Introduction: The Stuff of Teaching

Karin Shankar and Julia Steinmetz

What does a performance studies syllabus instantiate or call into being? As an interdiscipline, performance studies has been incorporated as an academic field while still remaining sensationally unsettled in its interventions, methods, and objects of analysis. Performance studies syllabi may function as performance scores, performative texts, archives of pedagogical practice, and finally, as the material trace of our performance as teachers. Indeed, the classroom, for many of us, is our most prolific and durational performance site. These iterative classroom performances rely on scripts as well as improvisational practices, with new forms and constellations emerging from the tried and true. The classroom is then a black box: a space for the staging of collective process, of dialogical exchange, and of inquiry itself as a performance form. It is also a black box in another sense: the classroom walls obscure its inner workings, rendering the performance of pedagogy strikingly difficult to represent. How do we document these pedagogical performances and make them accessible in some way to those who were not there?

Our call for proposals for this special issue asked scholars and practitioners to critically reframe the performance studies syllabus. If the syllabus (from its Greek origins, meaning "title," "slip" or "label") is a protocol for an experiment, how do we design syllabi to serve radical spaces of knowledge-making and modes of coming to know? How do syllabi create new structures within which to learn, reformulating the dynamics and relationships between the positions of teacher, student, and institution, as well as our engagements with the world beyond the classroom? As professors and teachers, we often informally share syllabi and assignments with one another, but all too rarely do we publicly share our classroom materials. It was clear to us that performance studies as a collective enterprise could benefit greatly from a commons of pedagogical materials. And so, our call invited contributions to an assemblage of the "stuff" of teaching, with the syllabus as a central object.

This special issue was conceived of in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, and amid powerful waves of protest against white nationalism, police brutality, war and insidious forms of state violence. All too familiarly, the classroom transformed into a "situation room" in the face of direct political assaults on minoritarian experience. These ranged from Florida's "Don't Say Gay" legislation prohibiting discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity in schools to nationwide efforts in the United States to ban the teaching of critical race theory (or at least Fox News's caricature of it), as well as the ongoing marginalization of Black, Brown, and Indigenous voices in the academy. During this time, our feminist theory courses moved from questioning the symbolic force of #hashtag activism to the chilling material effects of the Supreme Court's overturning of *Roe*

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v. Wade. While classrooms may sometimes serve as sanctuaries and places of refuge, we are continually aware that realities in the world "outside" are also present in the seminar room, and conversely, the waves we create in these rooms can ripple outward and resonate widely.

In response to our call for papers, we received annotated syllabi and assignment prompts, teaching manifestos, classroom contracts, and documentation of collaborative works with students (amid a glorious rubble of thank you notes, love letters, hate mail, desk graffiti, and gossip). The special issue that we curated from these submissions addresses a number of critical themes organized by affinities of form: Pedagogical Duets; From Pro Forma to Performative; Between Students and Teachers; and Classroom Experiments.

Pedagogical Duets

Pedagogical Duets meditates on the pleasures and labours of co-teaching. In "Performance, Race, and Media: A Syllabus" by Miriam Petty and Joshua Chambers-Letson, the authors explore the aesthetic strategies deployed by artists of colour to "reorganize the orders of (white) power to which minoritarian life is subject." Chambers-Letson and Petty reflect on the way this class came into being, transforming from a series of "playful but deadly serious" conversations between the authors into a co-taught doctoral level seminar that brought the spirit of this ongoing relational and intellectual exchange into the classroom. Using the syllabus as a score for collective improvisation, the class became a vital forum for thinking together under the "storm of racial animus" that orders public life, while considering how minoritarian performance and media might bring new worlds into view on the horizon.

In "The Unwieldy Otherwise: Rethinking the Roots of Performance Studies in, and through, the Black Arts Movement and Black Freedom Struggle," authors Leon J. Hilton and Mariahdessa Ekere Tallie present us with a process-oriented view of this syllabus as it evolved from a reading list in preparation for Tallie's PhD qualifying exams. Through screen shots of their email exchanges, we see the syllabus come to life in an epistolary form that also gives us a rare portrait of the faculty-advisee relationship that lies at the heart of doctoral study. Together, Hilton and Tallie excavate a previously unexamined root in the formation of the field of performance studies. They trace a genealogy of the Free Southern Theatre's emergence against the backdrop of the Civil Rights Movement. Started by three artists (John O'Neal, Doris Derby, and Gilbert Moses) who met as members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), this theatre was also an important early home for Richard Schechner, a founder of the field of performance studies. Through their collaboration and the resulting syllabus tracing out the influence of the Black Arts Movement on the origins of performance studies, the authors ask, "How might these largely hidden histories of resistance and dramaturgies of evasion reorient the way performance studies syllabi of the future tell the story of who and what matters, and in so doing materialize particular pedagogies of field formation that get frozen in place?"

"Performance, Protest, and Feminism in Latin America" by Cara Snyder and Sabrina González offers up a statement of the authors' co-teaching philosophy alongside their syllabus for the three-week course "Online and in the Streets: Feminist Protest and Performance in Latin America." Originally conceived of as an off-campus studies program to be conducted in Buenos Aires, Snyder and González translated the course into an online format when travel became impossible in 2020. The authors' work together took the form of a *pareja pedagógica*, or co-teaching partnership,

mobilizing a philosophy of collective teaching commonly used in nonformal education such as schools for working-class adults, typically from marginalized populations. In this *pareja pedagógica*, Snyder and Gonzáles worked in constant collaboration and dialogue as educators using innovative approaches such as "experience sets" to foreground embodied approaches that unite activism, performance practice, and feminist inquiry to transcend both national boundaries and the limits of online learning.

In "The Studio in the Seminar: Performing Theory in an MFA Classroom," the editors' contribution to this collection, we (Karin Shankar and Julia Steinmetz) describe an "Introduction to Performance Theory" course that the authors co-teach to MFA students at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. The article offers our syllabus and ten practice-based assignments to illustrate how we encourage the artists in our class to engage with critical theory and performance studies scholarship in an embodied way, bringing the studio into the seminar. In modules such as "Rethinking Ritual," "Play," "Decoloniality and Performance Studies," and "Quotidian Choreographies," students stage performance experiments that animate emerging and foundational performance studies scholarship. The syllabus is accompanied by a reflection on co-teaching performance studies, enactments of difference, and the politics of friendship.

From Pro Forma to Performative

The articles in From Pro Forma to Performative radically transform those sections of the syllabus that may conventionally be filled with hollow institutional speak: the accommodation statement; land acknowledgments; and DEI commitments. In "Awe of What a Body Can Be: Disability Justice, the Syllabus, and Academic Labor" coauthored by Jess Dorrance, Julia Havard, Caleb Luna, and Olivia Young, the authors foreground how both performance studies and disability studies as fields explore the ways in which power structures and bodies interact. They then mobilize this generative overlap to posit the performance studies syllabus itself as an opportunity to articulate more accessible spaces for learning and art-making. Thinking with and beyond standard accommodations for university students, such as physically accessible classrooms and increased time for test-taking, the authors compile a set of prompts and questions to more radically interrogate concerns around access. These concerns include cripping syllabus design, resisting productivity cultures, and building networks around access advocacy. The authors offer a dossier of personal reflections, autoethnographic fragments, illustrations, and creative classroom strategies in response to these prompts, which may help move pedagogical communities toward what disability justice activist Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha calls "collective access," and further, how this process may even be a profoundly joyful one.

The article "Performativity, Possibility, and Land Acknowledgments in Academia: Community-Engaged Work as Decolonial Praxis in the COVID-19 Context," coauthored by Sammy Roth and Tria Blu Wakpa, reformulates the land acknowledgment statement as praxis. Working at the intersection of dance, performance, and Indigenous studies, Roth and Blu Wakpa show how the trifecta of research, teaching, and service—often viewed as separate and competing demands on faculty—can in practice be holistically interlaced to build a movement toward decolonial redress in academia. The authors do so by reflecting on a series of ongoing and proposed community-engaged pedagogical initiatives at their academic institution in partnership with artists and cultural practitioners from the Tongva, Chumash, Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe, and Winnemem Wintu nations.

"Un/Commoning Pedagogies: Forging Collectivity through Difference in the Embodied Classroom and Beyond" by The Un/Commoning Pedagogies Collective comprising Dasha A. Chapman, J Dellecave, Adanna Kai Jones, Sharon Freda Kivenko, Mario LaMothe, Lailye Weidman, and Queen Meccasia Zabriskie, is a manifesto, transcript of exchanges, and ongoing pedagogical archive, about the possibilities and difficulties that an embodied approach to antiracist pedagogy presents. Such an approach invites teachers and students alike to "hone into bodily intelligence" by "toggling between discursive cognition of what [one is] reading and what is resonating within [one's] body." The authors focus on moments of "friction" when adopting such praxis in the classroom and pose vital questions about the urgency of body-based, intersectional, pedagogical work.

Between Students and Teachers

Between Students and Teachers brings together articles that propose models for how the classroom can be transformed into a meaningful space of intersubjective exchange. In "Four Handouts," Ethan Philbrick theorizes the "handout" as a pedagogical and writerly praxis. Philbrick riffs on paring the two meanings of handout: on the one hand, it is a financial or material gift; on the other hand, it is a printed text or piece of information given out for free, a form with a reputation as a "dry, instrumentalized, and bureaucratized genre." Philbrick asks how we might invigorate our teaching practices by sticking these two senses of the term "handout" together, embracing handouts as classroom materials "offered without indebtedness, gifts operating beyond logics of exchange." Philbrick, in turn, offers readers a hand by sharing the text of four handouts authored in the course of his own pedagogical practice, encouraging us to be freer and more open with the writing we engage in as part of our teaching.

In "Pedagogies of Negation: Notes on the Politics of Refusal," Michelle C. Velasquez-Potts reflects on the multiple ways in which a "politics of refusal" was creatively and critically enacted in an interdisciplinary course of the same name engaging Black studies, performance studies, psychoanalysis, trans studies, disability studies, prison studies, and science fiction. Offering fragments from classroom discussions, office hour meetings, and in-class collaborative note-taking, the author considers how the shape of the class ultimately transformed in line with its content. As students read works that simultaneously "refused the givenness of the present" while conjuring alternative life-affirming worlds, they also animated ecosystems of care within classroom sessions, thereby enacting a rejection of the "death-making" institutions that surround us.

In "Pandemic Pedagogy: Snapshots from a Year of COVID-Impacted Teaching in Three Artefacts," Sharon Green looks back on the 2020-21 academic year and her process of navigating the pivot to remote and hybrid learning. Through "curricular remains"—classroom prompts, personal reflection, student assignments—Green shows how she attempted to keep Paulo Freire's praxis of dialogic education and its respect for students as co-learners alive. Two questions animated her pedagogical thinking-doing that year: "What if students' emotional experiences during the pandemic became the subject of their critical inquiry and intellectual labour?" And, "how could I create assignments and activities that would do this?" Green's curricular remains and pedagogical reflections on care for her students and the labour of teaching under extenuating circumstances come together to shatter notions of the professor being anything other than co-learner with her students.

Classroom Experiments

The pieces in the Classroom Experiments section of this special issue give accounts of minor gestures and extraordinary undertakings that mobilize unexpected and underutilized spaces, both institutional and domestic, as laboratories for collective study and minoritarian aesthetic experimentation. In "Collective Curation across Difference: Performing Live with Race, Gender, & Sexuality," Sandra Ruiz vividly describes a course she taught at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, in which a collective of students, faculty, and staff transformed a disused copy/computer room housed in the Latina/Latino Studies Department into a self-sustaining gallery. Animated by questions of what impact it might have on disciplinary and ideological boundaries, La Estación Gallery centred the work of minoritarian performance artists, with an explicit emphasis on queer Latinx art. Students in Ruiz's course collectively curated an exhibition of student work for the gallery, and in the process learned how to work "theoretically, creatively, practically, and collectively, always moving from a space of curious care and rigour into an intellectual awareness of self, aesthetic practice, and a responsibility to one another, including a commitment to [their] objects."

In "Pedagogies of Praxis: Three Exercises in Embodying Social Justice," Serap Erincin offers up detailed accounts of three exercises she developed for courses that pair embodied approaches and training in performance practice with a focus on activism and questions of social justice. Students are guided through processes that explore the material, metaphorical, and performative valences of civil disobedience (The Obstacle Exercise), prompted to connect personal affective attachments with seemingly abstract sociopolitical goals (The Beloved Object), and led to consider questions of materiality and indexical modes of representation (The Photo Exercise). Building on "intuitive ways of doing and knowing," Erincin's exercises are aimed at revealing "the sociopolitical contexts that already undergird [students'] emerging performance practices," bringing the unthought known of experience into embodied, conscious awareness.

Chloe Edmonson brings the theory and practice of dramaturgy to an unexpected pedagogical site. In "Bathtub Dramaturgy: An Experimental Syllabus for Theater and Performance Studies Classrooms," Edmonson explicitly addresses the isolation brought on by the pandemic and counters that sense of separation in her class by framing dramaturgy as a relational form: "the dynamic labour of building relationships with and between playwrights, technicians, designers, directors, actors, audience, communities, and institutions." This course takes the unlikely yet ubiquitous site of the bathtub and uses it as a "microcosm for the complexity of human experience," mobilizing dramaturgical methods to explore relationships between public and private and choreographies of intimacy.

Conclusion

Assembled together in this special issue of *Performance Matters*, the articles that follow offer up a material trace of the ephemeral collective life of the performance studies classroom. As performances go, teaching is a particularly durational one that is notoriously difficult to document. The texts assembled here constitute an archive of performance studies pedagogy. It is our hope that these scripts, scores, exercises, and the shared ethos they enact will be reanimated and improvised upon in the embodied repertoire of new classrooms. A throughline for everything we chose to include here is an ethics of care, sustainability, and usefulness. Our aim is for this collection to refuel us, and our readers, for the struggles that lie ahead in our collective intellectual, artistic, and political life.

Syllabus for Race, Performance, and Media Studies

Miriam J. Petty and Joshua Chambers-Letson

The two of us joined the faculty at Northwestern in 2011, and we have thought, worked, and struggled closely alongside each other since. We work from different interdisciplinary junctures: Miriam is a film historian and media studies scholar and Joshua is situated in performance studies. But our scholarly and pedagogical investments converge around a shared interest in the relationship between race and racial meaning, embodiment, and aesthetic form. We both spend a lot of time thinking about how Black and Asian folk, as well as Latinx and Indigenous people, have worked with performance, art, film, and media to rethink and reorganize the orders of (white) power to which minoritarian life is subject. That conversation has happened in coffee shops (as one of us wrote a history of Black stardom in classic Hollywood cinema and the other wrote a treatise on law and performance in Asian America), in parking lots (as we ran fugitive from the pressures of campus life to a McDonald's, inhaling fries and burgers in the car, debating Fanon, Tyler Perry, or Janet Jackson), in living rooms, Facetimes, late-night calls, and shared flights to conferences (where we might have been thinking through a passage from Hortense Spillers or we might have been watching *Magic Mike*). These conversations were playful, but they were also deadly serious. The storm of racial animus and ordering that has always, by design, shaped life within the sphere of US American empire was the environment in which these conversations unfolded. And as the gathering clouds seized the sky and increasingly stole the light in 2020, the questions grew saturated and heaving in their weight and import. In the winter of 2021, we translated our conversation into a doctoral level seminar on Race, Performance, and Media Studies.

In some ways, this syllabus is utterly raw and bare-boned. It has the feeling of a script or a performance score, offering a stripped impression of the idea for the event, while hardly capturing the complexity of what happened in the room or on the screen. More than this, given the ongoing conditions of the pandemic, there was no gathering in any room as the class was carried out entirely online. By January of 2021, everyone was past being burnt out. We were living in the wake of a hundred thousand upheavals including the swelling waves of death, sickness, and political/social/economic instability produced by the pandemic; the continued assaults on Black, Latinx, Asian, and Indigenous life that characterize life in these United States; the uprisings in defence of Black life in the wake of George Floyd's and Breonna Taylor's murders (and many more besides); the police crackdowns that were to follow the uprisings; the racial terrorism that was the 2020 election; the political and psychological violence spanning the time from election day to January 6 and after; the uptick in violent, even murderous assaults on Asian people (and Asian femmes and elders in particular); the frontal assaults on trans life and livability; the continued regimes of exploiting, incarcerating, and deporting Black and Brown migrants; and the material and psychic effects of an order of overwork (at the university) that was grinding everyone to a pulp.

Miriam J. Petty is an associate professor of media studies at Northwestern University. She is the author of *Stealing the Show: African American Performers and Audiences in 1930s Hollywood* (University of California Press, 2016), winner of the Society for Cinema and Media Studies Best First Book Award for 2016-2017. **Joshua Chambers-Letson** is a professor of performance studies and Asian American studies at Northwestern University. His most recent book is *After the Party: A Manifesto for Queer of Color Life* (New York University Press, 2018), the 2019 winner of both the Association of Theatre in Higher Education's Outstanding Book Award and the American Society for Theatre Research's Eroll Hill Award.

We set out to construct a class that would keep these conditions in mind. Units were typically designed to stimulate thought around a cluster of questions rather than to (re)produce an order of epistemological mastery. We tried to think as porously as possible, associatively, loosely knit, playfully, thoughtfully, but also critically and with the depth and dedication that the questions required of us. Rather than overload with reading, we streamlined to a few exquisite texts a week. We hoped that the focusing of assignments would allow the students the time and space to sit with the density and weight of the text, film, or documentation of a performance and to linger in its contours and corners. We asked interlocking questions: How has race been constructed and transformed through media and performance cultures? How do the histories of the live display of racialized and colonized peoples structure the performativity of race and racial performance in the contemporary moment? How do the industrial conditions of cinematic production frame and delimit our understandings of Black life, Black film and Black possibility? In what ways have artists of colour, from Yoko Ono's *Cut Piece* to the films of Camille Billops, deployed the aesthetic to navigate the crushing orders of racism or open lines of flight toward otherwise ways of being in the world? Does the aesthetic help us to visualize and embody new and different ways of being-in-difference with each other, or does it keep us trapped in someone else's script? To help explore these questions, we invited three brilliant visitors—performance studies scholar Vivian Huang, film scholar Michael Gillespie, and artist Dorian Wood—to join us in study and community. The grace and generosity of their presence and intelligence enriched our discussions, refining and reshaping the questions and conversation.

Much of the syllabus is straightforward. Clusters of readings and/or a screening. Our grad seminars are typically three hours. Understanding the difficulty of remaining present on Zoom, we invited students to join us for a semi-structured seminar discussion for the first hour and a half of the session. At that point, we released the group, but remained online for the next hour and a half for anyone who wanted to stay and continue a looser, freeform discussion about the course or their work. And in those conversations and clusters of chat, in the midst of our shared isolation and fear, we tried to make the class into a forum for being and thinking with others. On the first day we watched the epic "Brand New Day" sequence from *The Wiz* and every session from there on out we thought seriously, but also lovingly, and carefully, about the role minoritarian performance and media can play in bringing such a day into the horizon of a new now.

SYLLABUS
Race, Performance, and Media Studies
Winter 2021
Profs. Joshua Chambers-Letson and Miriam J. Petty
Wednesday, 2:00–4:50 p.m. Central Standard Time

Course Description:
Frantz Fanon once wrote of the experience of racialization's revelation as occurring in a circuit of performance, film, and spectatorship. Recognizing that media and performance—medium and the body—play related but divergent role in the making and unmaking of race, this course draws two distinct disciplinary formations (media studies and performance studies) into conversation to engage and explore emergent and enduring texts relevant to issues of race, performance, and media in the US and beyond, from a variety of disciplines, eras, approaches, and schools of thought. Engaging with film, performance art, television, popular musical performance and the music video, as well as criticism and theory from Black studies, Asian American studies, and Latinx studies, with particular emphasis on Black feminsisms and queer of colour critique, artists, works, and theorists studied may

include Tina Campt, Samantha Shephard, Coco Fusco, Adrian Piper, Camille Billops and Jim Hatch, Vivian Huang, Arthur Knight, Arthur Jafaa, Hortense Spillers, Midori Yoshimoto, Frantz Fanon, Yoko Ono, Nina Simone, Janet Jackson, Dorian Wood, Vivian L. Huang, Daphne Brooks, and Michael Gillespie.

1/13 – Introductions, Provocations, Welcomes

Read:

Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness"

Screen:

"Brand New Day" from *The Wiz* (Lumet, 1978)
Terrell Grice - Reaction video to "Tamela Mann / Change Me" (YouTube)

1/20 – Mediated Sights and Sounds of Blackness

Read:

Miriam J. Petty, "Lincoln Perry's Problematic Stardom" from *Stealing the Show*
Tina Campt, "The Visual Frequency of Black Life"
Jennifer Stoever, "A Voice to Match All That" from *The Sonic Color Line*

Screen:

Love is the Message, the Message is Death (Arthur Jaffa, 2016, 7 min)

1/27 – Performance in the Flesh

Read:

Hortense Spillers, "Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe"
Daphne Brooks, "Nina Simone's Triple Play"
Joshua Chambers-Letson, "Nina Simone and the Work of Minoritarian Performance"

Screen:

Nina Simone Live in (England) '68 (22 mins)

2/3 – Black Film as Genre?

