maintains the status quo in your relationships or in your family life or in your workplace, and it doesn't actually do anything to change any of these larger systems. So that's, like - that's the crux of it. It maintains the status quo in your life. And usually, especially for women and for people of Color, it's typically an escape. And we can come

a divorce. Just as the personal, political, and global inform the teachers' well-ill-being, all of these have impacted mine also, as well as the writing of this work.

back to this. It's not that escape is bad, but it's an escape so that you can get away from all of the terribleness that's going on, or sometimes it can end up being something that actually gets turned into an achievement metric…. Because when you believe that the problem is inside of you, then you don't question the status quo. You don't ask yourself, well, why doesn't my employer give me paid sick days off? Why don't we have paid parental leave in America? Why is it so hard to find a therapist who takes insurance and is accepting new patients, right? So the reason that self-care is something that we have foisted onto the individual is really tied up in not only capitalism as a system, but also white supremacy. You know, I specialize in women's mental health, so all my patients are people who identify as women. So a lot of my patients are mothers or caretakers - whether that's taking care of little kids or whether that's taking care of your aging parents, right? So I do think that it's really important to think about how much we devalue care work. And emotional labor and all the things that are invisible….

LAKSHMIN: ...I have probably lost faith in the establishment. Like, I think the answers have to come from people that are outside of the systems, because I think inside the system - whether we're talking about health care or academics, whether we're talking about law, banking, whatever, all the different industries…

PARKER: Yeah.

LAKSHMIN: When you're inside the system as a person of Color, the cost of trying to change that particular system is so, so high…

PARKER: Yeah.

LAKSHMIN: ...On your own mental health.

PARKER: It's funny that the self-care that you're talking about does seem deeply communal…

LAKSHMIN: Yeah.

PARKER: ...And not the classic, like, quote-unquote, "self" that we think of.

LAKSHMIN: Yeah, because real self-care is interpersonal and communal. I know we hear a lot about community care. And maybe in writing this book, it's a little bit of a Trojan horse in that I feel like more people will read it when it's called "Real Self-Care," as opposed to calling it community care, even though what I am really speaking to is taking care of each other, too. (Parker & Lakshmin, 2024)

Emilia, Kay, and Azalea all found various ways in which to work outside the classroom. Kay was in the process of becoming a librarian full-time when she and I spoke. Her relationship to books as subversive, as she discussed in terms of the more Afro-centric books her mother showed her (as opposed to the books she was exposed to in school which were Eurocentric), became the most important part of her relationship to teaching. She discussed how she was choosing to leave teaching full time because she found more potential in working directly with books and children. Azalea had already left the K-12 classroom when she and I spoke. She works for a non-profit organization that works for social justice and change in education. She felt that she was more able to act in alignment with her values through this organization. Emilia was acting mostly in the role of technology coach and discussed how the things she was able to do outside of the classroom, whether that be working with technology or unlearning various hegemonies she had internalized earlier in life, were the things that really sustained her in the profession. I posit that all three of these teachers of Color were

working to find ways to make their practice fugitive, in the sense of Black and Indigenous fugitive learning. As Patel (2019) states,

> Fugitivity has… had a strong connection to learning, throughout the history of this settler nation and other places of colonization. When enslaved peoples were outlawed from being literate, the teaching of the alphabet and literacy continued, secreted away through many means, including the poetic action of an adult tracing the letters of the alphabet onto the palm of a child. (p. 257)

I also posit that this fugitivity emerged in response to the positioning, not of *them individually*, but of *teachers generally* in the position of white, feminized, footsoldier of colonialism and white supremacy. Regardless of these individual teachers' different positionalities along lines of race, color, sexuality, or personal history, the positionality of *teacher* in the U.S. K-12 school system is thoroughly imbued with the the historical characteristics of the "ideal [white] woman" in that it is a "caregiving" role, a "nurturing role," often performed with the "best of intentions" but that is designed to fail students and communities of Color systematically (see, e.g., Cunningham, 2021; Peters, 2019). The BIPOC educators who participated in this study all found ways to make their praxes fugitive against this positioning as "footsoldier of colonialism" in a racialized, white supremacist state. To reiterate, once again:

> As teacher educators, preservice teachers, and currently practicing teachers, we have the choice to continue our work in potentially dangerous ways, or resist assuming the position of cultural foot soldier for the colonizing state…. The work of identity reformation isn't akin to pseudo-decolonization. (Cherry-McDaniel, 2016, p. 44)

All the teachers involved in this study were engaged in identity reformation work--the work of worlding different teacher subjectivities out of the pre-personal and transpersonal arrangement/assemblage of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being. These were teachers

attempting to discontinue working in dangerous ways. Given the systems, environments, hegemonies, and the hidden curricula of ongoing teacher education, this is a "teaching in the undertow' (Michie, 2022) where the undertow is not separate or separable from teachers' subjectivities, personal histories, collective histories, corporations, settler colonialism, white supremacy, systems and institutions. It is brave and often grief-stricken work.