Guest Visitor: Michael Gillespie

Read:

Michael Gillespie, "Introduction" and "Black Maybe" from *Film Blackness*
Monica White Ndounou, "Breaking the Chains of History and Genre" from *Shaping the Future of African American Film*

Screen:

Medicine for Melancholy (Barry Jenkins, 2008, 88 min)

2/10 – An Other History of Live Performance

Read:

Coco Fusco, "The Other History of Intercultural Performance"
José Esteban Muñoz, "Latina Performance and Queer Worldmaking"
Jodi Byrd, "Introduction" and "This Island's Mine" from *The Transit of Empire*

Screen:

Couple in a Cage (Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gomez-Peña, 1993, 32 min)

2/17 – Mediating Blackness, Gender, History, and "Respectability"

Read:

Valerie Smith, "Telling Family Secrets"

Evelyn Brooks Higgenbotham, "The Politics of Respectability" from *Righteous Discontent*

Screen:

Finding Christa (Camille Billops and James Hatch, 1991, 55 min) and
Suzanne, Suzanne (Camille Billops and James Hatch, 1982, 30 min)

2/24 – Loquacious and Inscrutable Objecthood

Read:

Adrian Piper, "Talking to Myself"
Midori Yoshimoto, "The Message is the Medium" from *Into Performance*
Vivian L. Huang, "Inscrutably, Actually"

Screen:

Cut Piece (Yoko Ono, 1965, 8 min)
Cornered (Adrian Piper, 1888, 16 min)

3/3 – Madea's Baby, Tyler's Maybe

Read:

Arthur Knight, "Star Dances"
Samantha Sheppard, "She Ain't Heavy, She's Madea"

Screen:

Madea's Family Reunion (Tyler Perry, 1992, 132 min)

3/10 – Love Will Never Do (Without You)

Guest Visitor: Dorian Wood (Wood's website.)

Read:

Lisa Lowe, "The Intimacies of Four Continents"
Anthony DeCurtis: "Janet Jackson: Free at Last" (*Rolling Stone*)

Screen:

Rhythm Nation 1814 (The Short Film) (Janet Jackson, 1989, 31 min)

Listen:

Dorian Wood, *Rhythm Nation 1814* (Live at Human Resources LA, 1/17/19)

ASSIGNMENTS

Fuck Grading: don't worry about grades. You get an A for being. There is an ocean of uncertainty in life rn. This class is not about being assessed by an external authority or checked by the institution. It is about finding a foothold in thinking, film, performance, art, and communion during a period of seismic shifts. Think of it as a "study session." We are not compelling you to do anything, just inviting you. The assignments (reading and writing) are for your development. Do them as you are able. Keep up with the readings and assignments to the degree that you're able to function. Be present to yourself and to the ideas in this class. And put them to work to the degree that it does some work for you. We'll be happy that we make it through these ten weeks together and do some thinking that *matters* in the interim.

Final Proposal (due 2/10/21): Write up a 350–500 word abstract and bibliography proposing a final project for the course. The project may take a form of your design: a scholarly research paper is one option, but you may propose others. The abstract should define the form of the project and offer a rationale. The bibliography should include ten to twelve texts and sources that are informing the project design and does not count towards word total.

Final Project (due 3/17/21): In consultation with the professors, execute the project proposed on 10/20 and submit on **2/10/21** for engagement.

POLICIES

Policy is the death of us all, but here's some anyway:

Assignment Submission: Assignments should be submitted via Canvas. Document all citations with footnotes and include a bibliography of works cited. We don't care if you use Chicago style or MLA. Just be consistent. Note: The bibliography and footnotes do not count toward word count.

Late Work: Just ask for an extension. We will always grant it. For your own health of mind, ask for the extension before you start panicking that you don't have time, or even at that point, rather than putting it off. Since you know we'll say yes, what's the point in worrying?

Attendance Policy: Come, it'll be fun to learn together. This class is designed to keep your Zoom time at about an hour and a half a week. But you'll have the option to remain in conversation for longer/ing if you're into that.

All that said: Zoom/screen fatigue is a thing. The internet is a jerk. And the power keeps going out! Basically, here's what we ask: make the effort to be present as much as you can. If you can't do it, for whatever reason, we'd appreciate if you sent us an email to give us a heads up so we can make whatever adjustments might be needed for the session.

A NOTE ABOUT COURSE MEDIA AND THEIR CONTENT

The great majority of the works we watch for this class can be considered "adult," in the sense that they represent complex and difficult subject matter, with plots and visuals referencing murder, infidelity, rape, slavery, child abuse, racism, eating disorders, incarceration, homophobia, domestic violence, war, bullying, suicide, mental illness, hate crimes, and the like. If you are a particularly sensitive viewer, or know that you are consistently triggered by such topics, please familiarize yourself with the works on the syllabus in advance, and talk with one or both instructors about any concerns that you may have right away, so that we can support any needed accommodation. You should all be aware of the mental health and psychological counselling resources available to you on campus, including NU Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Wildchat (847) 467-5102), and the Northwestern Women's Center.

The Unwieldy Otherwise: Rethinking the Roots of Performance Studies in and through the Black Freedom Struggle

Leon J. Hilton and Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie

Meaning doesn't come from oracles; you forge it on the anvil of your own experience with each other.

—John O'Neal, *Tulane Drama Review* (1965)[1]

The genesis for this project and the impetus for creating the performance studies syllabus that follows came out of a brief exchange we had while developing a field list for a comprehensive doctoral examination. Initially, the topic we were working on concerned theories and histories of Black utopianism and related ideas about the "otherwise." In the course of our reading together of texts by Robin D. G. Kelley, Tavia Nyong'o, Jayna Brown, Ashon Crawley, Saidiya Hartman, L. H. Stallings, and La Marr Jurelle Bruce (among many others) who have productively mobilized concepts of otherwiseness in proximity to the confluence of Black studies and performance studies, notions of what the otherwise is and where it took root began to widen and deepen. Undertaking this work together, we began to think about how Black, Southern theatre and performance traditions, as well as embodied and transmitted genealogies of community engagement and activism, inform the intellectual, social, and political commitments that have suffused performance studies from its origins as an academic discipline within universities with the establishment of academic programs, faculty lines, and courses of study at the graduate and undergraduate level.

At the outset, we wish to briefly indicate something about who we are and how our experiences and identities informed what we brought with us to this collaboration. Differences of race, gender, age, and status/position within institutionalized educational hierarchies are certainly relevant in mapping out the general fields of knowledge and power that initiated and conditioned our shared inquiry into the past and present of performance studies pedagogy. One of us, Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie, is a black woman, writer, performer, mother of three daughters, and PhD student from Queens, New York. The other, Leon J. Hilton, is white, Jewish, queer, an assistant professor, and a member of Mariahadessa's doctoral exam committee. To be sure, our distinctive personal histories, educational trajectories, and disciplinary training have determined the different lenses of critical consciousness that we bring to this project.

The Free Southern Theater (FST), which was founded as a multiracial artistic ensemble in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1964 before moving its base of operations to New Orleans, counted Richard Schechner—one of the figures most frequently linked with the establishment of performance studies in standard histories of the field—among its members; and much of the early work of the FST was first chronicled in the *Tulane Drama Review* (later renamed simply *TDR* and now a flagship performance studies journal). Yet what shifts might occur in the performance studies classroom, we

Leon J. Hilton is an assistant professor of theatre arts and performance studies and a faculty affiliate with the Gender and Sexuality Studies and Science and Technology Studies programs at Brown University. His first book, *Feral Performatives*, is forthcoming from University of Minnesota Press, and his articles have appeared in *GLQ*, *Third Text*, *African American Review*, the *Journal of Literary and Cultural Disability Studies*, and *TDR*/*The Drama Review*. **Mariahadessa Ekere Tallie** is a PhD student in theatre arts and performance studies at Brown University and the award-winning author of *Layla's Happiness* (Enchanted Lion Books), *Strut* (Agape Editions), *Dear Continuum: Letters to a Poet Crafting Liberation* (Grand Concourse Press), and *Karma's Footsteps* (Flipped Eye Publishing).

wondered, by approaching the task of narrating the field's origins through the framework of the FST and its three founding members, John O'Neal, Doris Derby, and Gilbert Moses, who first met as members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)?

Bringing attention to this largely unspoken genealogy of the field suggests a potentially transformational approach to teaching performance studies for a new generation, something that is even more important as the context and circumstances of the 1960s civil rights and Black power movements become more historically remote for today's students, and as new laws are being debated and passed across the United States that radically decimate the teaching of these aspects of American history from school curriculums under the guise of attacks on what its critics erroneously lump together under the banner of critical race theory.

But First: An Email Exchange

The otherwise is unwieldy Inbox ×

Tallie, Mariahadessa Tue, May 18, 9:56 AM
to me

Greetings Professor Hilton,

I hope you are well.

It was so sweet that my parents got to meet you via zoom.

As I am working on my blurb and thinking of the diaspora, I realize that I need to say something about Rastafarians and reggae. How can I talk about black utopia without looking into that movement/spiritual belief system? This book looks interesting: https://nyupress.org/9781479882243/ and this one seems to be a classic: https://www.amazon.com/Rastafarians-Twentieth-Anniversary-Leonard-Barrett/dp/0807010391.

What do you think?

There is so much that people do to create otherwise spaces. Even freedom schools in the south could fall under this category. Oh my gosh.

One,
Mariahadessa

Hilton, Leon <leon_hilton@brown.edu> Tue, May 18, 11:20 PM
to Mariahadessa

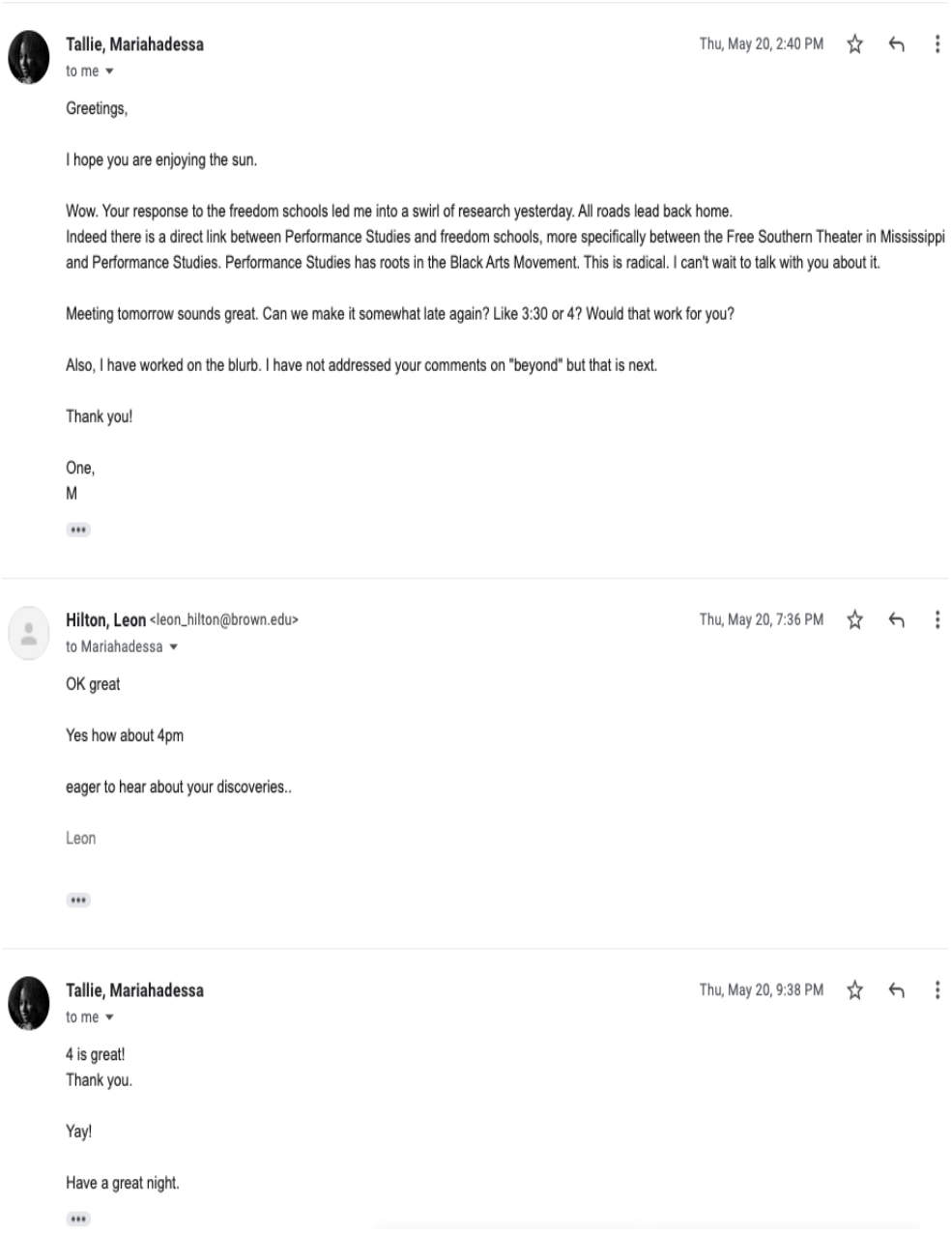
unwieldy indeed!

those Rastafarian books both look really good...i would certainly support adding both to your list. it seems like there is maybe a religion/spirituality section developing within this list, that's great...

I also love your thought about the freedom schools. There is actually a direct connection from that and the "freedom theater" (in new orleans I think?) to the founding of performance studies. what would be some good texts for this? I think there may be a number of articles on this topic to by found in the journal TDR

I was also thinking about the black panthers...in particular Alondra Nelson's book *Body and Soul* which is about the BPP's health activism.. should we plan to meet again this Friday?

Leon



Tallie, Mariahadessa Thu, May 20, 2:40 PM
to me

Greetings,

I hope you are enjoying the sun.

Wow. Your response to the freedom schools led me into a swirl of research yesterday. All roads lead back home.
Indeed there is a direct link between Performance Studies and freedom schools, more specifically between the Free Southern Theater in Mississippi and Performance Studies. Performance Studies has roots in the Black Arts Movement. This is radical. I can't wait to talk with you about it.

Meeting tomorrow sounds great. Can we make it somewhat late again? Like 3:30 or 4? Would that work for you?

Also, I have worked on the blurb. I have not addressed your comments on "beyond" but that is next.

Thank you!

One,
M

Hilton, Leon <leon_hilton@brown.edu> Thu, May 20, 7:36 PM
to Mariahadessa

OK great

Yes how about 4pm

eager to hear about your discoveries..

Leon

Tallie, Mariahadessa Thu, May 20, 9:38 PM
to me

4 is great!
Thank you.

Yay!

Have a great night.

What Does the South Have to Say? (Toward a New Performance Studies Syllabus)

To this day, in much of performance studies scholarship, there tends to be an East Coast bias and New York–centric lens, but as Andre 3000 once said, "the South got something to say."[2] How might our pedagogical intervention reposition the South in terms of academic discourses in performance studies? What would a "Free Theatre" look like in the present? Who is doing the kind of Soul Work pioneered in the Free Southern Theater in theatre and performance *now*?

The syllabus we have created to answer these questions appears below. It provides the raw materials for an alternative and potentially radically destabilizing pedagogical approach to narrating the historical roots and development of performance studies over the past half-century. Developing this

syllabus has helped us push the boundaries of our pedagogical practices and methods, challenging conventional/sedimented ways of reading and teaching plays. It has also challenged us to contemplate how the FST's "Story Circle" method might be implemented as a foundational method in the performance studies classroom. In assembling the syllabus, we have also been attentive to how this new approach to teaching performance studies can be put to use to decipher more recent theatrical, artistic, and performative projects that respond to the urgencies of the contemporary moment. How might these largely hidden histories of resistance and dramaturgies of evasion reorient the way performance studies syllabi of the future tell the story of who and what *matters* and, in so doing, materialize pedagogies of field formation that get frozen in place?

Our syllabus first provides students with the opportunity to engage with the specific historical context for understanding the FST's emergence against the backdrop of the civil rights movement—in particular, the Freedom Summer of 1964, which focused the national student movement's actions on the struggle to register African Americans in the US South to vote. The syllabus then attempts to rescript the standard narrative of the establishment of performance studies by turning instead to the key strands woven into the FST's aesthetic and political interventions in the 1960s, including Africanist cultural forms (such as the story circle) that would go on to become central to the emerging Black Arts Movement; influences from the artistic and theatrical avant-garde (Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* became one of FST's signature touring productions); and populist theatre projects that developed in tandem with the revolutionary energies of the anti-imperialist, anticolonial, and anticapitalist struggles and student movements of the mid-twentieth century. Indeed, our syllabus places the Free Southern Theater at the centre of a wider historical efflorescence of new popular theatre movements, groups, and forms that took shape in response to the worldwide political turbulence of the 1950s and 1960s, forging novel tactics for emphasizing the role of performance in movements for social change, from the Theatre of the Oppressed of Augusto Boal in Brazil to the Living Theatre of Judith Malina and Julian Beck in New York. What might teaching the Free Southern Theater alongside these more familiar (and commonly taught) reveal to performance studies students?

The syllabus also incorporates visits by guest artists and scholars who were directly involved in or influenced by these traditions and would be invited to visit the class and share their expertise and experience. For a final assignment, students create a project asking them to think through the FST's methods, but also their motivations, as a resource, template and indeed inspiration for our students to grapple with the role of performance within contemporary social movements and political struggles.

But What Even *Is* a Syllabus?

L. H.

A syllabus is not one thing but many things. In some cases, it functions like a contract between teacher and student and serves other administrative/institutional purposes as well. But for the most part, when we write a syllabus, we are in some sense doing something like writing the recipe for a meal (and including a grocery shopping list), assembling a toolbox, drawing up the itinerary for a trip while also writing up the list of things that you need to pack; and yes, finally the syllabus is kind of like a stage manager's prompt book. The exercise of developing the syllabus was undertaken as an experiment with ways of transcending the normal protocols of syllabus planning for those of us working and teaching classes rooted in performance studies. Rather than attempting something like

"coverage" or wrestling with the various impulse to teach foundational texts alongside new scholarship, our syllabus is an attempt to rewrite and thus transform the intellectual, artistic, historical, and political itineraries of performance studies by focalizing our pedagogical approach through a particular strand of the field's intellectual DNA that has, for the most part, been de-emphasized and overlooked.

M. T.
I think of a syllabus as a starting point. It's a space through which we begin to get to know each other. It's where we bend and reach toward one another. As an adjunct lecturer at two CUNY schools, I changed my syllabus all the time. I'd slow it down mostly because our intellectual meanderings would take us to powerful places where we needed to linger. I'd throw things off of it; I'd add things based on who was in the classroom and where our discussions led.

A syllabus is a spacious thing.

This is the new one, please throw the other one out.

The best thing that ever happened in my literature class with a syllabus was that late in the semester, I swapped one piece of fiction for another, and a student who hadn't spoken all semester wrapped us in her voice for the rest of the year. Hers was a rich, wise, funny voice that we all needed.

The syllabus is the thing we dive from into the deep water of our learning community.

***

Course Schedule

Week One: Introductions
Read:

- Carole Boston Weatherford and Ekua Holmes, *Voice of Freedom Fannie Lou Hamer: The Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement* (Somerville, MA: Candlewick Press, 2015).

Listen:

- Nina Simone, "Mississippi Goddamn."

For this week, we want to give students historical context for the Free Southern Theater and what Mississippi was like during the early 1960s. We decided to do it through song and a picture book as a way to upend the normal hierarchies of a university classroom and the sort of sources that are valued in academic spaces. As performance studies scholars, we want to honour the embodiment of historical experience through song and show how visual art can transmit knowledge. The picture book opens space to have a conversation about the civil rights movement. Nina Simone becomes, in her performance, preserved on film, an archive of the movement.

Week Two: Freedom Summer and the Free Southern Theater
Watch:

- *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Movement* (PBS/American Experience), Season 1, episode 5: "Mississippi: Is This America? (1963–1964)."

Read:

- Julius B. Fleming Jr, "Transforming Geographies of Black Time: How the Free Southern Theater Used the Plantation for Civil Rights Activism," *American Literature* 91, no. 3 (September 2019): 587–617.
- La Donna Forsgren, *Sistuhs in the Struggle: An Oral History of Black Arts Movement Theater and Performance* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2020), pp. 150–58.

This week our aim is to introduce the students to the work of the Free Southern Theater and continue to explore the landscape of Mississippi and various forms of resistance that took place there. We assign an interview with Doris Derby, one of the founders of the Free Southern Theater, which was established at Tougaloo College in Mississippi in 1963. The work of FST grew from an engagement with the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee; all of the FST's founders—including Doris Derby, John O'Neal, and Gilbert Moses—were members of the group. The FST founding collective met while taking a cigarette break from their SNCC activities. Derby, realizing their shared interest in theatre, stopped and observed: "If theatre means anything anywhere, it should certainly mean something here! Why don't we start a theatre?"

Week Three: Dramaturgies of Resistance before Civil Rights and the Black Arts Movement

Readings:

- Saidiya Hartman, *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (New York: Norton, 2019).
- August Wilson, *The Piano Lesson* (New York: Plume, 1990).