Anti-Racist, Anti-Colonial Teacher Well-Ill-Being and/as Curricular Praxis

> The rhizome is altogether different, a *map and not a tracing*. Make a map, not a tracing. The orchid does not reproduce the tracing of the wasp; it forms a map with the wasp, in a rhizome. What distinguishes the map from the tracing is that it is entirely oriented toward an experimentation in contact with the real. The map does not reproduce an unconscious closed in upon itself; it *constructs* [my emphasis] the unconscious. It fosters connections between fields, the removal of blockages on bodies without organs, the maximum opening of bodies without organs onto a plane of consistency. It is itself a part of the rhizome. The map is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification. It can be torn, reversed, adapted to any kind of mounting, reworked by an individual, group, or social formation. It can be drawn on a wall, conceived of as a work of art, constructed as a political action or as a meditation. Perhaps one of the most important characteristics of the rhizome is that is always has multiple entryways; in this sense, the burrow is an animal rhizome, and sometimes maintains a clear distinction between the line of flight as passageway and storage or living strata (cf. the muskrat). A map has multiple entryways, as opposed to the tracing, which always comes back "to the same." The map has to do with performance, whereas the tracing always involves an alleged "competence." Unlike psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic competence (which confines every desire and statement to a genetic axis or overcoding structure, and makes infinite,

> monotonous tracings of the stages on that axis or the constituents of that structure), schizoanalysis rejects any idea of pretraced destiny, whatever name is given to it—divine, anagogic, historical, economic, structural, hereditary, or syntagmatic. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, pp. 12-13)

Immersive cartography, in its "map-making," is "experimentation in contact with the real." It constructs the unconscious, and connections between fields. These can be fields in the sense of "fields of study" or "disciplines" but can also be planes of thought laid out in reality. It can always be "reworked" and is not a closed structure. *It does not give finality.* Crucially, it does not "decide" "knowledge" once and for all.

Praxis is process is ontological is ethical is political is temporal. The making of pasts-presents-futures that is intensely present, that is contextual to its core, although there is no "core;" there is only movement, phenomena, affect.

The ontology of this writing is thoroughly one of entanglement and emergence. Immersive cartography has allowed me to follow where thought leads in the reading, the theorizing, the interviewing, the responding. It allowed me to remain intentionally open to what might become during and emerge from the interviews and focus groups. It allowed me to lean into Kay's asking questions of me, and it allowed the open-endedness of conversation that led to Emilia challenging Tristan and calling him in to perform additional/emotional labor on behalf of his Chuuk students. In this way, immersive cartography goes beyond the "semi-structured interview," even as it bears similarity in terms of using pre-planned questions as guides. It intentionally leans into affective emergence and the emergence of the phenomena being inquired about--in this case, anti-racist, anti-colonial teaching practice.

Implications and Significance

This work draws attention to the ways in which collective action influences material circumstances as well as how affective and psychological experiences of well-ill-being emerge for anti-racist and/or anti-colonial teachers. Well-being is an often atomized phenomenon in discussions of the teaching profession. Well-being and self-care discourses are often conflated, and discourses of self-care are often both individualized and work to uphold the status quo. When teacher well-being is discussed it is rarely, if ever, discussed along lines of race, coloniality, Indigenous sovereignty, dis/ability, gender, or color. This research calls attention to the ways in which these are unentangleable parts of teacher well-ill-being.

Further, in discourses of care about teachers, teachers' and students' concerns are often portrayed as antithetical to one another. In other words, what is considered to be good for teachers (e.g. higher pay, more time off, more planning time) is purported to be *worse* for students (e.g. fewer resources directed to students, less instructional time, fewer instructional days, etc.). Specifically in discourses around teachers' unions, teachers' unions are often portrayed as *selfish*, concerned with teachers' working conditions over and against students' learning conditions. This work contributes to the larger call for dismantling this false division. Like so many other binaries, it does not hold.