Spiralling momentarily backward in time from the course's starting point of the 1964 Freedom Summer, this week's class looks to retrospective reflections and dramaturgical representations of the pre-civil rights moment, asking how narratives and strategies of embodied resistance and evasion took shape in the face of political institutions and social scientific regimes that constituted the long afterlife of slavery (Hartman 1997) in the wake (Sharpe 2016) of its formal abolition. Hartman and Wilson both tell stories that are primarily set in the North; however, they're both dealing with legacies of archives, gaps in evidence, and the ways that slavery's history is embodied and can haunt spaces, sites, and even musical instruments. The South remains in bodies and objects no matter where they are located.

Week Four: Performances of Non/violent Resistance

Readings:

- Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" in *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Signet Classic, 1964), pp 64–84.
- Susan Leigh Foster, "Choreographies of Protest." *Theatre Journal* 55, no. 3 (October 2003): 395–412.
- Akinyele Umoja, *We Will Shoot Back: Armed Resistance in the Mississippi Freedom Movement* (New York: NYU Press, 2013).

Watch:

- *We're Here*. Season 2, episode 4: "Selma, Alabama." *HBO* video. 60 min. https://play.hbomax.com/page/urn:hbo:page:GYVuJwQctR4HDwwEAAAAE:type:episode

How do social movements perform resistance, and how does resistance transform over time? What unspoken acts—what physical movements—make these performances of resistance possible? How do the body and its "obstinate recalcitrance" (Foster) enable forms of nonviolent resistance that are in turn studied as social choreographies? Alongside studying the civil rights movement's defining statement in defence of civil disobedience, we thought it was important to answer these questions about embodiment by simultaneously examining a parallel narrative to the more popular story of nonviolence, attending to the overlooked histories of armed Black resistance in Mississippi. Finally, we assign an episode of the HBO television documentary *We're Here*, filmed in Selma, Alabama, in 2020. Each episode of this program documents a weeklong process in which three drag performers—Shangela, Eureka, and Bob the Drag Queen—visit a city or town somewhere in the United States and team up with local residents to produce a drag show for the community. The Selma episode emphasizes the legacies of the civil rights movement in the community by focusing on the continuities between the Black freedom struggle of the 1960s and the circumstances of Black LGBT life in Selma today. "My freedom as a Black queer person in America," Bob the Drag Queen states at the beginning of the episode, "is directly linked to Selma. Directly."

Week Five: Histories and Aesthetics of the Black Arts Movement in the South

Readings:

- Kalamu Ya Salaam, *The Magic of Juju: An Appreciation of the Black Arts Movement* (Chicago: Third World Press, 2016).
- James Smethurst, *The Black Arts Movement in the South: Behold the Land* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021).

In this class session, we want to give an overview of the Black Arts Movement. This week will ensure that students understand it as a creative arm of the Black Power movement, which is the basis of BAM aims. We will explore the various arts the BAM ethos was woven through, and we will also reassess the south as a critical hub of BAM development and activity, as much of the scholarship on the movement locates it in the North. One of our texts is written by an independent scholar who lived through and participated in BAM, and the other is by a scholar of the movement.

Week Six: Revisiting the Free Southern Theater

Watch:

- *Gone Are the Days!* (dir. Nicholas Webster, 1963)
- *Purlie* (dir. Rudi Goldman, 1981)

Readings:

- Ossie Davis, *Purlie Victorious: A Comedy in Three Acts* (New York: Samuel French, 1969).
- Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot: A Tragicomedy in Two Acts* (Grove Press, 1954).
- Gilbert Moses, John O'Neal, Denise Nicholas, Murray Levy, and Richard Schechner, "Dialogue: The Free Southern Theatre." *The Tulane Drama Review* 9, no. 4 (1965): 63–76.
- Christina Larocco, "'COFO Is Not Godot': The Free Southern Theater, the Black Freedom Movement, and the Search for a Usable Aesthetic." *Cultural and Social History* 12, no. 4 (2015): 509–26.

This week highlights the voices of the founders of the FST in dialogue while also assigning students to read and watch the actual plays the company put on in its tours through the South in 1963 and

1964. How might a staple of the undergraduate drama curriculum like *Waiting for Godot* be radically reframed by being taught in this context? As Julius Fleming argues, "the theater's repertoire creatively exposed and critiqued the violent operations of black patience" (2019, 590), returning us to Nina Simone's sardonic observation in "Mississippi Goddamn": "They keep on saying 'Go slow!'/ But that's just the trouble / 'Do it slow'"!

Week Seven: Black Arts Poetry and Drama

Watch:

- Leroi Jones, *Dutchman*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8VRoOAmtHsQ.

Read:

- Amiri Baraka, "Bopera Theory," in *Digging: The Afro-American Soul of American Classical Music* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
- La Donna Forsgren, *In Search of Our Warrior Mothers: Women Dramatists of the Black Arts Movement*, pp. 67–106.
- Sonia Sanchez, "Sister Son/Ji," in *I'm Black When I'm Singing and Blue When I Ain't: Plays* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010).

We next jump to some major texts of the Black Arts Movement and explore the theoretical work of Amiri Baraka and Sonia Sanchez. It's important to break down the idea that artists don't imbue their work with theory. We want to highlight the scholarship inherent in literature, art, and performance.

Week Eight: Performance Studies, between Black Arts and Broad Spectrum

Readings:

- Nina Angela Mercer, "At the Corner of Chaos and Divine: Black Ritual Theater, Performance, and Politics," in *Are You Entertained? Black Popular Culture in the Twenty-First Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020), pp. 207–28.
- La Donna Forsgren, *In Search of Our Warrior Mothers: Women Dramatists of the Black Arts Movement*, pp. 17–36.
- James Harding and Cindy Rosenthal, "Introduction," in Harding & Rosenthal, eds., *The Rise of Performance Studies: Rethinking Richard Schechner's Broad Spectrum* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 1–10.
- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "Notes Towards a Performance Theory of Orature." *Performance Research* 12, no. 3 (2007): 4–7.

Guest Speaker:

- Prof. Elmo Terry-Morgan (Artistic Director, Rites and Reason Theatre)

Here, we look at the importance of ritual theatre during the Black Arts Movement and what it means to contemporary theatre makers alongside the experiences that enabled scholars and practitioners like Richard Schechner, Victor Turner, and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o to theorize about performance in ways that shaped what we now know as performance studies. Why has ritual been such a key concept for performance studies, the Black Arts Movement, and Black theatre? What is the relationship of ritual to orature?

Week Nine: Still in the Wilderness?

Reading:

- Alice Childress, *Wine in the Wilderness* (New York: Dramatists Play Service, 1969).
- "We See You White American Theater" (2020). https://www.weseeyouwat.com/statement

We read Alice Childress's 1955 backstage drama, which belatedly received its Broadway premiere only in 2021, alongside the powerful statement "We See You White American Theater." Considering the realities of Childress' work being censored and changed during its time, we ask what the play's biting social satire exposes about American theatre's racial contradictions. We also ask: What has changed? And what has not?

Week Ten: Radical Possibilities of Space

Readings:

- Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, "Enactments of Power: The Politics of Performance Space." *TDR* 41, no. 3 (Autumn 1997): 11–30.
- Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed* (New York: Theater Communications Group, 1993).

Guest speakers:

- Haus of Glitter, discussing *The Historical Fantasy of Esek Hopkins*

What is the space of performance, what political possibilities does the space of "performance" offer, and how might our conceptions of history and power be remade in and through the spaces that performance takes up? In this week's readings, the FST's reconfiguration of Southern US space through the transformational potential of performance is contextualized within a larger history of radical theatrical practices that encompasses Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o and Augusto Boal. Haus of Glitter, a collective of queer of colour artists in Providence, has reanimated this tradition through their recent performance project, developed during an artist's residency at the historical home of colonial Rhode Island sea captain and slave trader Esek Hopkins. Their original work, *The Historical Fantasy of Esek Hopkins*, weaves theatre, autoethnography, song, dance, and activism to reimagine the narrative of Esek Hopkins, the future of our community, the future of public space, and the future we will leave behind to our children's children.

Week Eleven

Readings:

- Christopher Lindsay, *Songs of a Caged Bird* (unpublished script).
- Regina N. Bradley, *An Outkast Reader* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2021).

We end our readings and discussions on a current note with new performances and meditations on Southern aesthetics. Indeed, "The South got something to say," and we hope by this point in our syllabus, the class understands it always has and going forward . . . will. From here on, the class will engage their collective creativity and share their art with all of us.

Week Twelve

Work on final project
Share final projects/performances

Week Thirteen
Share final projects/performances

Notes

1. Quoted in a dialogue on the Free Southern Theatre with Gilbert Moses, Denise Nicholas, Murray Levy, and Richard Schechner (1965, 67).

2. Spoken at the 1995 Source Awards. See Bradley (2021).

References

Bradley, Regina N. 2021. "OutKast Was Almost a Casualty of the East Coast–West Coast Rap Battle." *Slate.com*. February 22, 2021. https://slate.com/culture/2021/02/outkast-source-awards-1995-southern-hip-hop.html.

Hartman, Saidiya V. 1997. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Moses, Gilbert, John O'Neal, Denise Nicholas, Murray Levy, and Richard Schechner. 1965. "Dialogue: The Free Southern Theatre." *The Tulane Drama Review* 9 (4): 63–76.

Sharpe, Christina. 2016. *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Performance, Protest, and Feminism in Latin America

Cara K. Snyder and Sabrina González

Online and in the Streets: Feminist Protest and Performance in Latin America

Professors
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Course Overview

How do activists fight for change, both online and in the streets? This course will explore the limits and possibilities of feminist activism in physical and digital spaces. At this critical historical juncture,

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feminists across the hemisphere are organizing *en masse* to demand change and justice, to denounce pervasive misogyny and gender violence, and to envision and realize another world. Drawing on a long history of struggle, they are engaging in performance artivism across multiple platforms including Las Tesis' piece *El Violador Eres Tu* (The rapist is you), under the hashtags #NiUnaMenos (#NotOneWomanLess) and #AbortoLegalYa (#LegalizeAbortionNow), and in massive physical occupations and protests like #OcupaEscola (#OccupyTheSchools). They are mobilizing to condemn femicide and misogyny, to advocate access to legal abortions in public hospitals, and to introduce comprehensive sex education in public schools. Drawing on these interconnected forms of performance and protest, what Marcela Fuentes refers to as "performance constellations," women and *disidencias sexuales* are fighting together for the right to live without fear, to make decisions about their own bodies, and to exist in a more just world. In this class, we will learn from feminist movements and connect their insights to our intimate and collective experiences.

We will begin by establishing a foundation in feminist protest and performance from which our course will build. In the first unit, students will produce a feminist vlog as we consider ideas of space, sex(uality), gender, and nation as they intersect with race and class. Then we will explore women's movements in the twentieth century, discovering the conflicts and debates that have characterized this activist history on the streets, in the media, and in law and politics. Drawing on course materials and on interactive workshops, students will complete an interview using oral history methods. Finally, students will collectively make and present a creative work that responds to contemporary feminist performances and artivism.

Course Objectives and Learning Goals

⚧ Gain fluency describing and analyzing women's movements in Latin America and the Caribbean, including its actors, strategies, and demands.

⚧ Study the historical antecedents for contemporary feminist performance and activism, both online and in the streets

⚧ Evaluate how women's agendas and tactics have changed over time, particularly with regard to issues of labour, reproductive justice, gender violence, and human rights.

⚧ Explore oral history methods, examine conflict and historical memory in women's movements, analyze how historical context has shaped the multiple and complex ways in which women have participated in their local as well as global communities.

Requirements

Throughout the course, you will be expected to learn about Latin American feminisms and engage with your classmates through reading and watching the class material, to write daily assignments and discussion posts, and to develop an oral history project. Your grade for the course will be calculated from a total of 1000 points, as follows:

Assignment	Points	Percentage
Weekly Instagram Post	100	10%
Weekly Discussion Posts	100	10%

Explorations: Oral History Project Creative Response 600 (200 each) 60%	600	60%
Participation	200	20%

Instagram Post *100 points*
You will create a post on Instagram in response to the class material for the week.

Weekly discussion prompt *100 points*
Discussion prompts will be posted every day on our class site, inviting you to delve more deeply into issues raised by the assigned texts and video lectures.

Explorations *600 points*
You will complete three project-based assignments. For these assignments, you will draw on course materials, performances, and discussions as well as your own experiences to synthesize what you are learning in class. The three explorations are:
1. Feminist Vlog (200 pts)
2. Oral History Interview (200 pts)
3. Creative Response (200 pts)

Participation *200 points*
This grade is based on your general engagement in the course and class activities, including attendance at workshops and talks. Your participation grade will depend on how often you participate; on how active, engaged, and generous a participant you are; and on your commitment to the class's rules of engagement on the class discussion board.

Content and Discussion
The history of women's movements has often been a violent one, and feminist activists, writers, and artists have frequently responded to their cultural and political context by using intense language and imagery. Students in this class should expect to read and view sexually explicit material as well as material that includes discussions and depictions of homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, sexual assault, suicide, medical abuse, and other kinds of violence and trauma. Because this is an online class where students are accessing material at their own pace, I have not provided notes on specific content; however, if you require such notes as an accessibility measure, please contact your instructor. If you are struggling with the nature of the course's content in any way, please also contact your instructor.

Classes like this one, where we talk about identity and oppression, require us to be especially mindful of the ways in which we speak to and about one another. Our studies include figuring out what assumptions we make and where they come from, and our discussions will raise many questions about sex, race, class, gender, disability, politics, religion, and other issues. You should expect to feel uncomfortable sometimes—that is part of the learning process. Your job as a student is to sit with that discomfort long enough to understand what it might mean. Online or embodied, the classroom should be a space where you can express your thoughts as they develop; explore your responses to

readings and assignments; be honest about what you do and don't know; and take the time to understand the context of texts and ideas before passing judgment on them. We will have to work together to make a shared digital space where all voices, perspectives, and learning processes are respected, and where we can discuss sexist, homophobic, transphobic, racist, and ableist language without using it against members of our community. Sometimes things won't go as well as we might hope. Everyone in the class, including the teachers, should be prepared to critically examine their own language and behaviour. If you have concerns about the way conversations are going, please contact your instructor.

Schedule

This syllabus is subject to change based on the students and teachers' needs and priorities.

WEEK 1 || Welcome to Online and in the Streets!
We will spend the first week of class getting to know one another, including participating in embodied activities, and introducing key concepts that we will be working with over the course of the semester. More specifically, we will present frameworks for both performance and feminism in a Latin American context.

Read
Syllabus and Co-teaching statement
Ogata-Aguilar, Jumko. 2021."Unpacking the Term Hispanic and the Homogenizing of Diasporas." *Anti-Racism Daily*. June 30, 2021. https://the-ard.com/2021/06/30/unpack-the-term-hispanic-anti-racism-daily/.
Taylor, Diana. 2016. "Framing [Performance]." In *Performance*, 1–42. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
González, Sabrina, and Cara Snyder. 2021. "Towards a Pedagogy of Transnational Feminism When Teaching and Activism Go Online." In *The Radical Teacher*, 121.

Watch
"Latin American Feminism Today," *in Spanish with English subtitles* (3:37); "Marina Abramovic: What Is Performance Art?" (1:55); and "The Body as Medium" (1:40).

Optional
Schwall, Elizabeth. 2021. "Performance in Latin America." *Latin American Research Review* 56 (3): 739–50. https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.1548.

UNIT 1

Feminist Constellations

We conceived this unit as an introduction of concepts and movements that we will continue using throughout the class. Week 2 establishes the basis for understanding the process of racialization and gender in the Americas and puts students in contact with contemporary paintings, performances, and archives that challenge colonialism and cisheteronormativity. Week 3 questions constructions of feminism as "white" (cisgendered, middle class, heterosexual, global North) by centring Black, trans, lesbian, Indigenous, Latinx, Afro Latinx and diasporic feminisms. Week 4 interrogates how feminist movements are cocreated in physical and digital spaces. Drawing on a long history of protest, feminist activists throughout the Americas are creating a broad network of interconnected performances and agendas to denounce neoliberal policies, misogyny, capitalist oppression, and

gender violence. Performances and political projects that seek to denounce injustice are varied, and as the readings suggest, it is necessary to recognize their diverse forms in order to move away from ableist conceptions of activism and knowledge making. Week 5 introduces you to key concepts that inspire this course: transnational solidarity and transnational feminisms. The readings provide a critical perspective to a solely digital form of activism and address the importance of building solidarity across borders beyond digital platforms. In this week, we encounter the interconnected struggles for justice in the Americas through Marielle Franco and Breonna Taylor. Their murderers show the hemispherical structures of racism and police violence as well as the importance of transnational solidarity among activists, scholars, and students. The protests happening in the streets of the US and Latin America appear not only in social media but also in the classroom, a transnational space that we hope can be part of social change.

WEEK 2 || The Coloniality of Gender
We begin with materials that establish a historical context and a foundation for understanding processes of racialization and gender in the Americas. This week pushes against Eurocentric notions of gender and sexuality and gives a transnational view of their social constructions. In other words, ideas about sex and gender are highly dependent on context and are saturated with (geo)politics. Lugones's canonical text "The Coloniality of Gender" theorizes Eurocentric capitalism as having the coloniality of power and modernity. Respectively, these two axes of power impose Eurocentric categories of race on the world's population and construct a progress narrative that deems Europeans as "advanced" compared to other "primitive" societies. Lugones underscores how gender and sexual relations are not only saturated with the coloniality of power but also inseparable from racist ideology: particular sex/gender relations are constituted within the colonial/modern gender system and then imposed upon non-Europeans.

The performance of Nao Bustamante, paintings of Christian Bandayán, and music of Ana Tijoux explore such lasting, gendered, and raced implications of colonialism in the Americas. Correa et. al. write about the beauty and urgency of the Trans Memory Archive, and Mongrovejo provides an overview of feminist debates in the Americas that concludes with questions of trans inclusion. Taken together, today's materials explore how feminists in the transnational Americas grapple with the fraught history of racialized gender: categories that are neither "natural" nor neutral.

Read
Lugones, Maria. 2008. "The Coloniality of Gender." *Worlds & Knowledges Otherwise*, 13–33. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-137-38273-3_2.
Correa, María Belén, et. al. 2019. "Trans Memory Archive." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 6 (2): 156–63.
OR
Daly, Tara. 2017. "Christian Bendayán: Queering the Archive from Iquitos, Peru." *Feminist Studies* 43 (2): 353–68. **ONLY VIEW THE ART WORKS in this art essay on pages 353–368. You are NOT expected to read the full article.

Watch
Indigurrito, a performance piece by Nao Bustamante. You must enable adobe flash player to watch from your browser: http://hdl.handle.net/2333.1/m0cfxpz3 (links to an external site).
Tijoux, Ana. 2015. "Antipatriarca." YouTube. June 29, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoKoj8bFg2E.

Optional
Mongrovejo, Norma. 2010. "Itineraries of Latin American Lesbian Insubordination." In *Women's Activism in Latin America and the Caribbean: Engendering Social Justice, Democratizing Citizenship*, edited by Elizabeth Maier and Nathalie Lebon, 187–201. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

WEEK 3 || Latin American Feminisms: An Overview
Women hold multiple, intersecting identities, including (but not limited to) gender, race, class, ability, sexuality, nationality, religion, and age. It makes sense, then, that Latin American feminist movements are diverse in their demands and activist tactics. Against the notion that white (cisgendered, heterosexual) feminism is universal, this week's texts include pieces that centre Black, trans, lesbian, Indigenous, Latinx, Afro Latinx and diasporic feminisms.

The film *Bixa Travesti* profiles the life and work of self-proclaimed "gender terrorist" MC Linn Da Quebrada. Through her art and performance, MC Linn upends binary configurations of gender, resists anti-blackness, and condemns trans misogyny and misogynoir. Santana's *Mais Viva* (More alive) also addresses stories of Black *travestis* in Brazil and the diaspora. Offering a transnational reading, Santana reflects on how translating the Portuguese *travesti* into the English *trans* would erase the particular history and the class implications of *travistis* in Brazil.

Friedman introduces the *encuentros*, or regional gatherings of women and *disidencias*, as a site of transnational networking for Latin American and Caribbean feminists. Seider briefly introduces the struggles of Indigenous women in their own communities and vis-à-vis the colonial and racist national states that violate the human rights of their indigenous peoples. Tatiana de la tierra's poem, along with selected texts from *This Bridge Called My Back* (*Esa Puente mi Espalda*), is part of what is referred to as US-Third World feminism. These authors represent a valuable point of encounter between Latin America and the US. They make visible women of colour (or Latinx in the US), and challenge the idea of women (as heterosexual, middle class, white) from a lesbian perspective that pushes against gender stereotypes of beauty, among others. Like last week, the texts in week 3 overview the range of interconnected issues that converge under the banner of feminism.

Read
Santana, Dora Silva. 2019. "Mais Viva! Reassembling Transness, Blackness, and Feminism." *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 6 (2): 210–22.
Friedman, Elisabeth Jay. 2014. "Feminism Under Construction." AND Seider, Rachel. 2014. "Indigenous Women's Struggles for Justice." *NACLA Report on the Americas* 47 (4): 20–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2014.11721807. *Both readings are in the same short text.
de la tierra, tatiana. 2017. "Ode to Unsavory Lesbians." *Feminist Studies* 43 (2): 418–19.
Excerpts from Moraga, Cherríe, and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*: "Children Passing in the Streets: The Roots of Our Radicalism" (3–4); Cherry Moraga, "La Guera" (24–33); Jo Carillo, "And When You Leave, Take your Pictures with You" (78–79).

Watch
Priscila, Claudia, and Kiko Goifman, dirs. 2018. *Bixa Travesty*. 1:14:00.

WEEK 4 || Online and in the Streets
How are movements cocreated in physical and digital spaces? What are the conditions necessary to activate networks, both off- and online? What sorts of connections are made possible in the digital

age, and which are foreclosed? Today's materials introduce you to queer and feminist activists, artists, and scholars who have considered such questions in their multi-platformed work.

Marcela Fuentes looks at how bodily performances in the streets (from Ciudad Juarez to Buenos Aires) and social media campaigns work together to create "insurgent collective actions" that denounce state violence, patriarchal power, and neoliberal policies, which disproportionately affect women, travestis, trans, and nonbinary persons. From a disabilities studies perspective, Piepzna-Samarasinha invites us to challenge ableist assumptions of activism as restricted to marching in the streets. Friedman argues that pre-Internet networks of *disidencias* across Latin America enabled the later use of the Internet as an activist tool. Micha Cardenas's work is an example of the multidimensional, speculative ways of activism using digital tools to create alternative futures.

Invited Speaker
Marcela Fuentes, Northwestern University

Read
Fuentes, Marcela A. 2019. "Together We Are Infinite: Projecting Performance Constellations." In *Performance Constellations: Networks of Protest and Activism in Latin America*, 107–15. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
Piepzna-Samarasinha, Leah Lakshmi. 2018. "Preface: Writing (With) a Movement from Bed." In *Care Work: Dreaming Disability Justice*, 15–29. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.
Friedman, Elisabeth J. 2017. "The Creation of 'a Modern Weaving Machine': Bringing Feminist Counterpublics Online." In *Interpreting the Internet: Feminist and Queer Counterpublics in Latin America*, 57-88. Oakland: University of California Press.

Explore
Cárdenas, Micha. n.d. "Redshift & Portalmetal." Micharoja. Accessed November 1, 2021. https://micharoja.itch.io/redshift-and-portalmetal.

WEEK 5 || #MariellePresente: Transnational Feminism and Solidarity
There is much injustice to protest, and we end our first unit with texts that acknowledge this fact. Against facile celebrations of digital activism, Tambe and Thayer articulate the dangers of what they call "spectral transnational feminism": a disembodied and ephemeral form of transnational organizing resulting from spending cuts, surges in right-wing movements forcing activists to act locally, and crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizing solely online does not rise to the challenge of confronting the interrelated forms of violence across the Americas based on race, class, gender, and sexuality. The fifth week's materials draw connections between such forms of violence while highlighting interconnected struggles for justice as well as the transnational solidarity that such figures as Marielle Franco and Breonna Taylor inspire. The documentary *Marielle and Monica*, the performance by Sobre Elas, as well as the statement "On the Imperative of Transnational Solidarity," written by Black scholars in the US, introduce you to Marielle Franco and invite critical reflection about:

- hemispherical structures of racism and violence by police;
- the importance of transnational solidarity among activists against this violence.

In their panel "No Justice, No Peace," activists Sadiqua Reynolds, Dr. Cherie Dawson-Edwards, Keturah Herron, Ashanti Scott, and Lonita Baker (one of Taylor's attorneys) draw on their collective

expertise to envision racial justice. "Listen" includes two audiovisual compilations created in homage to Marielle. We encourage you to check in with your body (you may wish to take a walk or engage in movement) as you listen to the music and art produced by activists who say it loudly: *Marielle Presente*!

Silvana Falcón's "The Globalization of Ferguson" discusses the importance of attending to what happens beyond the classroom and how the news about Ferguson shaped discussion in the classroom. This is a crucial principle that guides our course, which was born out of the protests against gender and racialized violence happening in the streets of Buenos Aires, Argentina, as well as other cities like Louisville, USA. Falcón's central argument is that we conceive of police brutality in the case of Ferguson not in terms of individual actions by racist police officers but within the multiple and global sites of violence in the region that link police brutality in the US with the violence, for example, perpetrated against students of Ayotzinapa in Mexico. According to Falcón, to confront global violence is necessary to "maximize the counterhegemonic imaginations and actions" among students, and we hope that our class offers that generative counter-hegemonic space.

Read
Tambe, Ashwini, and Millie Thayer. 2021. "The Many Destinations of Transnational Feminism." In *Transnational Feminist Itineraries: Situating Theory and Activist Practice*, edited by Ashwini Tambe and Millie Thayer, 13–36. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. https://doi.org/10.1177/053331647000300202.
"On the Imperative of Transnational Solidarity: A U.S. Black Feminist Statement on the Assassination of Marielle Franco." *The Black Scholar*, March 23, 2018. https://www.theblackscholar.org/on-the-imperative-of-transnational solidarity-a-u-s-black-feminist-statement-on-the-assassination-of-marielle-franco/.
Falcón, Sylvanna M. 2015. "The Globalization of Ferguson: Pedagogical Matters about Racial Violence." *Feminist Studies* 41 (1): 218–21.

Watch
Erdos, Fabio, dir. 2018. *Marielle and Monica*. The Guardian. Uploaded January 4, 2019. Vimeo, 25:09. https://vimeo.com/309491182.
Elas, Sobra. 2018. *MARIELLE, PRESENTE! - Manifesto Rosa de Luta*. Uploaded March 16, 2018. YouTube video, 3:25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icok_lXZuNw.

Listen
Poder360. 2018. *Samba-Enredo Da Mangueira Em 2019 Fará Homenagem a Marielle Franco* (Tribute to Marielle Franco). Uploaded October 14, 2018. YouTube, 6:34. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7SObzDOug_A.
Drama Musica. 2018. *Marielle Presente by Catarina Domenici - A Tribute to Marielle Franco (1979–2018) ENG Subtitles*. Uploaded October 24, 2018. YouTube, 2:11. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMVv-kvJYRY.

Optional
Snyder, Cara, et al. 2020. "No Justice, No Peace: Exploring Breonna's Law, Transformative Justice [from All Eyes on Louisville: WGST 2019 Fall Social Justice Speaker Series on November 19, 2020]". Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies at UofL. Uploaded on November 26, 2020. YouTube video, 1:30:11. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqUhfEW9AU8&t=24s.

UNIT 2
Historical Perspectives on Women's Activism in the Southern Cone

This unit aims to give you a historical arc of women's activism throughout the twentieth century. Contemporary feminist movements do not emerge in a vacuum and are the result of a long history of organizing in the factories, in the schools, in the universities, and in the home. Given the diversity within Latin America and the lengthy time period covered in the course, we will not study the full stories of women's activism in the region. Rather, we will take a thematic and chronological approach that will help you understand the trajectory of feminist discourses and practices from a historical perspective. We will therefore look at national histories as examples of broader processes led by women in their fight for justice.

In the first class, we depart from conceptions of motherhood as we explore the intersection between feminism, race, and science. In the second class, we will learn about women and labour movements in the context of populist governments that favoured the working class at the same time they consolidated patriarchal authority. From there, we move to the "revolutionary sixties" in the third class, a period when women and other activists attempted to radically change society by challenging gender norms and sexual behaviours. In the context of US imperial interventions in Latin America, we see the emergence of dictatorial states in the '70s. In the fourth class, we read about women's responses to state violence and the disappearances of their family members, exploring the connections between women's activism and human rights advocacy. In the last week, we return to questions regarding labour and class in a context of neoliberal policies that devastated the region during the 1990s and 2000s.

WEEK 6 || Feminism and Eugenics at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century

For decades, historians have constructed Latin American ideologies as a result or product of European or US ideas. Under this perspective, Latin American countries are seen merely as repositories of ideas, a laboratory where political projects are practiced. However, when we look at the history of feminism in the region, it is possible to see to what extent Latin American women adapted, re-created, and constructed innovative feminist theory and practice. Without disregarding the imperial power over Latin American countries and the influence of anarchist, feminist, and socialist immigrants who arrived from Europe to South America in the process of state formation, it is crucial to understand how Latin American women contributed to debates and public policies that centred women's bodies and gender inequality.

This week we will look at one specific aspect of the feminism movement during this period: its links with the eugenic movement and *higienismo*. Lavrin's chapter invites us to reflect how did women create an agenda for public health and education based on feminist ideology? What networks and alliances did they construct to promote their agendas? What were the links between reproduction, gender, and race in Latin America?

Invited Speakers
Ana Nadalini Mendes, University of Pennsylvania
Jessica Wicks-Allen, Arizona State University

Read
Lavrin, Asunción. 1995. *Women, Feminism, and Social Change in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay*, 1890–1940. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. Introduction (1–14) and either chapter 3:

"Puericultura, Public Health and Motherhood" (97–124) or chapter 5: "The Control of Reproduction: Gender Relations under Scrutiny" (159–92).

Optional Watch
Renee, Tajima-Peña. 2015. *No más bebés*. Los Angeles: Moon Canyons Films.

WEEK 7 || Exploring Oral History Methods: Listening to Women & the Interview as Performance
The readings for this class put you in contact with definitions of oral history as a method for conducting research and as a narrative that is constructed by the source (the person whose oral history is being recorded) and the historian. Portelli's piece gives an overview of what oral history is and how it's been used by researchers to tell stories that may be absent from "official" records. Patricia Lina Leavy explains how feminist historians have used oral histories as a way of investigating the experiences of those—including women, dissidents, people of colour, poor people, and the subaltern—who have been excluded from more traditional (i.e., masculinist) research agendas. Borland shares an example of the miscommunication that can happen between interviewee and interviewer, and she offers insight into how working through this miscommunication can build feminist consciousness *through* the research process.

As a storytelling practice, oral history is a performance in which the interviewee uses tone, rhythm, metaphors, and bodily gestures to communicate their story. These readings, along with the documentary by Merle Collins (the only piece in this unit not from the Southern Cone), aim to inform your oral history interview as you consider what questions to include in your interview, how to prepare for a careful listening, and what aspects of the interviewee you use to construct a life story. Mexican anthropologist Marcela Lagarde suggests that in order to build feminist leadership, we must understand where we come from. We must know the women who came before us, identify the conflicts they faced, and recognize how they navigated them. In past iterations of this course, the discussions that arose from students' oral histories proved to be a powerful feminist method to foster dialogues between grandmothers, mothers, daughters (whether chosen or biological), aunties, mentors, and more. It helped students to humanize and empathize with older generations, rather than judge them, and to situate contemporary feminist agendas while acknowledging past struggles.

Invited Speaker
Merle Collins, University of Maryland

Read
Portelli, Alessandro. 1998. "Oral History as Genre." In *Narrative and Genre*, edited by Mary Chamberlain and Paul Thompson, 23–45. New York, NY: Routledge.
Borland, Katherine. 1991. "'That's Not What I Said': Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research." In *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, 63–75. New York: Routledge.
Leavy, Patricia Lina. 2007. "The Practice of Feminist Oral History and Focus Group Interviews." In *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, edited by Patricia Lina Leavy and Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber, 149–86. London: Sage.

Watch
Collins, Merle. 2010. *Saracca and Nation: African Memory and Re-Creation in Granada and Cariacou*. Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities.

Optional
Lagarde, Marcela. 2018. *Claves feministas para mis socias de la vida*, 23–24 and 305–307. Buenos Aires: Batalla de ideas.

WEEK 8 || Eva Peron, Women, and Labor (1940s–1950s)
Eva Peron is probably the most internationally known woman of Argentina. Coming from a working-class family, she became one of the leaders of a political movement that changed Argentine history forever. Not only did she lead the most progressive aspects of the Peronist governments in the 1940s–1950s in terms of social assistance, education, health, and labour, but she also advocated for women's right to vote, an agenda that socialist feminists had promoted since the 1920s. Doña Maria's story, an oral history conducted by historian Daniel James, is a wonderful example of the complexities of Peronist gender ideology. As a union leader, Maria Roldán challenged gender expectations involved in protests, debates, and community advocacy in Beriso. At the same time, she defended notions of motherhood and womanhood that reflects women's domesticity and submission to patriarchal authority.

Read
James, Daniel. 1996. *Doña Maria's Story: Life History, Memory, and Political Identity.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press. "The Transcript" (31–84) and chapter 3: "Tales Told Out on the Borderlands. Reading Doña Maria's Story for Gender" (213–243).

Optional Watch (in Spanish)
Sabs L. 2013. "Debate Parlamentario Sufragio Femenino Argentina 1947." YouTube. August 28, 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K6tqO95moW8&t=1s.
Ortizjco. 2012. "Eva Peron's Final Speech (1951)." YouTube. April 2, 2012. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dr7ymWtnHWc.

Excerpts from:
Ehrick, Christine. 2015. *Radio and the Gendered Soundscape: Women and Broadcasting in Argentina and Uruguay, 1930–1950*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Rosemblatt, Karin. 2000. *Gendered Compromises: Political Cultures and the State in Chile, 1920–1950*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

WEEK 9 || The Revolutionary Sixties
The 1960s were a period of profound change in politics and culture, characterized by the emergence of youth as a new political actor with a revolutionary agenda. In Latin America, activists organized into student unions, peasant organizations, guerrilla units, and art collectives to denounce capitalism, consumerism, and authoritarian governments. Today's readings put you in contact with those histories from a transnational perspective. Cowan exposes the term "machismo" as a Cold War tactic employed by social scientists and the media in the United States against Latin American revolutionaries. Conversely, in her interview with Mir Yarfitz, Valeria Manzano, author of *The Age of Youth in Argentina*, discusses her research on how and why freedom movements of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s understood sexual liberation as central to their struggle. These movements led by young activists drew on both local political traditions of organizing during Peronism and the transnational circulation of ideas and cultural objects such as jeans. The film *Elis*, based on the life of Brazilian singer/songwriter Elis Regina, shows her ascent alongside the rise of military rule. Regina is part of a group of artists who spoke out against the dictatorship in Brazil; their movement came to be called *tropicalia*.

Read
Cowan, Benjamin Arthur. 2017. "How Machismo Got Its Spurs—in English: Social Science, Cold War Imperialism, and the Ethnicization of Hypermasculinity." *Latin American Research Review* 52 (4): 606–22. https://doi.org/10.25222/larr.100.
Yarfitz, Mir. 2015. "'The Age of Youth in Argentina:' An Interview with Valeria Manzano." NOTCHES, November 3, 2015, https://notchesblog.com/2015/11/03/the-age-of-youth-in-argentina-an-interview-with-va leria-manzano/.

Watch (Portuguese with English Subtitles)
Prata, Hugo. 2016. *Elis*. Brazil: Bravura Cinematografía and Globo Films.

Optional
Cowan, Benjamin Arthur. 2016. "Sexual Revolution! Moral Panic and the Repressive Right." In *Securing Sex: Morality and Repression in the Making of Cold War Brazil*, 72–110. Durham, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

WEEK 10 || State Violence, Motherhood, and Human Rights Activism (1970s–1980s)
The 1970s were a violent period in the history of Latin America. As a response to Latin American revolutionary ideas and practices that manifested in guerrilla, peasant, Indigenous, worker, and student movements, dictatorial governments, supported by the US government, established a regime of state terror to implement neoliberal policies. After the coup d'état against the Peronist government in Argentina and Salvador Allende in Chile (made possible by US military and economic support), the right to strike was prohibited, Congress was abolished, and the media was censored. In this period, thousands of activists disappeared. They were kidnapped and tortured. Their children were kidnapped.

Women were at the forefront of the struggles for justice in the '70s and '80s. Today's class puts you in contact with two examples of how through building networks of solidarity, marching in the streets, and performing quotidian activist tasks, women in Chile and Argentina resisted state violence and advocated for human rights. Brandi Townsend's article and interview explore the links between state violence and women who were tortured during Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile. Townsend provides an example for how historians have utilized oral history methods to read quotidian acts of resistance that challenges the victimization of women. Marysa Navarro examines the role of Madres de Plaza de Mayo in fighting against the dictatorship in Argentina. Gustavo Germano's photography exhibit functions as a powerful media to understand the impact of the absences created by state terror. The videos about Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo along with the performance of Las Tesis *El violador eres tu* allow us to interrogate how art and performances contribute to the recreation of historical memory and the contemporary strategies to advocate for justice.

Invited Speaker
Brandi Townsend, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Read
Townsend, Brandi. 2019. "The Body and State Violence, from the Harrowing to the Mundane: Chilean Women's Oral Histories of the Augusto Pinochet Dictatorship (1973–1990)." *Journal of Women's History* 31 (2): 33–56. https://doi.org/10.1353/jowh.2019.0013.

Navarro, Marysa. 1988. "The Personal Is Political: Las Madres de Plaza de Mayo." In *Power and Popular Protest*, edited by Susan Eva Eckstein, 241–58. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Watch
Hafen, Sarah Grace. 2019. "'Un Violador En Tu Camino' by Feminist Collective Las Tesis (English Subtitles)." Uploaded December 1, 2019. YouTube video, 3:18. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uSHUS2lehOY.
Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo. 2019. "Institutional Video of Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo - 2002 - English Version." Uploaded March 27, 2019. YouTube video, 7:38. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuqT4hH5y9Q.

Explore
Photography exhibits by Gustavo Germano
** Scroll down and click on the Exhibits *Ausencias* (Uruguay, Brasil, Argentina, Colombia) and *Busquedas*. https://www.gustavogermano.com/porfolio-2/.

Optional
Walsh, Rodolfo. 1977. *Open Letter From a Writer to the Military Junta*. Buenos Aires: Archivo Nacional de La Memoria. http://www.jus.gob.ar/media/2940455/carta_rw_ingles-espa_ol_web.pdf.

WEEK 11 || Mujeres Piqueteras and Rural Workers in Argentina and Chile's Neoliberal Regimes (1990s–2000s)
Today's readings delve into how neoliberal policies oppressed working-class women in Argentina and Chile as well as the creative ways activists responded to economic crises. Cooperatives, factories ruined by their workers, alternative media, community centres, piquetes, and assemblies are part of this repertoire of protests and grassroots organization that women developed relying on local networks of solidarity. As we enter the third week, focused on contemporary feminist movements, the readings from La Vaca Collective delves into the 2001 crisis and centres the experiences of women, factory workers, and community organizers during this period. Naomi Klein explains the effects of neoliberal policies in Latin America. Heidi Tinsman's article demonstrates that even despite the exploitative working conditions during neoliberal Chile women challenged the patriarchal household and organized communal networks of care.

Invited Speaker
Carolina Flores, Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, Universidad Nacional de San Martín

Read
Lavaca Collective. 2007. *Sin Patrón: Stories from Argentina's Worker-Run Factories*. Chicago: Haymarket Books. Excerpts (pp. 8–13, 37–44, 64–85).
Tinsman, Heidi. 2016. "Struggles in the Countryside in Democracy and Dictatorship." *Radical History Review*, no. 124, 67–77. https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-3159970.

Watch
Big Think. 2012. "Naomi Klein on Global Neoliberalism." Uploaded April 23, 2012. YouTube video, 14:27. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sKTmwu3ynOY.

UNIT 3
Poner el Cuerpo in Contemporary Feminist Movements

Unit 3 is titled "Poner el Cuerpo" in Contemporary Feminist Movements. *Poner el cuerpo* (putting the body on the line) is a metaphor that feminists have used for decades in Latin America and the Caribbean to signal the embodied character of activism: perform a song, march in the streets, and sometimes put your body at risk in front of the police. Expanding on the meaning of "poner el cuerpo," an activist from the Argentine Movimiento de Trabajadores Desocupados (MTE; Movement of unemployed workers) explains, "To question inequality is not exclusively a 'mental' activity and in order to make our voices heard, we have to feel it, and have [this protest] come out of your whole body" (Colectiva Mala Junta 2019, 53). Since the 1980s, Latin American and Caribbean *encuentros* (meetings) have provided physical spaces for thousands, and now millions, of women and dissidents to discuss gender inequality, build collective power, and strategize a feminist agenda for local, national, and transnational arenas. Beyond the *encuentros*, feminists have participated in local organizations and intervened in everyday life "putting their bodies" into transforming popular neighbourhoods, cultural centres, schools, unions, universities, and the workplace.

Centring the body in movements for justice recognizes how women's bodies are contested spaces and is part of the feminist insistence that "the personal is political." This slogan emerged in the 1960s in recognition that so-called private matters related to domesticity and bodily autonomy are, in fact, political. With this statement, women's movements called attention to the ways larger structures of power and inequality are intimately connected to individual problems within marriages, homes, and families. In drawing connections between sexist systems and individual women's embodied experiences, feminists spurred mobilization on multiple fronts, from housework to reproductive choice. This final unit focuses on feminist performance and protest which asserts their human right to make decisions about their own bodies.