Similarly to Lenz Taguchi & Palmer's work, (2013), this work draws attention to the ways in which structures, ambient affects, histories, and, in these cases, race, white supremacy, settler colonialism and racism form and inform anti-racist/anti-colonial teachers' well-ill-being as assembled and collective, not individual, although individually inflected, phenomena.

The most recent episode of the podcast *Hidden Brain* from NPR was entitled "Why You Feel Empty" (Vedantham & Keyes, 2024) and discussed the difference between what they call "languishing" and "thriving." At one point, they bring up a recent study (Mitchell et al., 2018) that studied mothers, caregiving, and burnout, and what they found was that

> the mothers who had more support from family, friends, and others, and yet had more years of caregiving, were slightly protected against the damage. And what they found was that being exposed to supportive, caring, loving relationships as a mother who's going through this challenging thing. Being exposed to that seems to activate a protective enzyme called telomerase that protects the ends of our telomeres against the damage of stress. It's not a perfect solution; the stress still happens, but it slows it down. And so something about supportive, caring relationships, when you're undergoing challenge and adversity, gets under our skin and does for us, at the biological level, what's needed to be protected against stress. I find that a beautiful, beautiful example of just what caring and support does for us. (Vedantham & Keyes, 2024)

Even a "body" exists, at its most material and biological level, in relation. The implications of this work include that, as both K-12 and higher education struggle to recruit and retain BIPOC teachers and faculty, both the perceived and the very real whiteness of the teaching profession serve to both keep Black students from being interested in the teaching profession in the first place (McCaskill, 2022) *and* are likely causing teachers of Color to seek and find other means of becoming educators that do not involve staying—or staying exclusively—in the K-12 classroom. There are already some projects that help to create affinity spaces for teachers of Color (e.g., Mosely, 2018); however, while these are crucial projects that create pathways to sustain educators of Color, this work implies that affinity spaces are important largely *because* the *larger* space of the teaching profession as a whole is racialized white space and gendered white female (here, as elsewhere, white femininity and white feminism have actively excluded and continue to exclude the concerns and experiences of womxn of Color.) Thus, the racialized/gendered milieu of the teaching profession cannot be disaggregated to race or gender alone, as intersectionality theory avers (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Not only are

community and support necessary for anti-racist and anti-colonial[60] teachers' survival and retention in schools, the character of schools (culturally white and white supremacist/settler colonial/assimilationist) forms and informs a curriculum of ongoing teacher becoming that is frequently antithetical to these teachers' well-being--thus co-constituting complex and contextually nuanced well-ill-being. Nonetheless, the relationships possible with students and with like-minded colleagues, collaborators, and co-conspirators do keep teachers in the work--even, and perhaps especially, when "staying in the work" means finding alternate--or fugitive--spaces through which to continue the work. This work also implies that systems, institutions, policies, community access to services, and more must also change in order to improve anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-being and retention.

Future Work

Possibilities for future work include further theorizing the posthuman and dividual character of ongoing teacher education curriculum as well as further exploring the possibilities for forming spaces of support and collaboration via asynchronous online formats. Teachers in this study expressed interest in forming such spaces, and the timeline and resources available for this dissertation simply exceeded my capacity to include building those spaces as part of the current instantiation of this project. Teachers expressed interest particularly in a Facebook group, Whatsapp group chat, and/or Slack channel, potentially with sub-groups or threads specifically for anti-racist/anti-colonial teachers of Color and other affinity group spaces. What virtual/digital spaces do in terms of co-constituting anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being is another area for future inquiry.

[60] This is not to conflate all anti-racist/anti-colonial teachers as teachers of Color, nor to conflate all teachers of Color as anti-racist/anti-colonial. However, as this work demonstrates, all the teachers who participated and considered themselves committed to this work had either experienced one or multiple marginalized identities, or had significant educational experiences with people who hold marginalized identities.

While the possibilities for these spaces are as-yet unrealized, other existing groups may serve as potential models and/or collaborators, including organizations such as Northwest Teachers for Social Justice, the WREN network, Education for Liberation, and the Abolitionist Teaching Network, which explicitly asks, "If teachers are not well, how can we expect the students to be well?" and states, therefore, that "ATN [Abolitionist Teaching Network] puts the wellness and healing of teachers at the center of educational justice and collective liberation" (Abolitionist Teaching Network, 2024). Furthermore, with the ongoing development of artificial intelligence (AI) technology, it is as-yet-unknown what types of fora for digital connection may become possible and may continue to form and inform teachers' subjectivities, opportunities for connection and collaboration, and the character of schooling. The very nature of our reality is continuously changing.