WEEK 12 || #NiUnaMenos (#NotOneWomanLess)

In the context of daily feminicides, on June 3, 2015, a group of journalists and scholars called for a protest to denounce gender violence. It was the first of many protests that would continue in the following years and fuel a vibrant and massive movement online and in the streets in Argentina, Chile, and Mexico. The collective scream against machista violence became transnational, uniting women from Buenos Aires to Ciudad Juarez in claims for their right to live a life without fear. Indeed, feminicides expressed a powerful point of contact among feminists in Latin America. The name of the campaign and movement, "Ni una menos" (Not one woman less) took inspiration from Mexican poet and activist from Ciudad Juarez, Susana Chavez. Written from different disciplinary perspectives, today's readings analyze the phenomenon of feminicide in the Americas as well as the creative ways in which activists are performing on- and offline through hashtags and street protests. Along with the academic readings, we chose literary, activist, and musical artifacts that not only expose the violent realities of many women in Latin America but also present a vision of the world with collective action, solidarity, desire, autonomy and joy.

Read

Fuentes, Marcela A. 2019. "#NiUnaMenos (#NotOneWomanLess): Hashtag Performativity, Memory, and Direct Action against Gender Violence in Argentina." In *Women Mobilizing Memory*, edited by Gul Ayse Altinay, María José Contreras, Marianne Hirsch, Jean Howard, Banu Karaca, and Alisa Solomon, 172–92. New York: Columbia University Press.
Fregoso, Rosa-Linda, and Cynthia Bejarano. 2010. "Introduction: A Cartography of Feminicide in

the Americas." In *Terrorizing Women: Feminicide in the Americas*, 1–42. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Bolaño, Roberto. 2008. "The Part About Crimes." In *2666*, 358–61. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
Ni una Menos Collective - Argentina
** Especially for the discussion post you will read the "Carta Organica" within the "About us" section.
Gago, Veronica. 2020. "#We Strike: Toward a Political Theory of the Feminist Strike" and "Eight Theses on the Feminist Revolution." In *Feminist International: How to Change Everything*, 9-56; 234–48. London: Verso.

Watch (Spanish and English lyrics visible here):
Lane, Rebeca. 2016. "Este Cuerpo Es Mío." Uploaded November 25, 2016. YouTube video, 3:37. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dT2mTKwXlG8.
Lane, Rebecca. 2019. "Siempre Viva." Uploaded September 27, 2019. YouTube video, 5:13. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eacS_lvCh7A.
Lane, Rebecca. 2018. "Ni Una Menos." Uploaded November 11, 2018. YouTube video, 3:27. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VbQ_yOlzWTs.
Vivir Quintana ft. El Palomar. 2020. "Canción Sin Miedo." Uploaded March 7, 2020. YouTube video, 3:48. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLLyzqkH6cs.
Miss Bolivia, Rebecca Lane, and Ali Gua Gua. 2015. "Libre, Atrevida y Loca." Uploaded August 30, 2015. YouTube video, 4:25. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0jiE9I0ybE.

Optional
Hilton, Leon J., and Iván A. Ramos. 2017. "'Madness Is Contagious': Language and Violence in the Goodman Theatre's 2666." *TDR/The Drama Review*. 61 (2): 166–72. https://doi.org/10.1162/DRAM_a_00654.
Finnegan, Nuala. 2018. "Translating Feminicide: Women of Sand and the Performance of Trauma." *Performance Matters* 4 (3): 30–48
Segato, Rita. 2021. "Introducción." In *La guerra contra las mujeres*, 3–23. Buenos Aires. Prometeo.

WEEK 13 || #Abortolegalya: Reproductive Violence and Justice
Since the 1990s, women have advocated for the decriminalization of abortion at the national *encuentros*. Feminists demanded not only bodily autonomy, a life free of violence, and reproductive rights as a public health issue but also the national implementation of integral sex education in the schools. Twenty years later, and relying on the visibility that the Ni Una Menos protests gave to gender violence, projects to legalize abortion were debated in Congress. The green bandanas invaded the streets of Buenos Aires and other cities around the country. For months, scholars, activists, and journalists exposed their arguments and stories in Congress. Thousands of people met in the streets outside the historical building hear the deputies' statements. For the first time, feminism was massive. In the media, in social media, in the streets, in public transportation, in the schools, and in supermarkets people were debating whether or not the law should be passed. The 2018 law for the legalization of abortion did not pass but the green bandana became a transnational symbol for feminists throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

Today's class material exposes students to how feminists framed the criminalization of abortion and clandestine abortions as a form of state violence and how feminists advocated for their right to decide over their bodies. The articles by LATFEM, a digital native feminist media outlet located in

Buenos Aires, Argentina, and co-founders of the Network of Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Journalists, delve into the stories of women and girls who died by clandestine abortions, the reproductive rights of trans men, and the approval of the law in 2020. *Siete Semanas*, a film by Chilean director Constanza Figari, follows the journey of a young dance student, Camila, who decides to terminate a pregnancy. It is an intimate look into the multiple competing forces that insert themselves into women's reproductive choices.

Invited Speakers
Santiago Zemaitis, Universidad Nacional de La Plata
Josefina Vallejos, Colegio San José

Read
From LATFEM:
Alcaraz, Flor, Vanina Escales, and Agustina Frontera. n.d. "Sin Ley: Zona de Riesgo." LATFEM. Accessed April 11, 2023. https://latfem.org/sin-ley/.
"'Cuerpos Gestantes' y Derecho Al Aborto de Varones Trans: Nuevos Nudos Temáticos Feministas y Disidencias Sexuales." 2020. LATFEM. September 27, 2020. https://latfem.org/menos-prescriptivismo-mas-articulacion/.
Alcaraz, Flor. 2021. "La Vida Digna Es Ley." LATFEM. January 15, 2021. https://latfem.org/la-vida-digna-es-ley/.
*The webpages can be translated into English in your browser.

Watch
Figari, Constanza. 2016. *Siete Semanas* [Seven weeks]. Chile.

WEEK 14 || Feminist Responses to Systemic Violence
One way that connections between the personal and the political have manifested is through feminist anti-violence movements. These movements exposed the ways in which personalized and systemic forms of aggression are inextricably linked. Interpersonal violence refers to brutalities like rape, domestic violence, and emotional and psychological abuse that occur within privatized relationships. Structural violence refers to injury caused by governments (state violence), institutions, businesses, or individuals who commit harm based on stereotypes. Feminist activists have drawn attention to the systemic violence—rooted in historical processes and in social meanings ascribed to gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and nationality—which undergirds the individualized aggressions that many marginalized populations confront. To identify physical violence, coercive sex, and abuse as gendered violence is to recognize these as acts of power that both define and reinforce sexism and toxic gender norms. Activists in the late 1900s throughout the Americas asserted that rape and intimate partner violence must be considered issues of public concern. In cyclical form, structures of gender-based oppression shape individual existence, and vice versa. The terror of rape, for instance, dictates the terms of girls' and feminized subjects' lives from early on: what they wear, how they behave, where and when they move through the world, and who they interact with, are all impacted by the looming threat of sexual violence. Certainly, this threat is exacerbated for poor people, people of colour, and members of the LGBT+ community. Feminists have fought (and continue to fight) for safety nets, such as shelters and legal reforms. But ultimately, these measures are stopgaps; addressing, preventing, and eliminating sexual violence requires systemic change. Thus, even while feminist movements gave voice to individualized forms of aggression, they also understood that in order to eradicate brutality we must focus on dismantling interconnected systems of oppression which promote, condone, and facilitate misogynist, racist,

homophobic, and transphobic violence.

Diana Taylor presents various Latin American artivists (artist-activists) who expose multiple registers of violence as they "summon the tools of performance to fight for political and economic change" (147). These performances include the *escraches* of the group H.I.J.O.S that denounce the Argentine dictatorship, embodied works like *Earth* by Regina José Galindo that confront the Guatemalan genocide, and satirical videos like *Amnezas* by the Latina performance collective Fulana that make visible US-fuelled violence in the region. Amanda Aguilar Shank describes her experience speaking out against an abusive CEO and seeking accountability through restorative measures. Our optional reading by Adrienne Marie Brown offers a sex-positive spin on #MeToo, focusing less on punishing offenders and more on how to build cultures of consent and pleasure. Finally, today's film centres Latin American youth as crucial actors in the emergence of Latin American feminisms in the last years. *Lute Como Menina* (Fight like a girl) documents school takeovers in Brazil, led by students fighting for their right to public education.

Read
Taylor, Diana. 2016. "Artivists (Artist-Activists), or What's to Be Done?" In *Performance*, 147–84. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
Shank, Amanda Aguilar. 2020. "Beyond Firing How Do We Create Community-Wide Accountability for Sexual Harassment in Our Movements?" In *Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement Ebook*, edited by Ejeris Dixon and Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 27–43. Chicago: AK Press.

Watch
Lute como uma menina! 2016. "Lute Como Uma Menina!" Uploaded November 9, 2016. YouTube video, 1:16:17. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OCUMGHm2oA.

Optional
Brown, Adrienne Marie. 2019. "Skills for Sex in the #MeToo Era." In *Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good*, 190–229. Chicago: AK Press.
Serafini, Paula. 2020. "'A Rapist in Your Path': Transnational Feminist Protest and Why (and How) Performance Matters." *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 23 (2): 290–95. https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549420912748.

WEEK 15 || Feminist Organizing during the Pandemic
The pandemic is still ravaging populations around the world. As in other countries, in Latin America the pandemic exacerbated poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to basic resources such as medical attention and housing. As Argentine scholar Eleonor Faur put it, the current economic and health crisis in the region had a "feminine and popular face." As we saw in week 11, women and *disidencias* are not only the ones who more deeply suffered the consequences of the economic crisis, but they are also the ones who put more labour into grassroots organizing by providing food and other resources to sustain their local communities. Facing death and violence, activists are responding with care and collective action to protect life. Today's readings make visible both the health crisis that disproportionately affected Black, trans, and working-class people in Latin America along with the politics of care and the networks of solidarity created by local leaders in Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico.

Read
Destine, Shaneda, Jazzmine Brooks, and Christopher Rogers. 2020. "Black Maternal Health Crisis , COVID-19 , and the Crisis of Care." *Feminist Studies* 46 (3): 603–14.
Moraes, Carolina, Juma Santos, and Mariana Prandini Assis. 2020. "'We Are in Quarantine but Caring Does Not Stop': Mutual Aid as Radical Care in Brazil." *Feminist Studies* 46 (3): 639–52.
AND
At least two of the following articles published in LATFEM, a digital native feminist media outlet located in Buenos Aires, Argentina: https://latfem.org/. LATFEM are the founders of the Network of Latin American and Caribbean Feminist Journalists. (*Note: use chrome as your browser and translate the page into English by right-clicking, and selecting the translate option.)
"Defensoras ambientales en tiempos de coronavirus" (Environmental defenders in times of coronavirus)
"Ministerio de putas: cómo Ammar articula con el Estado durante la pandemia" (Ministry of whores: How Ammar articulates with the state during the pandemics)
"¿Qué vidas importan? Preguntas feministas y acciones colectivas en tiempos de violencias en pandemia" (What lives matter? Feminist questions and collective actions in times of violence in a pandemic)
"Hola Profe. La educación en pandemia" (Hello teacher: Education in a pandemic)
"Volver a clases en México: las mujeres cuidan, educan y trabajan" (Back to class in Mexico: Women care, educate, and work)
"Madres solas en pandemia: la 'super mujer' no existe" (Lonely mothers in pandemic: The "superwoman" does not exist)
"Puerto Rico: tres jóvenes epidemiólogas reescriben la historia de las ciencias" (Puerto Rico: Three young epidemiologists rewrite the history of science)

Postscript

Behind the Scenes

Online and in the Streets was originally conceived as a three-week, on-site class in Buenos Aires, Argentina, set to take place during the fifth anniversary of #NiUnaMenos. The course moved online when COVID-19 made travel impossible. We co-taught our first iterations of the class in 2020 amid protests against police brutality, and our course was influenced by the powerful networked activism surrounding us. Because of their involvement with local movements, students in the US connected more intimately with class material about feminist protest in Latin America. As a class, we began to understand ourselves as part of what Marcela Fuentes calls "performance constellations." Fuentes's concept—one we engaged with throughout the class—recognizes the co-constitutive nature of performance and activism occurring in digital and physical spaces that aims to challenge neoliberal, patriarchal, and racist forms of violence. While we acknowledge the limitations of learning about feminist performance and protest in online classes, our course honours embodied knowledge and enacts transnational solidarities and collaboration, two pillars of our co-teaching philosophy. These commitments to transformative teaching are reflected through class materials, interviews with feminist artists, activists, and scholars, and major course projects that we refer to as "experience sets." Experience sets are project-based assignments, in which we ask students to synthesize course material, discussions, and experiences outside the classroom.

Co-Teaching Transnational Feminisms Online

Our approach to teaching draws from a genealogy of pedagogues throughout the Americas, including Marxist philosopher Paulo Freire (Brazil), Black feminist scholar and activist bell hooks (USA), and Latin American feminist scholars Julieta Kirkwood (Chile) and Marcela Largarde (Mexico), to name a few. The *pareja pedagógica* (co-teaching partnership) is a common practice in popular education. In practice, this philosophy of collective teaching used in nonformal education (schools for working-class adults, usually from marginalized populations) means that educators do not plan their classes, teach, and grade students in isolation but along with their partners, in a constant dialogue and process of reflection. The pareja pedagógica of this class comprises Sabrina González and Cara K. Snyder. Sabrina González is a feminist historian from Buenos Aires, a non-native English speaker, and a first-generation college student from a working-class family. Her experience as an activist in community centres, student and teachers' unions, alternative media, and nontraditional schools for adults shape her research on the history of education and her approaches to popular and feminist pedagogies. Cara Snyder, a white, US-born professor of women's, gender, and sexuality studies has lived and taught in the US, Guatemala, Argentina, and Brazil. Cara's research and organizing with women and LGBTQIA++ athlete-activists, and their two decades of experience teaching in a variety of settings, including multiple study abroad programs, inform Cara's embodied approaches to queer, feminist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist pedagogies.

It is not possible, of course, to consider the full story of women's activism in the region. As in any class, we have had to make hard decisions about what to include based on our expertise, the scope of our time together, and diversity within Latin America. Our research expertise and lived experiences are geographically situated in what is referred to as the Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay), and our syllabus reflects this bias. For example, there is excellent work coming from Caribbean and Central American artists, scholars, and activists that we were unable to include: José Esteban Muñoz, April Mayes, Ginetta Candelario, Elizabeth S. Manley, Lawrence La Fountain-Stokes, Maja Horn, Jennifer Shoaff, Beverly Bell, and Audre Lorde, to name

a few. We invite students to explore these geographies and artivists in their experience sets. As part of performance-based and feminist pedagogies, we want to make explicit who we are and how our situated knowledges and political commitments impact our teaching. This naming of our positions is part of our feminist pedagogy; we ask students to engage in the same practice of self and collective reflexivity.

Here, we must call out the politics of language and recognize that linguistic considerations limited the inclusion of the voices of Latin American actors (in Spanish and Portuguese). The first and many subsequent iterations of this class were taught in English, and, therefore, limited the material we could include (materials had to be available in English or with English subtitles). Yet, the expansion of the class allowed for transnational collaborations with scholars in Latin America and made the incorporation of material in Spanish possible. Since summer 2021, Sabrina González has taught Feminist Protest twice in collaboration with Universidad Nacional de Tres de Febrero, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In this "Global (Virtual) Classroom," students from the Argentine university take the course alongside US-based students. Because some students in the classroom spoke Spanish and the professors did the labour of translation, it was possible to include important pieces of feminist theory produced in Spanish (such as the work of Rita Segato).

Put Your Body On(the)Line: Embodied Knowledge

When we envisioned the class as an on-site course in Argentina, we imagined students would be fully immersed in feminist movements during our short time there. Against the idea of a "tourist gaze"—where US students go "abroad" to superficially visit iconic places promoted by the tourism industry—we wanted students to commit to transnational struggles through thinking, feeling, and acting in solidarity. By documenting the anniversary of #NUM, dancing queer tango, organizing a cultural activity with local social movements, and participating in *futbol feminino* (women's soccer), students would have to *poner sus cuerpos/as* (put their bodies on the line), a metaphor that Latin American feminists have used for decades to signal the embodied character of activism. While virtual classrooms may not allow for the sort of embodiment we originally imagined, the body is still central in digital spaces. We invited students to *poner sus cuerpos/as/xs/es*, even, and perhaps especially, in this online course.

There were multiple ways in which the body appeared in the class material, in some cases via police brutality, oppression, and state violence against women and Black and trans people. At other moments, the body celebrated, created, and performed, both on- and offline. Together, we explored what happens to our bodies online and how we relate to embodiment in virtual space. The format of a condensed online class necessarily presented limitations for creating a learning community and accommodating students' diverse needs. Still, we asked that students be active participants in the classroom, that they be present, and that they interact with the class material and the experiences they encounter, dialogue with classmates' perspectives, and honour the long history of activists who have died fighting for their right to exist. In other words, we encouraged students to engage through rituals of active listening, reflecting, caring, commenting, and researching about Latin American feminist theory and practice.

Think-Feel-Act Beyond Borders: Transnational Solidarity and Collaboration

In this class, students encountered a transnational feminist pedagogy that opened the classroom to the world and were invited to contemplate scales from the intimate to the global. This course also exposed students to asymmetrical flows of power across borders, challenged the fixedness of the

nation-state as a category, and built transnational solidarities in order to take action both on- and offline. Our class enacted transnational dialogues through recorded interviews by the instructors with Latin American and Caribbean thinkers. The interviews were opportunities to conceptualize *with* and not only *about* Latin American actors. Students met scholars, including Merle Collins and Marcela Fuentes, that envision transnational feminism through performance. As a class, we watched and analyzed performances by such artists as Las Tesis and Linn de Quebrada, street performances of #NUM, and feminist music videos. We implored students to stay open, reminding them that even if they did not understand the language, other forms of communication—including costume, face, makeup, and movement—are powerful ways to enact change. Students "read" for these multiple forms of communication in an assignment that asked them to practice oral history. As they interviewed a woman or *disidencia,* they interpreted the interview as a type of performance while also analyzing the content for elements of transnational exchange. Oral history methodologies were a tool to engage questions of scale by drawing connections between the self, the community, the nation, and beyond.

Conclusion: A Good Performance

We asked students: what does it mean to "perform well" in this class? That depended on the extent to which students were able to engage, to *poner sus cuerpos*, and to think-feel-act in collaboration with our (global) classroom community. At the end of the class, teachers and students reflected together about the process of learning, and students assessed their own performances based on the learning goals. While we acknowledged the challenges of liberatory practices in formal education, we still wanted students to focus on the process more than the final product. Throughout the class, students were encouraged to focus on pleasure, reflection, and creativity. Ultimately, their grade is not their final takeaway; what they take away (and what cannot be captured by a numerical assessment) is what they enjoyed, the ways they learned, and how they connected with intimate histories of oppression and liberation.

As a collective endeavour, the class has been less a product of our behind-the-scenes planning and more the result of a dialogical process between students, teachers, and class material interacting in particular contexts. Every class is a new performance of the syllabus. Students who have thrived in this class are those who actively "claim their education" (to quote feminist writer Adrienne Rich) rather than passively receive it (or actively resist it!). We try to perform horizontalism, but we are still operating in a hierarchical institution where teachers have power over students' grades. Furthermore, we have encountered students who felt uncomfortable with a pedagogical approach that values horizontalism and flexibility. We ask students to focus on pleasure and creativity, to think-feel-act beyond borders, to "put their bodies on the line" and engage with the histories of Latin American feminisms . . . but not every student will feel pleasure in a three-week online class about feminist protest. Still, there is value in reflecting on our sources of discomfort and using this reflection as an opportunity for growth.

The Studio in the Seminar: Performing Theory in an MFA Classroom

Karin Shankar and Julia Steinmetz

A Praxis-Based Approach to Performance Theory

This article describes an "Introduction to Performance Theory" course that the authors co-teach to MFA students at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. Through the semester, we track genealogies of performance studies, highlighting the ways in which our interdiscipline has been incorporated as an academic field while still remaining sensationally unsettled in its interventions, methods, and objects of analysis. The focus of this article is on the ways we have tailored a performance theory course to serve MFA students—artists and makers across genre and discipline. The article offers our syllabus and ten practice-based assignments to illustrate how we encourage the artists in our class to engage with critical theory and performance studies scholarship in an embodied way. Bringing the studio into the seminar, our MFA students stage performance experiments related to each week's readings. Our syllabus is accompanied by a reflection on co-teaching performance studies as a dynamic couple form that itself constitutes a performance of pedagogy, an enactment of sociality, and an embodiment of theory.

Our praxis-based approach, as illustrated in the syllabus and weekly embodied exercises, centres performance and art practice as forms of theory-making and theory as a force that animates performance. This "seminar as studio" pedagogy also allows us to approach each week's topic anew, as an experiment in which the outcome is not known in advance. Our context, as a (presumably) reading- and writing-intensive course within an arts school, led us to create this multidimensional approach to teaching an Introduction to Performance Theory class. We found that written assignments and discussions of texts became richer and more vital as soon as students brought the materiality of their practices (kinetics, textures, rhythms, colours) to rub up against theory. We, in turn, started to read theory with a freshly activated sensorium, only to remember that our favourite performance studies thinkers had been asking us to do this all along. We always learn from our students, and in the second and third iterations of the course we formalized this learning in the embodied prompts you see on the syllabus.

A praxis-based approach to teaching performance theory has allowed us to establish a framework in which reading, writing, and thinking are plaited together with doing, making and creating. We consider theory as always already intimately, socially, and politically grounded in the embodied articulations of each student's art practice. This encourages students to bring something approaching their whole selves to bear on the theoretical, political, and aesthetic problems at hand.

Karin Shankar (PhD) is an assistant professor of performance studies in the Department of Humanities and Media Studies at Pratt Institute. Her work has been published or is forthcoming in *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, *TDR*, *Feminist Teacher*, *Art India*, *ASAP/Journal*, *Performance Philosophy,* and elsewhere.
Julia Steinmetz (PhD) is an assistant professor of performance studies in the Department of Humanities and Media Studies at Pratt Institute. Her scholarly work has appeared in *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *Studies in Gender and Sexuality, TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly*, *QED: A Journal of GLBT Worldmaking*, *E-misférica*, and *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*.

Notes on Co-Teaching

Perhaps the greatest joy of developing and teaching this course is that it has been a joint enterprise. Pratt Institute has a history of supporting co-teaching as a generative modality for creative pedagogy. As co-teachers, we alternate between listening and speaking, present contrasting interpretations of texts, offer complementary feedback on assignments, disagree, engage in playful sparring over ideas, attend to gaps and fissures in our expertise and experience, and model pathways for connecting across difference. Co-teaching in the field of performance studies is a dynamic couple form. Viewed as performance, our pedagogy takes on a dialogical quality in which knowledge is contested and difference is a radical resource that "sparks like a dialectic."[1]

Teaching together presents a constant challenge to the myth of the individual author and productively frustrates students' demands for their professors to occupy the position of the "subject supposed to know" (Lacan, Miller, and Sheridan 1998). Teaching at its best is a kind of ecstatic exteriorization, and co-teaching pulls internal lines of thought not just into monologue but into dialogue, creating an opportunity for us to push one another beyond the limits of our own subjectivity. The classroom is a space of identification and disidentification, of transference and countertransference, of desire and frustration and deep satisfaction. Co-teaching makes these powerful dynamics legible in new ways, while still calling attention to the moments in which we find ourselves embodying, as a group, the rituals, social dramas, and complex choreographies we study. Most intimately, over hours of syllabus design, lesson planning, lecture composition, and practicing pedagogy, the authors have also grown a deep friendship. If the future of the political is the future of friends, then our experience co-teaching this class was one space in which this future appeared as a glimmer on the horizon.[2]

Syllabus: An Introduction to Performance Theory

As an introduction to the interdiscipline of performance studies, this course offers students a range of ways of conceptualizing, framing, analyzing, and making performance. Via key readings, performance viewings, experiments in performance practice, and critical writing, students will become acquainted with multiple genealogies of performance studies. These include its early intersections with anthropological and sociological literature; its critical borrowings from and elaborations of linguistics and speech act theory; its vital contemporary interventions in critical race theory, queer of colour critique, and trans studies; and its engagements with Global South performance praxis and politics. The format for most classes will be an introductory lecture by the professor(s) followed by class discussion on the week's assigned readings. Performance experiments and embodied artistic investigations constitute an essential component of each class session. This course takes a praxis-based approach in which artistic impulses drive theory-making and we approach theory as aesthetic material.

Week 1. Introduction: What Is Performance? What Is Performance Studies? Why Perform?
Keywords: performance, performativity, performance studies, embodiment
Session synopsis: *We read Audre Lorde's essays aloud to acknowledge our lived realities as resources for embodied thinking, writing, and art making.*

- An in-class choral reading of Audre Lorde "Uses of the Erotic" and "The Master's Tools"
- Diana Taylor, "[Framing] Performance," in *Performance*
- *What is Performance Studies* interviews: https://scalar.usc.edu/nehvectors/wips/interviews-eng

Week 2. Performing History
Keywords: history, performance, archaeology, hauntings
Session synopsis: *We analyze Kara Walker's installation "A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby" (2014) in conversation with excerpts from Saidiya Hartman's* Scenes of Subjection *in order to investigate the monumental forms and material traces of history-making.*

- Saidiya Hartman, "Redressing the Pained Body," in *Scenes of Subjection*
- Arlene R. Keizer, "Gone Astray in the Flesh: Kara Walker, Black Women Writers, and African American Postmemory"
- Kara Walker, "A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby"
- Creative Time Dossier on Walker's artistic process and the project's curatorial statement: https://creativetime.org/projects/karawalker/
- "Toppling Monuments and Performing History": https://terremoto.mx/en/revista/derribo-de-monumentos-y-representacion-historica/

Praxis I: Stage a one-minute embodied interaction with a public monument. Document your action and be prepared to share with the class.

Week 3. Rethinking Ritual
Keywords: liminality, ritual, communitas
Session Synopsis: *We understand ritual acts as "restored behaviours" that reveal the values of their social context. We explore how troubling a ritual or performing it differently might instantiate a new sociality and politics.*

- Victor Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," in *Ritual Process*
- Richard Schechner, "Points of Contact," in *Between Theater and Anthropology*
- Maya Deren, *Ritual in Transfigured Time*
- Martha Rosler, *Semiotics of the Kitchen*, https://youtu.be/ZuZympOIGC0

Praxis II: Misrecognize, fail at, or otherwise perform an everyday ritual *differently* in a three-minute performance.[3]

Week 4. Performance of Self in Everyday Life
Keywords: fronts, the art of impression management, avatars
Session Synopsis: *We update Goffman's classic dramaturgical framing of the presentation of self in everyday life for the social media age.*

- Erving Goffman, "Introduction" and "Performances," in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*
- Jeff Orlowski, dir., *The Social Dilemma*
- Marcy J. Dinius, "The Long History of the 'Selfie'"
- Amelia Jones, "'The Eternal Return': Self-Portrait Photography as a Technology of Embodiment."

Praxis III: Share an example of the performance of self in everyday life from social media, either your own account or that of someone you follow.

Week 5. Quotidian Choreographies
Keywords: everyday choreographies, techniques of the body, psychogeography, "bodies-cities"
Session Synopsis: *We practice modes of choreographing the everyday with tools from the works of Debord, de Certeau, Grosz, and Rivera-Servera. We frame the body's interactions with the city as a rhetorical form.*

- Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City," in *The Practice of Everyday Life*
- Ramon Rivera-Servera, "Quotidian Utopias: Latina/o Queer Choreographies," in *Performing Queer Latinidad Dance*
- Guy Debord "Theory of the Dérive"

- Elizabeth Grosz, "Bodies-Cities"

Praxis IV: Perform a dérive inspired by the assigned texts. Document your experience in five hundred words.

Week 6. Play
Keywords: play, fantasy, illusion, transitional objects and phenomena, potential space
Session Synopsis: *We draw from psychoanalyst Winnicott to explore how play, an integral part of performance entails stitching together "a sample of dream potential" with "fragments of external reality."*

- D. W. Winnicott, "Transitional Objects and Transitional Phenomena" and "Playing: A Theoretical Statement," in *Playing and Reality*

Praxis V: Come to class prepared to lead us in a brief (two–five minute) play activity.

Week 7. Interlude: Performing Theory
Praxis V: Prepare a five-minute performance of theory. Your performance should offer evidence of how a critical idea that we have encountered in this course has influenced your thoughts about the making of performance. Therefore, your performance must include at least three sentences from the critical readings for the course to present an embodied form of scholarly engagement. Use the tools and vocabulary of your own performance practice as a medium to animate your chosen theoretical texts.[4]

Week 8. Performance Scores
Keywords: happenings, fluxus, performance scores, avant-garde performance, art/life
Session Synopsis: *We look back at performance experiments of the 1960s that trouble the division between art and life as inspiration for creating our own contemporary performance scores.*

- Allan Kaprow, "Untitled Guidelines for Happenings" (c. 1965)
- Yoko Ono, *Grapefruit*
- Natilee Harren, Natilee, selections from *Fluxus Forms: Scores, Multiples, and the Eternal Network*
- John Cage, "The Future of Music: Credo," in *Silence: Lectures and Writings*

Praxis VI: Create a text-based performance score to be performed by your classmates.

Week 9. Performativity
Keywords: performativity, speech acts, how to do things with words, felicitous and infelicitous performatives, illocutionary acts, queer failure
Session Synopsis: *We consider Austin's foundational lectures on performative speech acts and their translations in the Twittersphere.*

- Diana Taylor, "Performative and Performativity," in *Performance*
- J. L. Austin, "Lecture II," in *How to Do Things with Words*
- Shoshana Felman, *The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J. L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages.*

Praxis VII: Compose and post a performative tweet in 280 characters or less.

Week 10. Performance Documents
Keywords: the archive and the repertoire, ephemera, traces, liveness, the performance document
Session Synopsis: *We ask what remains once a performance has ended, how critical acts are transferred, and the relationship of a performance to its documents.*

- Diana Taylor, "Acts of Transfer," in *The Archive and the Repertoire*
- Jose Esteban Muñoz, "Ephemera as Evidence: Introductory Notes to Queer Acts"

- Martin F. Manalansan, IV, "The 'Stuff' of Archives: Mess, Migration, and Queer Lives"
- Peggy Phelan "The Ontology of Performance," in *Umarked*

Praxis VIII: Show and tell from *your* performance archive. Bring an artifact from your practice area to class and deliver a three-minute presentation on why that artifact is important to understanding your practice. The artifact may be a prop, a costume, a gesture or movement phrase, an image, a site, a fragment of text, a sound, etc.

Week 11. Performativity of Race and Gender I
Keywords: drag, appropriation, queer kinship, interpellation, Vogueing, the Harlem ballroom scene
Session Synopsis: *We introduce the relationship of performativity to the construction and contestation of race and gender.*

- José Esteban Muñoz, "Introduction," in *Disidentifications*
- Jennie Livingston, *Paris is Burning*
- Murphy, Ryan, dir., *Pose*, season 1, episode 1
- Judith Butler, "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," in *Bodies that Matter*
- bell hooks, "Is Paris Burning," in *Black Looks*

Week 12. Performativity of Race and Gender II
Keywords: visibility/hypervisibility, racialization, disidentification, excess, embodied writing, transitioning
Session Synopsis: *We deepen our consideration of performativity in relation to the materiality of the racialized and gendered body.*

- Frantz Fanon, "The Fact of Blackness," in *Black Skin, White Masks*
- Nicole Fleetwood, "Excess Flesh," in *Troubling Vision*
- Dora Silva Santana, "Transitionings and Returnings: Experiments with the Poetics of Transatlantic Water"
- Narcissister, *Narcissiter Organ Player*

Week 13. In Your Feelings: Affect and Performance
Keywords: affect, feelings, difficulty, abject performance, the periperformative
Session Synopsis: *We approach the work of racialized affect, the labour of sitting with difficult artworks, and the exhaustion of performance.*

- Ivan Ramos, "Spic(y) Appropriations: The Gustatory Aesthetics of Xandra Ibarra (aka La Chica Boom)"
- Xandra Ibarra, http://www.xandraibarra.com/about/
- Jennifer Doyle, "Introducing Difficulty," in *Hold It Against Me*
- Eve Sedgwick, "Introduction," in *Touching Feeling*

Praxis IX: Choose a "difficult" piece of performance work to share with the class. Offer up a generative pathway for sitting with that difficulty.

Week 14. Decoloniality and Performance Studies
Keywords: Indigeneity, decoloniality, extraction, settler colonialism, land as pedagogy, intergenerational exchange
Session Synopsis: *Considering settler colonialism as "a structure not an event," we explore the decolonial aesthetics of contemporary Indigenous artists and performers (Wolfe 2006).*

- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, "Land as Pedagogy: Nishnaabeg Intelligence and Rebellious Rransformation," in *As We Have Always Done*

- Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, https://youtu.be/IiFIgF_OHlM and https://youtu.be/dp5oGZ1r60g
- Kent Monkman, https://www.kentmonkman.com/ and https://creativetime.org/summit/2017/10/18/kent-monkman/
- Wendy Red Star, https://www.wendyredstar.com/
- Kim Tall Bear, "Making Love and Relations Beyond Settler Sexualities," https://youtu.be/zfdo2ujRUv8
- Tom Boellstorff et al., "Decolonizing Transgender: A Roundtable Discussion"

Week 15. FINAL PRESENTATIONS
Praxis X: Build on any one (or a combination of) your Praxis offerings this semester to create a five–ten minute performance piece. Write an eight–ten page (double-spaced) extended artist statement positioning your performance within the field of performance studies.

Notes

1. This generative image comes from Lorde (1984).

2. Here we draw from both Jacques Derrida (2005) and José Esteban Muñoz (1996) in thinking about friendship and utopia in the space of the classroom.

3. This exercise is inspired by the syllabus for Joshua Chambers-Letson's Northwestern University course Introduction to Performance Studies.

4. We adapted this exercise from Professor Brandi Catanese's Introduction to Performance Studies undergraduate syllabus, a course that she has taught for several years in UC Berkeley's Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies.

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Awe of What a Body Can Be: Disability Justice, the Syllabus, and Academic Labour

Jess Dorrance, Julia Havard, Caleb Luna, and Olivia K. Young

Introduction

Hi! We are a multi-racial group of sick and disabled queer and trans graduate students, post-docs, and early-career faculty who are friends and who think a lot about art, performance, and collective liberation. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been meeting online once a week to support one another around our chronic illnesses and disabilities, as well as our personal struggles and wins. Working against the isolation that so often accompanies sickness and disability, we have felt deeply grateful to have a place to bring the minutiae of the ups and downs of our bodies and our journeys within and outside of the medical system (insert stool test joke here) and the academy (insert joke about shitty working conditions here). Over the time we've been meeting, two of us came out as autistic, three graduated, three survived fire season, two moved, and four promised to make the academy safer for our bodies to work, care, imagine, and rest. Our care labour for each other has produced many reflections about what it means to try to manifest Disability Justice magic in the academy.

As scholars invested in both performance studies and disability studies, we view these fields as ones that have many productive overlaps which can be mutually instructive. Both fields think complexly and intersectionally about various kinds of embodiment, examining how bodily norms and identities are produced and resisted. Both fields interrogate how power structures and bodies interact. Indeed, there is a rich scholarly history of these two fields intersecting.[1] The performance studies syllabus, then, is an opportunity to harness this interdisciplinary dialogue to create more accessible spaces for learning and art-making.

In this article, we've come together to explore how to more critically and lovingly manifest access in syllabus construction. The syllabus, we argue, can be one site to work against how ableism, racism, cisheteronormativity, xenophobia, and other axes of oppression shape our classrooms. Enacting the syllabus as a tool of liberation recentres our own bodies in the classroom and raises bigger questions of Disability Justice and teaching labour in graduate school and the academy at large. We examine how accommodations offer a limited model of access in the academy, reflect on the primacy of undergraduate students in disability offices and centres, and offer a series of questions that could be used as a checklist for teachers to examine their approach to disability in higher education. Throughout this essay, we move between our shared Disability Justice politic and the nuances of our individual experiences as people who are differently sick and disabled, raced, sized, and who have different citizenships. When we speak as individuals, the text is indented with the writer's name parenthetically cited at the end.

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Articulating our personal experiences, we believe, is necessary toward generating what Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha calls "collective access"—where needs for access and care are shifted away from "an unfortunate cost of having an unfortunate body, to a collective responsibility that's maybe even deeply joyful" (2019a, 33). Our needs are not only "our own." They point to the needs of a multitude of other people who are participating in higher education or might want to. They point to an opportunity for academia to collectively practise what it might feel like to care for one another better and, in so doing, create more revolutionary spaces to learn and grow.

Cripping Accommodations

As noted by the editors of this issue, a syllabus can reflect ways of knowing and philosophies of teaching and learning that reveal an approach to education. It follows that the accommodations statement—often the one moment in the syllabus where disability is dealt with explicitly—is a salient demonstration of a teacher's approach to disability in the university setting. The ways accommodations are dealt with in the syllabus offer insight into the larger political complexities of the disability rights movement's fight for institutional accommodations and how this struggle has been taken up by the university.

Accommodations, as Elizabeth F. Emens details in *Keywords for Disability Studies*, has its roots in early civil rights discourse (2015, 18). The concept of accommodations first referred to a process of gradual integration and compromise, a strategy referring to the white supremacist logics of accommodation of the minority by the majority. The term experienced a shift with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), a law that was leveraged for "reasonable accommodations" for disabled people across workplaces and educational institutions alike (19). This concept of accommodation holds the racial capitalist valences of productivity—normatively construed—as a central value that refigures the disabled body toward maximum efficiency and output. Rather than continuing to think of accommodations as simply holding class in a physically accessible classroom or providing more time for exams (which are still elements of access that disabled students must fight for on a daily basis), we ask: what shifts when we imagine our classes as spaces where bodyminds across a range of difference can experience the utmost presence, safety, and respect? Instead of trying to reform the standard academic experience, which asks bodies to conform to so-called universal norms, we dream of building learning spaces that honour and respond to, as Caleb Luna writes, the "awe of what a body can be" (2018).

An accommodations statement most often points disabled students toward an accommodations office where they can register themselves while also perhaps offering vague platitudes about how welcome disabled students should feel.[2] Students are sometimes asked to communicate their access needs directly to the professor or via their accommodations specialist. Either way, accommodation statements hold a legal valence that largely displaces the responsibility for access onto a designated office.

Legal accommodations are a necessary and hard-fought-for mode of access for disabled students that we do not take for granted. However, legal accommodations only scratch the surface of the care networks we dream of building in a more accessible classroom and university environment. Anne-Marie Womack suggests that rather than comprising a fragment of the experience of teaching, "accommodation is the most basic act and art of teaching. It is not the exception we sometimes make in spite of learning, but rather the adaptations we continually make to promote learning"

(2017, 32). Here, Womack puts the *how* of teaching at the centre of its practice, arguing for a classroom that prioritizes the whole of the learning community over the needs of those that already happen to succeed within normative educational conditions. Her conception of accommodations as the constant responsive changes in our teaching that allow us to grow in efficacy as teachers asserts that our classrooms must ever evolve to encompass our students' shifting needs.

The responsibility for crafting accommodations cannot be displaced solely onto disability offices, as there can be significant barriers that prevent students from using these offices' resources. Most significantly, disability offices are often dependent on diagnosis as part of registration, and diagnoses can be burdensome, financially inaccessible, and time-consuming to acquire. This is particularly true for students without health insurance, child care, or transportation or who face other obstacles that prevent just and equitable access to health care. In addition, doctors and their offices are shaped by racism, misogyny, ableism, and fatphobia that often prevents patients of colour, disabled, and/or fat patients from seeking treatment and receiving the quality medical care that is necessary to diagnose and treat a condition in an appropriate and timely manner.

If a diagnosis *is* procured, shame and stigma can follow the coming out necessary to register oneself. The registration process itself is another step that may be inaccessible for spoonies.[3] Registration is a logistically complicated and laborious process, and offices are often understaffed, sometimes taking months to process a request. Finally, it is important to note that registering our disabilities allows them to be tracked, observed, surveilled, and policed.

> I did not register with the Disabled Students' Program in graduate school for multiple reasons. My disability shifted during graduate school, intensifying after I had finished my coursework and was mostly teaching and writing my dissertation. The university struggles with how to conceptualize ABD graduate students' access needs. When I was assigned to teach in a classroom that was inaccessible for me, I was fortunate enough to have a quick response from my department who shifted the room based on my requests. Most departments would not have had the willingness or capacity for such a response. We need a system that takes into account instructors as well as students—that considers our workplace accommodations alongside educational ones. The graduate student workers' union ultimately became a more apt place to fight for my access needs and those of my peers, but most graduate schools lack this resource. In the end, most of my resources for surviving graduate school were cultivated in disability communities and disability culture-centred spaces. (Julia)

Because many of us consider disability an identity and/or a culture, an accommodations office without a space for students to gather in community, learn from one another, share resources, and organize when resources are scarce is not an office built to respond to the fullness of disabled students' needs. Spurred by student activism, disability cultural centres such as the one recently created at UC Berkeley are emerging across academic institutions.[4] In what follows, we consider ways that the syllabus can lay the groundwork for the classroom to be a space where not only academic work but also disability culture can thrive. The performance studies classroom offers an opportunity to interrogate the assumptions present in cultural spaces alongside educational ones and thus is a particularly apt space for these conversations.

While accommodations are the changes teachers make to respond to students' needs within a class, *access* is the preemptive set of tools and strategies instructors use to craft the most inclusive

classrooms possible with the resources and information we have. Access is a political commitment that ideally influences our entire pedagogical process. In their syllabus, Olivia Young incorporates access into what they call a "classroom ethos," a set of values that inform the syllabus as an agreement between teacher and student (see Appendix). Moments in the syllabus that highlight teachers' valuation of access and familiarity with disability culture can serve as powerful sites of solidarity with sick and disabled students, reframing disability as an issue that impacts all students. These moments can also serve as teaching tools for students that have not yet had to (or who have not had the resources to) think deeply about these issues.

Thinking access radically asks us to respond to a wide swath of needs and experiences that can sometimes prevent students' full participation in classroom environments. These needs and experiences can be related to economics, sensory issues, trauma, care of dependents, housing, immigration status, and so on. When setting up a class or event, some common access needs might include varied seating, desks/tables, adapters for different kinds of technology, a microphone, presentation slides, childcare, children's activities, dietary needs, scent-free spaces, ASL interpretation, lighting sensitivity, nonvisual options for visual materials and/or audio describers, wheelchair accessibility, all-gender bathrooms, and armless seating. What else might a body need to participate more fully in your performance studies course?