Given this work's implications concerning the white feminized, imperial character of teaching as a profession, there is also a trajectory for future work to include further exploration of white women's subjectivities vis a vis psychological concepts such as "codependency," which includes the rescuer-persecutor-victim triad (Beattie, 2022). Because white feminized, imperial teaching has been so deeply imbricated with a "rescuer" and consequently a "martyr" hidden curriculum, it is worth exploring the ways in which white feminized spaces are both victimized and also create a fragile, victim subjectivity, which then does violence to students and teachers of Color within such spaces.

However, there also have always been white co-conspirators who have defied the otherwise white norms of such spaces, from the underground railroad and abolitionists to the Civil Rights movement and through to contemporary times. During a fireside chat at the American Educational Research Association's annual conference in 2023, Dr. Taliaferro Baszille recommended that I also look into the history of white co-conspirators, and doing so is work I still have on my future agenda.

Furthermore, I also have work currently in the planning phases concerning a comparative history of (mostly white) Christian missionaries in North America and South Korea,[61] and how these formed and informed the character of the teaching profession. Following this work, a colleague and I also hope to collaborate to further inquire into the impacts on physical health in the teaching profession as compared with other professions in these two locations as well.

I also have work in progress concerning the ontology of temporality in fieldwork and research design, and I hope to continue to build on that work to explore the concept of posthuman grief/grieving as a site of building affective justice in an unjust world.

Last, but certainly not least, Participatory Action Research has a rich tradition of what it means to honor participants and communities in the research process, and considering this study's exploration of the dividual and posthuman character of ongoing teacher professional development, theorizing Participatory Action Research (PAR) drawing on the frameworks used here--posthumanism, Indigenous studies, Sociology of Race and CRT, counseling psychology--is also an area for potential future work that may provide an avenue for deeper ongoing engagement with teachers, potentially in and surrounding the aforementioned potential digital spaces for this work to continue. The possibilities are many; the risks are many; and this work has explored the dangers, potential pitfalls, and uncertain character of this ongoing work. This is neither solely a pain narrative nor a redemption narrative (Delker et al., 2020); it refuses that binary. However, in continuing to call for ongoing teacher education to take contextual and nuanced account of the co-constitution of race, settler colonialism, and anti-racist/anti-colonial teacher well-ill-being, the hope is to create conditions under which the well-being of such teachers better serves the well-being and academic growth of students, and thus society.

[61] This is because I will be working with a South Korean colleague; she and I have similar interests in terms of how formative the work and subjectivities of Christian (and mostly white) missionaries have been in forming the character of the teaching profession in our respective home countries/continents.

Summary

In summary, teachers have been leaving the profession since the pandemic in increasing numbers; however, even prior to the pandemic, teachers were leaving schools in historically marginalized communities at greater rates than teachers were leaving other schools. While teacher well-being has become something of an educational "buzz-term" since the pandemic, it is often discussed as an individualized phenomenon with individualized solutions (more yoga, more hot tea, more "self-care"). Furthermore, there has not been as much research on the well-being and retention specifically of teachers who orient themselves as anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers. This study of anti-racist, anti-colonial teachers' well-being draws on an immersive cartographic methodology along with interviews and focus groups. Together, these intensively map the affective and dividual character of anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers' well-ill-being.

These teachers' well-ill-being also co-constituted with personal and collective histories and multiple temporalities. Multiple forms of relationality—with students, with colleagues, with personal histories, with society, with the specific environments in which these teachers taught—also co-constituted teachers' joys and teachers' challenges in this work. Assemblages of teachers' well-ill-being specifically produced the two Black teachers in the study as becoming pushed out of the profession. The three teachers of Color whose stories were included in the case studies all found means outside of their traditional classroom duties to do the work they loved and cared about; one left K-12 for the educational non-profit world; one became a school librarian; one simply engaged processes of learning and un-learning about various social-justice-related topics outside of her classroom duties. In so doing, these teachers' well-ill-being co-constituted a flow of resistance to the societal position of white feminized "footsoldier of colonialism" (Leonardo & Boas, 2021). Understanding anti-racist and anti-colonial teachers' well-ill-being as imbricated in their environments, personal and collective histories, gendered embodiments, institutions, and policy

landscapes gives a different, less individualized but more robust language for teachers' well-ill-being, which in turn, allows for a more nuanced—and perhaps more truthful—discussion of anti-racist, anti-colonial teacher burnout, teacher pushout, and teacher retention.

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