> During one meeting of a disability and sexuality working group at UC Berkeley, participants went around introducing ourselves and sharing our names, pronouns, and access needs. In response to comments proclaiming, "I don't have any access needs," a friend, Bay Area disability activist Jack Sanders, reminded us that many access needs of nondisabled, neurotypical people are so normalized that they are a "given." They reminded us that needs such as lighting, seating, tables, speaking loudly and clearly enough to be heard by everyone, food, restrooms, and water are all access needs that we collectively benefit from. Every bodymind, no matter their proximity to ablebodiedness and neurotypicality, deserves to have their needs met. (Caleb)

Disability Justice teaches us that our differences can be thought of as resources that create a richer learning environment as opposed to being detriments. Rather than merely building a new statement to be inserted in place of the accommodations statement, we ask readers to consider: What are the values we hold around access in our classrooms? How can our syllabi and pedagogy function as a form of Disability Justice praxis? How can we reimagine classrooms as places where sick, disabled, fat, and all other marginalized bodies can be welcomed in their complexities?

Graduate Students, Instructors, and Professors Are/Become Sick and Disabled Too!

All of us are navigating or have navigated graduate school as sick and disabled people, and during this time, one thing became eminently clear: accommodation concessions in the university are conceptualized almost entirely with the undergraduate student in mind. In our experience, the most common formal accommodations universities offer students are extensions on exams, essays, and assignments. These tools might be helpful to sick and disabled graduate students when in coursework; however, as simultaneous educators and students, the bulk of our labour lies in

teaching, researching, and writing. These commitments fall outside of the purview of accommodation as currently imagined by the university.
In other words, normative conceptions of disability accommodations register a very narrow scope of what it can mean to be disabled in the academy. While these standardized accommodations are important, they clearly fall short of creating a truly accessible environment for undergraduate and graduate students, as well as for instructors and professors. It is important to note that we could also consider graduate school *itself* to be disabling: a job of five to eight years or more, with few benefits or protections, whose high-intensity, productivity-driven work environment often renders students sick and disabled.[5]

From the position of graduate students, who (at least in some institutions) are often tasked with performing the majority of access labour, we want to highlight how much work is involved in creating an accessible classroom. *Access labour is real labour.* Access consultants are a part of an entire specialized field informed by extensive bodies of research. The expectation that graduate students perform all access labour for a class is misplaced. As disabled graduate students and junior faculty, we long for a syllabus that recognizes the complexity of access and strives to integrate it into all aspects of the classroom structure. As teachers, we seek to fill the lack that shaped our experiences as students.

> As a kid with early diagnosed learning disabilities, I was often called on to create the infrastructure to make my learning spaces more accessible. However, it was not until graduate school that I began to process this work as Disability Justice. Up until the authors of this piece first met as a support group, my disability spaces of care as an adult had mostly been cancer support groups. My first care network was a young adult group at the Gathering Place in Cleveland, Ohio, and my second was a morning meditation circle at the Women's Cancer Resource Center in Berkeley, California. Logging onto my weekly Zoom calls with Caleb, Jess, and Julia brought up years of (un)processed grief about friends who had passed away from cancer during my early years of graduate school, my cancer returning during qualifying exams, and my own fear and shame of being chronically ill and neurodivergent while teaching and writing my dissertation. In April of 2020, one month away from graduating with my PhD, I was relieved to find a space where I could share openly about what it felt like to be a disabled student. To me, being crip in a doctoral program felt like a metaphor for my bodymind neurodivergence—a cancer survivor, newly identifying as Autistic, who has multiple learning disorders. I always felt ten steps behind other people's rationalization of my marginalization: brain fog, confusion, and slow and complicated processing. One day, Julia shared with me a reflection that felt like a sentence from a crip mission statement or set of slogans I had forgotten or tucked away somewhere: "People get defensive when you bring up accessibility. They just do. They take expressions of inaccessibility as a moral failing on their part and often react with anger, shame, and blame."
>
> As a graduate student instructor, most of my Disability Justice work was invisible to nondisabled students, faculty, and departments. At the end of each course I instructed, I would often share tears with disabled undergraduates as we collectively expressed grief about how inaccessible learning was on campus. Many shared with me how in our classroom, for the first time, they felt able to show up as their most authentic crip selves. Outside of the classroom, I had to learn over and over again

> the boundary of who was safe to do Disability Justice work with and who was not. My first requests for access, either interpersonally or infrastructurally, were always filled with feelings of grief and nonbelonging. As Julia noted, asking for my access needs in graduate school to be better met often provoked resistance, confusion, and shame in my interlocutors. Right now, my black, queer, disabled, nonbinary, femme practice of processing this fear is writing down the words that my friends share with me every week in our support calls and underlining them in my journal for tender keeping and radical repeating: "I'm at capacity for growth right now." "This is a pro-bragging space!" "I wish I didn't have to make all these decisions about my body." "How much de-adulting does it take to compassionately parent yourself? "Labour looks like getting through the day; it's not legible, but it's real work." "You forget again and think that your current bodymind state is always your bodymind state." "We don't only get more disabled." (Olivia)

Choose Your Own Crip-Venture! Some Questions and Considerations for Access

Below we offer a list of provocations to use while going through your syllabi that have emerged from questions we have asked ourselves about our own access practices. Some of what we articulate derives from crip pedagogy studies, and some from the embodied experiences of teaching disabled students and teaching as disabled professors and instructors. We ask how performance studies as an (un)discipline can push back on academic ableism in ways that further the goals of performance studies as a whole. Readers can go through their syllabi and use these questions as a checklist or explore the list nonlinearly. Reader's choice! However, we also urge readers to consider access more broadly as something deeply embedded in the architecture and theories that inform classroom space. We organized these questions to help reimagine the classroom dynamic from its very conception, beginning at the micro level of course design and moving outwards to end at the structure of the university at large.

COURSE DESIGN

- As we try to figure out what teaching means in the midst of an ongoing pandemic—a mass death and disabling event—how can we build syllabi, classrooms, and a world that strives to be more accessible than previous norms?

The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed discourse on sickness and disability further into mainstream consciousness. During this ongoing health crisis, some people discovered in-person learning was an access need. For others, the possibility to attend class, dance parties, poetry readings, and more from home opened up worlds of possibility for connection. For all of us, the need to live in a world of universal healthcare that simultaneously allows for rest and grief became clear. For those of us who have survived, how do we continue to conceptualize access in a world that is increasingly attempting to force a pre-pandemic "normal" back onto us—a "normal" that fails to consider so many? How can we integrate what we've learned about hybrid and virtual learning in order to take into account the increasing number of students who are sick and disabled? What has the pandemic taught us about our needs and students' needs that we can integrate into our classrooms? Can our syllabi create space for slowness amid ongoing grief, illness, and trauma?

- How are our pedagogy, syllabi, and classroom praxis working against white supremacy culture?

Promoting radical access in the classroom begins with understanding that "access" is intersectional. As Disability Justice activists Patty Berne, David Langstaff, and Aurora Levins Morales note, "We cannot comprehend ableism without grasping its interrelations with heteropatriarchy, white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. Each system benefits from extracting profits and status from the subjugated 'other'" (2015). For example, colonization and racial capitalism produce chronic illness through social and environmental destruction. If we want to make a classroom as supportive as possible to all bodyminds, we must address the ways that the higher education system is hostile not only to fat, sick, and disabled people but also to BIPOC, queer and trans, undocumented, and otherwise marginalized folks.

In her well-circulated article, Tema Okun (1999) identifies a number of values that drive hegemonic white supremacy culture.[6] Unsurprisingly, so many of the values she names also produce ableism in the classroom. For instance, Okun argues that generating a constant sense of urgency is part of white supremacy culture. The dedication to moving quickly at all costs, she argues, perpetuates power imbalances by privileging those who "process information quickly (or think they do)" (Okun 2021, 27) and sacrificing and erasing the "potential of other modes of knowing and wisdom that require more time (embodied, intuitive, spiritual)" (28). These other modes of knowing may be racialized, fugitive, and decolonial, and, building on Okun, they may also be crip. Valuing individual and collective well-being over speed, quantity, and normative ideas of "productivity" works against both white supremacy and ableist culture. How does the often unquestioned commitment to "getting through" a jam-packed syllabus or lesson plan end up creating inaccessible learning spaces?

- How can centring access resist productivity culture while also fostering a deep engagement with course material? What could a more livable syllabus look like? Is the workload of your syllabus disabling?

  The most liveable semester I had during all of grad school thus far was this one semester during coursework, when our professor Trinh T. Minh-ha announced on the first day of class that she was refusing to participate in the racial-capitalist productivity culture of the neoliberal university. Instead, our final paper was a maximum of 1000 words. We read about 100 pages or less a week. We had one class presentation and one small assignment. And guess what? I still learned a lot. Her class is one of the classes I remember the most from coursework. What's more, the fact that one professor refused to replicate the one-book-a-week, multiple assignments, long-final-paper structure of grad courses meant that all of a sudden, I didn't come home every day, do my homework, and crash exhausted and worn out into bed. I had time to do dishes, clean my room, start a love affair, go to the swimming pool. Life was pretty good!

  Every time I've taught undergraduates, it's been patently clear that they are subjected to a system that produces the same feelings that I've felt throughout all grad school: there's too much to humanly do; no matter how hard I work, I feel constantly behind; I'm working myself to the bone. We believe that accessibility at the

> university requires us to do what all of us who seek to resist racial capitalism also need to do: deliberately slow down and plan to do less. Sure, faculty can tell us we need to learn to "manage our time better" or have "more targeted" reading practices. And, yes, there can be value in exposing students to a lot of materials through a "robust" syllabus. But at the end of the day, we need to recognize that the demands of undergraduate and graduate school education in the 2020s are simply too much. As healing justice advocate Cara Page argues, "our movements themselves have to be healing, or there's no point to them" (quoted in Piepzna-Samarasinha 2019a, 97). Similarly, if we are interested in helping to create collective liberation, we need to figure out ways to manifest more healing educational spaces and practices. We need to leave time for students to have a life outside of school, make some art and dance 'til dawn, do some activism, and be part of vibrant, interconnected communities of friendship, mutual aid, and care. (Jess)

- Have you considered opting for a grading contract and other labour-based frameworks for evaluation? This can create less work for both us and students!

Labour-based grading contracts are a form of anti-racist pedagogy that breaks down assessment hierarchies created by grades that disproportionately benefit students with class and educational privilege. Peter Elbow and Jane Danielewicz (2018) and Asao Inoue (2015) are experts on this subject and created templates for this type of anti-grading work.

THE SYLLABUS

As disability, sickness, and impairment are ever-changing, access must be an ever-evolving process rather than an end product. That said, there are small technical changes we can enact to make our syllabi more accessible as documents. For detailed instructions and models of how to restructure our syllabi, see the "Accessible Syllabus" project spearheaded by Anne-Marie Womack (2015). Here are some considerations for this process:

- Is your syllabus formatted in Universal Design?

The principles of Universal Design (UD) are meant to make environments, practices, and materials more widely usable by people with an enormous range of abilities, capacities, and preferences (Centre for Excellence in Universal Design 2020a).[7] Formatting course documents according to UD makes them more accessible for students who use a screenreader as well as for students with learning disabilities. In fact, UD makes documents more searchable and content more easily readable for all students, including nondisabled ones. There are many excellent guides for how to make documents accessible (see, for example, Centre for Excellence in Universal Design 2020a), but it can be helpful to connect with an expert. Your tech accessibility liaison can be an excellent person to start this conversation with if your institution has such a resource.

- Do you have image descriptions?

We include images in this article as a way of gesturing toward the kinds of syllabi we like—ones with different points for access and ones that depart from the dry academese of conventional syllabi. One of the many reasons undergrads tend not to read syllabi closely, we think, is because they are often

overwhelming or intimidating. While images can make syllabi more visually stimulating, they can also be a barrier to access for some. Image descriptions can temper this by translating visual representations into language in order to render them more accessible to blind and visually impaired students. In addition, image descriptions can be excellent examples of what it means to close read images, thereby serving as a way to teach visual analysis. Blind scholar Georgina Kleege (2008) argues that the power of the image description is that it can create a feeling and frame of analysis; Kleege and Scott Wallin (2015) also address the use of audio description as a pedagogic tool.

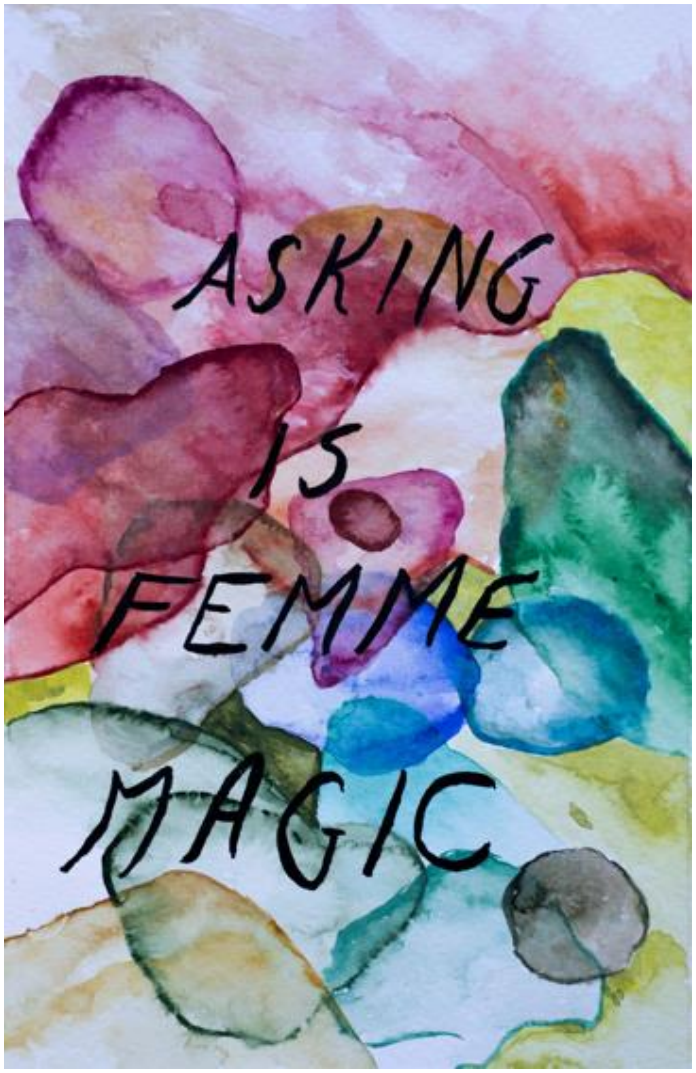

Image Description: A watercolour painting with thin, black, opaque lettering forms the contours of four words vertically aligned on a single letter-size piece of paper. On the page, the slightly italicized uppercase script reads "ASKING IS FEMME MAGIC" and sharply contrasts the colourful, semi-transparent blotches of watercolour that fill the background. Uncontained red and pink paint runs along the top of the image. Below, large stains of maroon, mauve, and deep purple form enclosed, semi-circular formations behind the word "ASKING." Each drop of watercolour grows in texture and density, creating thick rings of rich colour to mark its exterior bounds. The reds overlap large patches of blue, grey, and green, which mark the background of the word "FEMME." Green touches mustard, earthy yellows that sit underneath the word "MAGIC" and traverse to the bottom corners of the image. The result is a series of circular lines that overlap, contrast, and fade into each other, marked most distinctly by the rainbow trail they leave behind the text. This is a watercolour by Jess Dorrance from her in-progress oracle deck of queer-feminist quotes she is making with Chani Bockwinkel. The text is a quote from Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha's poem "Crip Magic Spells" (2019b, 43).

How can our syllabi work less as contractual documents and more as fun resources for learning? Syllabi can be places where instructors are actively doing teaching work by instantiating Disability Justice praxis, citing our intellectual lineages, calling in our ancestors, and performing the kind of academia we want to take part in. There is no one way to do an image description, and we encourage you to be as creative as you want when trying it out for yourself. For examples of what image descriptions could look like, take a look at the ones that accompany the images in this essay.

- Does your attendance policy reflect your pedagogical goals? Have you considered flexible due dates that embrace crip time?

We work to reflect on how attendance policies reflect pedagogical goals of access. As Clare McKinney (2014) suggests, overly strict and inflexible attendance policies may convey to sick and disabled students that their participation is not welcome. What shifts if we consider due dates as suggestions that can be modified with appropriate communication? As academics, we expect that we will miss deadlines and receive extensions in our personal work. Instead of having a default policy of deducting points for late assignments, could we instead ask students to proactively communicate their need for extensions with us and not penalize them if they meet this criterion? This could allow students to practise both identifying their own needs and limits and communicating them responsibly.

- Have you made all readings and assignment-based materials available to students either at the beginning of the semester or far in advance of the assigned due date?

Something as simple as providing materials ahead of time can give students more opportunities to make sure the materials meet their access needs and allows them to open a dialogue with you if they do not. Providing materials ahead of time also benefits students who must be intentional about their time management due to work, care obligations, school activities, and so on—another example of how access for some benefits all.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Is your course assigned to a classroom that has controllable lighting, functioning equipment, fat-accessible seating, and wheelchair accessibility? How can you create an environment that encourages all bodyminds to do what they need to do in order to take care of themselves?

How a classroom is structured functions as (dis)invitations for certain bodyminds and, thus, is important to attend to if we want our classrooms to be as accessible as possible. In addition to the architectural and equipment questions listed in the above bullet point, teachers can promote a more accessible classroom environment by normalizing various human needs and behaviours, for example, stimming, sitting on the floor, stretching, eating and drinking, moving around, and using the restroom when needed. Encourage students to meet their own access needs and emphasize permission is not necessary to do so. When facilitating embodied or somatic exercises, we try to be aware that being present in one's body is not always available for people who have experienced trauma or are sick and disabled, and to think about various methods of offering consent and ways of opting out.

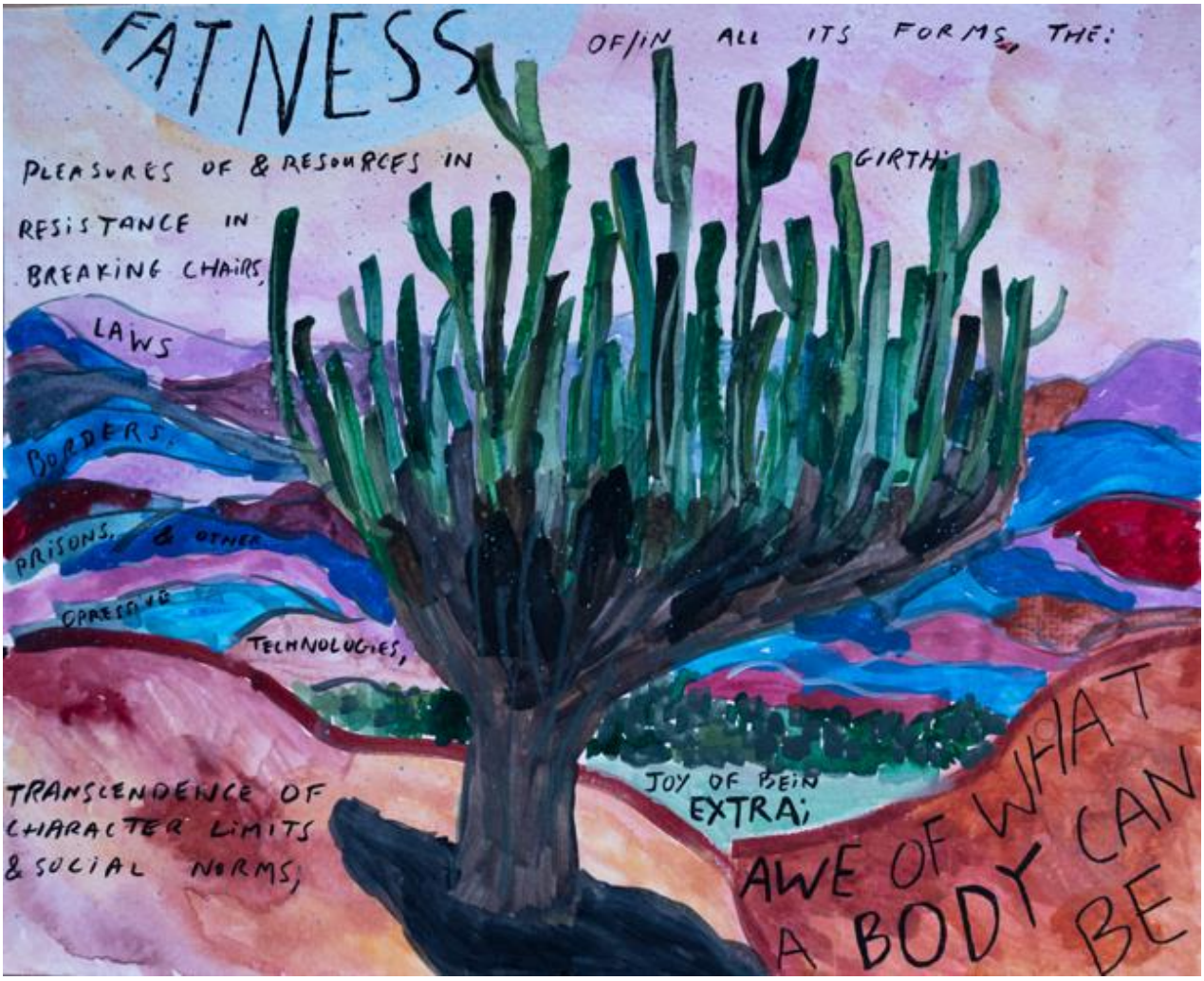

Image Description: A watercolour painting with a quote from Caleb Luna (2018) reads: "fatness of/in all its forms, the: pleasures of & resources in girth; resistance in breaking chairs, laws, borders, prisons & other oppressive technologies; joy of bein extra; transcendence of character limits & social norms; awe of what a body can be." The text is embedded across a desert landscape, the sky painted in muted pink and orange, while the hills are exuberant blues, pinks, and purples that suggest sunset and an emerging night. In the foreground, a vibrant green desert plant resiliently carves out space for itself as it reaches its fingers into the sky. This is a watercolour by Jess Dorrance from her in-progress oracle deck of queer-feminist quotes she is making with Chani Bockwinkel.

> I entered graduate school as fat, disabled, and neurodivergent. As a superfat[8] undergraduate and graduate student, the most commonly encountered barrier to accessing the classroom space is seating. When classrooms, meetings, and trainings are held in auditorium spaces, which often have narrow seats and immovable and containing armrests, and when rooms only have seats with attached desks, these spaces are inaccessible to fat people. Moreover, not all restrooms come with accessible stalls. While I encountered this less regularly at the graduate level, I do not navigate the university with the assumption that I will comfortably fit in any given space. In other words, throughout my experience as a graduate student, I moved with the knowledge that, although I was accepted into graduate school and, by extension, invited to enter this space, I was painfully (sometimes somatically) aware that I was not welcomed.

> Work in the field of fat studies has offered me awareness that this inaccessibility is connected to which bodies are imagined to enter the space of the university—white, straight, ablebodied and -minded cis men that are not fat. Perhaps fat students are less visible because we are accepted to university at lower rates, funnelling us into lives of impoverishment at higher rates.[9] More historically, we can think of the university within the genealogy of Enlightenment thinking that produced white supremacist frameworks of thinness as the product of "rational" thinking and control of the body, imagined to be absent from the impulses of Black and Indigenous people globally, bolstering rationale for enslavement and colonization from the metropole.[10] It is impossible to think of either of these without the context of the higher incidence of fatness in communities of colour and the twinned experience of universities historically and presently remaining inaccessible to students of colour of all sizes and abilities. (Caleb)

- Are your required performances, theatres, and stages physically accessible? Have you organized transportation for those who need it? Do the films and videos you assign have closed captioning?

As performance studies and art history scholars, we are often taught to heroize "the performance" and "the art object" themselves as discrete objects of analysis, but as Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha (2019a, 150) argues, a Disability Justice lens on art-making disrupts this framework, emphasizing that *how* art is created and *which* bodies are able to attend performances or art shows is equally as important as what is on display. A fight for accessibility in the performance studies syllabus is a fight for accessible theatres. We will never create performance worlds built for every body without collective action, and we need every person to leverage their institutional power when they have it.

> My disability progressed over the course of graduate school such that I now need a mobility device to perform some activities like standing, walking, and dancing. Though my graduate department strove to become more accessible over my time there and was met with institutional blocks, I continued to come up against the most basic and frustrating issues like inaccessible stages, theatre houses, and classrooms. The marginalization of disabled students from these inaccessible spaces meant that fewer of the students in performance studies classes were disabled, with most disabled students participating in theatre and dance outside of the department. Being a disabled graduate student puts you in the very challenging middle position of having to advocate for yourself and your students and having to mediate the frustrating failures of administrative bureaucracy, digging through the placating "yeses" to eventually find a well-disguised "not for you" at the bottom of the bullshit barrel.
>
> The physical accessibility of a space is a microcosm. If the space isn't even architecturally accessible, how could it possibly be safe for those with both visible and invisible disabilities? When I look out at an inaccessible space that I am expected to navigate with my ever-changing and unpredictable disabled body with chronic pain, I wince with preemptive nerve pain in my hip for the journey up unexpected stairs. I feel the shame of hypervisibility, of being the only one in the theatre or studio with a visible disability: my limp in the spotlight rather than my teaching. I feel

> the anger of being in a theatre space not built for me and the fury that my disabled students are unwelcome there. I feel tired. (Julia)

- What are your access needs as an instructor?

All teachers have access needs, whether we are sick and/or disabled or are currently mostly ablebodied. Clear boundaries around email response times and office hour availabilities count as access boundaries! By integrating our own access needs into our syllabus, we show our students that it is not shameful to have access needs, and, in doing so, our class becomes more accessible for us too. We strive to take time to identify our access needs and how we might proactively address them and make them explicit in our syllabi. As Sarah Chinn and Ellen Samuels (2014) discuss, being a teacher is not only a powerful position, it is also a vulnerable one. Our performances of disability and disclosures about our identities and capacities are our own, and our choices around how much of ourselves to show our students have rippling implications. This is one aspect of access in the classroom where we truly need wider disability teaching community to debrief, troubleshoot, and hold each other in our complexity.

> As a neurodivergent instructor, I incorporate my own access needs into teaching. This includes setting strict boundaries around communication—notifying my students that I check email once every weekday morning and to manage their expectations around response time accordingly. I also try to be transparent that it may take me longer than other instructors to learn people's names and that I will undoubtedly occasionally call students by the wrong name until the end of semester. I ask students to have patience with me and try to not take these misspeaks personally. Finally, I also ask students to have patience with me around grading. I communicate with them about where I am with grading each assignment, as well as when I expect to have grades returned. This open communication keeps students in the loop, manages their potential anxiety about feedback, and models how to communicate boundaries and access needs as neutral. This process of addressing some of my own access needs as a teacher brings with it an awareness that my needs may conflict with the access needs of a student, which is an honest and regular occurrence within disabled communities. (Caleb)

ACROSS THE UNIVERSITY AT LARGE

- Beyond the syllabus, what infrastructure is required at the level of the university to support current sick and disabled students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels?

> I fell gravely, chronically ill at the end of the fourth year of my graduate work. Too sick to teach or work on my dissertation, I was suddenly entirely without income, and my ability to stay in the US legally was under threat. As an international student, the first messaging I received from the university was essentially to "go home." Whereas all grad students know they will need to move from the site of their PhD work eventually, the idea that a grad student has an alternate "home" to return to belies many assumptions: that the student has some kind of social/kinship security net in their place of citizenship that is safe to rely on; that this net is able to

financially support them while they are unable to earn income, will care for them while sick, and will possibly house them; that the student has enough money and spoons to uproot their life and do an international move; that the student will have enough money and spoons to acquire new health insurance and assemble a new healthcare team in a new setting (and that inevitable lapses of care during this transition will not prove harmful); and that the student does not have meaningful social ties to their place of study (friendships, romantic relationships, housing) they are entitled to preserve and draw upon while dealing with a serious health crisis. At UC Berkeley, I was allowed to be on medical withdrawal and remain in the country for up to one academic year, and this possibility only emerged after a great deal of advocacy. After this year, I needed to either be a full-time registered student or leave the country.

Meaningful access accommodations at this time would have included financial support while being ill, the ability to remain in the country and preserve health insurance and care while ill, and a disability office that actually understood the specificities of being a graduate student and an international graduate student. Like everyone at some point in their lives, (international) graduate students become sick and disabled! This experience revealed to me that the second I was unable to teach, I lost all support, both materially and legally. Though I am grateful for the meaningful support of certain individuals in the university's bureaucracy that I have worked with during this crisis, on a structural level, I was made to feel like I was the only international grad student ever to be in this situation, which of course cannot be true. No one knew what to do with me or how to help. I was given tons of information that, months or years later, turned out not to be fully accurate and turned out to be biased in favour of protecting bureaucratic priorities. In the throes of extreme bodily disarray, which included a huge amount of brain fog that compromised my ability to function cognitively, I was forced to spend hours and hours contacting different university offices in a desperate attempt to simply stay in my home and keep my supportive community, therapist, healthcare team, long-term girlfriend, etc., while incredibly ill. There was little support around how to make the system work for me in this time of crisis. Instead, the system strove over and over to push me out and, effectively, to punish me for getting sick.

What would a university system look like that acknowledged that the ability to undertake ablebodied, uninterrupted full-time work for six to eight years is an anomaly and not the rule? All people deserve the right to be nonfunctional for periods of time without the threat of immediate material precarity and social and physical displacement. As Sunny Taylor (2004) argues, all people deserve the right not to work: to not have our value and stability determined by our ability to perform wage labour.[11] We deserve the right to be supported and maintain our place in our communities regardless of whether or not we have the ability to hold down a paid job or choose to do so. (Jess)

- Have you built community and networks around access work? Have you asked for help?

Wow, this seems like a lot of work, you might say! It is. It really, really is. Many of these tasks are labour-intensive and therefore are often overlooked or side-stepped in course design. We approach this work as a routine practice that spans our teaching careers, and we try to build relationships of collaborative exchange in the process.

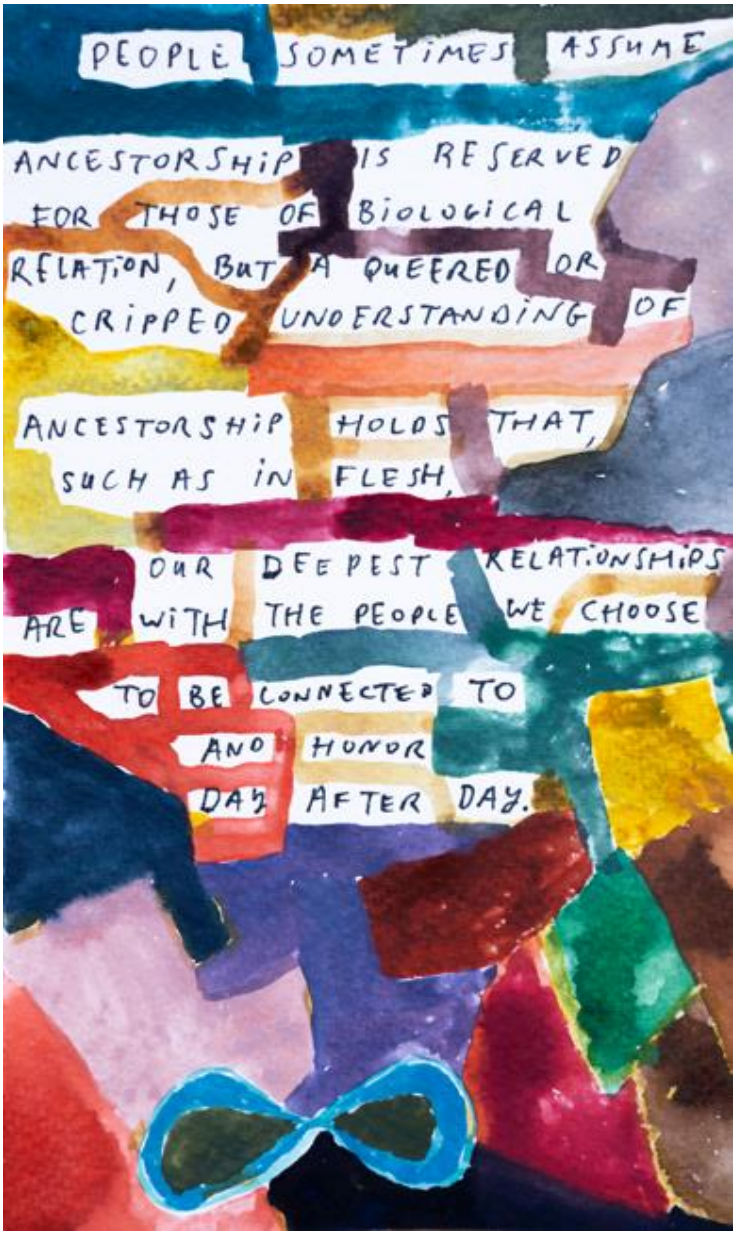

Image Description: This is a watercolour painting with a quote from Stacey Milburn (2019) that reads: "People sometimes assume ancestorship is reserved for those of biological relation, but a queered or cripped understanding of ancestorship holds that, such as in flesh, our deepest relationships are with people we choose to be connected to and honor day after day." The text is set off against abstract geometric shapes that in some places bleed together and in others stand in stark contrast. The shapes are filled with liquid jewel tones that seem to quiver and sparkle from the watery texture of small brush strokes. The shapes flow down the page, resting at the bottom in an infinity symbol. This is a watercolour by Jess Dorrance from her in-progress oracle deck of queer-feminist quotes she is making with Chani Bockwinkel.

Ask for help! Set limits based on your own capacity for labour. If you don't know the answer, consult an expert! This offers a great opportunity to resist white supremacist cultural norms of individualism and bootstrapping and returns us to Disability Justice values of interdependence. We have benefited from creating collaborative work sessions with our colleagues to make our class materials accessible and share the access labour. Other things we have tried include teaching access while creating it for our classrooms; having one group of students audio describe a performance while another group captions it; sharing the work of making our pdfs accessible with a coworker who assigns the same texts; applying for a grant to fund an access consultant for a show or class; and creating an environment where cultivating communal access is embedded in classroom culture.

This work is not easy, simple, or fast. Take it slow. Every semester, we aim to establish more forms of accessibility in our classrooms. In performance studies, when we ask for the complex and radical work that is students bringing their whole bodyminds into the space of the classroom, we must put greater emphasis on making sure that when students meet us in this ask, their whole selves are as welcome as possible. If the classroom or class material is inaccessible to one student, it is inaccessible, period, and needs to be cancelled, rescheduled, or reformatted. Though universal accessibility is impossible to achieve because access needs contradict and fluctuate, consider the fact that when we decide not to provide access in some of the straightforward modes listed above, we are dictating who belongs or doesn't belong in the classroom space. Disability Justice means we move forward together, or we don't move forward at all.

These questions just graze the surface of what access in the syllabus could look like. What are further creative strategies we can dream of to make our syllabi, classrooms, and the university more accessible?

Acknowledgment

Thank you to the special issue editors for giving us the space to think and write about this topic. Thank you to all the sick and disabled folk out here in the university and our wider communities. We see you and are so glad for your presence and solidarity. Thank you to all our sick and disabled ancestors who have taught us so much and forged the paths for us to be who we are today.

Notes

1. For the tiniest sliver of this lineage, see works by Jina B. Kim, Moya Bailey, Eli Clare, Mel Chen, Tobin Siebers, Cam Awkward Rich, Sins Invalid, and many more!

2. Here is a relatively standard example of an accommodations statement: "Students with Disabilities: Your access in this course is important to me. Please request your accommodation letter early in the semester, or as soon as you become registered with SDS, so that we have adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodations." Student Disability Services (2022).

3. The term "spoonies" emerged out of "Spoon Theory," created by Christine Miserandino (2013) and refers to the limitations on time, energy, and capacity experienced by sick and disabled people.

4. Alice Wong interviews student leader Alena Morales on the importance of building disability cultural spaces at university campuses in her Disability Visibility Project (Wong 2021).

5. See, for instance, Puri (2019).

6. Okun (2022) updates and reflects on the history of the circulation of the original article, first published in 1999. Okun also recently launched a beautiful website: https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/.

7. See Hamraie (2017) for a discussion of the history of Universal Design and disability politics.

8. Superfat is one designation among many within fat communities to highlight the fat experience as a spectrum and locate ourselves within this spectrum. I am referring to the scale devised by Ash of the Fat Lip Podcast, which indexes small fat, mid fat, superfat, and infinifat as subcategories within the fat experience that bring their own unique proximities to privilege and oppression.

9. See Ernsberger (2009).

10. See Strings (2019).

11. As Sunny Taylor (2004) argues, "Disabled people are brought up with the same cultural ideals and ambitions and dreams as their able-bodied counterparts; we too are indoctrinated to fetishize work and romanticize career and to see the performance of wage labor as the ultimate freedom. Shouldn't we, of all groups, recognize that it is not work that would liberate us . . . but the right to not work and be proud of it?"

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Appendix

HART 352: Black Contemporary Art: Speculative (un)Making

Dr. Olivia K. Young (they/them)
Department of Art History and The Center for African & African American Studies
Rice University, Fall 2021

Visual Description of the Professor: I am a black, lightly melanated, queer, non-binary, disabled femme. I have thick, curly brown, shoulder-length hair with bangs. I sometimes wear large, round, silver-framed glasses.

Image Description: In the direct center of the photograph, a camera lens points out towards the viewer. The camera covers parts of two bodies, both nude, one facing out towards the viewer, the other, arms wrapped around and behind the first. The dark brown skin of the man holding the camera up against his face, fades into the black background at the bottom left edge of the image. His exposed chest and arms are visible, covered only by the arms of the other person whose body comes from behind, presses against his, wraps one arm securely around his neck and the other gently around his face. This person, whose medium-toned skin brightens with contact with light coming from the left, turns their head away from the viewer and hides behind the head of the man staring directly outward through the lens of the camera. Their hair, a loosely formed fro, fades into the black of the background at the top left-hand corner of the image. Flecks and smudges across the ground of the photograph expose another surface of touch: a mirror raveled with the capture of the camera. The photograph cuts both bodies off above the waist but gives the impression of a seated position and a posturing of a more intimate stance. The black background wrinkles a bit in the light, revealing itself as a thick cloth hung intentionally behind them. The keen lines of skin against cloth become a second center of the image—blurred and slightly out of focus. These disconnected semi-vertical lines, emerging from contrast, run up the image and cut the photograph in disproportionate halves—tangled bodies on the right and vacant, emptied yet flowing blackened background on the left. Paul Mpagi Sepuya, *Darkroom Mirror (_2070386),* 2017. Acrylic pigment print, 32 x 24 in.

Access & Resources

Class Ethos:

Decolonizing Language: In this class, we support each other in the careful work of removing colonial, ableist, racist and binary language from our writing and speech. What does this look like? How can we support each other in this?

Decolonizing Learning Practices: We nurture out of each other the disciplined practice of capitalist productivity and logic-based homework and instead center collective learning, joy-based lessons, and consensual work practices. What does this mean and how can we begin doing this work?

> If students are interested, I will hold a group reading hour where students can come together and read assignments once a week. Collectively reading can sometimes strengthen memories of terms and concepts and help disburse the stress of completing homework assignments.
>
> Additionally, this class does not have an attendance policy. I teach because this is part of the work I want to do in the world. I trust your ability to care for your schedules and hope you will join me every week in class as we learn and build something together this semester.

Deconstructing Gender Binaries: We work toward understanding that not everyone in this class identifies their gender within the binary of male/female.

> In this class, we work to remove gender-based language from our conversations. This can look like replacing gendered terms with expansive language such as "everyone", "people", "human" and "y'all." This helps us to avoid gendering the classroom and misgendering any student in the classroom.
>
> Sometimes misgendering happens but was not intended to cause harm. If we misgender someone, we apologize, correctly gender them and continue on with the conversation.

Access and Disability: Everyone has access needs! These are the resources or support structures that make accessing a space possible. However, not all access needs are built into the environment of our classroom. Additionally, our access needs can change day-to-day.

> At the beginning of each class, we will go around and share our access needs of the day. This is done so I can work to abundantly meet your needs throughout the semester. If you have access needs that might need advanced planning, you can get in touch with me via email or talk with me before or after class.

Flexible Due Dates for ALL Assignments: All assignments are due virtually in canvas on Wednesday; however, as long as you turn the assignment in by Friday at midnight of the same week, it will be counted as on-time. Please note that canvas might report the assignment as late until I go in manually and report it as on time.

Fragrance-Free Classroom: This is a low-to-no fragrance space. Please avoid putting on fragranced lotions, body sprays, perfumes, colognes, or hair products in class or directly before class. This also includes using only fragrance-free hand sanitizer.

> Attached to this syllabus is a resource written by disability scholar Alison Kafer, Associate Professor at The University of Texas at Austin, entitled "How and Why to be Scent Free."

Campus Disability Resources: The Disability Resource Center is located at Allen Center, Room 111, and can be reached via email at adarice@rice.edu, via phone at 713-348-5841, and at https://drc.rice.edu/. I will work directly with the Disability Resource Center to make my classroom, my lesson plans, my teaching, and my assignments accessible to everyone. This class does not have exams, but I will work with each students' accommodation plan to expand access measures to all assignments.

Learn more about what modes of access are available to you:
Campus Access: https://drc.rice.edu/campus-access
Technology-based Access: https://drc.rice.edu/students#Adaptive

Plagiarism and Rice's Honor Code

Contemporary artist Indira Allegra writes in a collection of 'ethos' on their website:

> "Poaching creative ideas from studio assistants, students, lesser known or marginalized artists is an act of colonialism."

Find their full artist statement here: https://www.indiraallegra.com/about

Decolonizing the writing and testing process is first and foremost the responsibility of the professor— to, first, formulate assignments that remind students of their creative potential and, second, teach students how to cultivate their own opinions rather than rely on the words of others. In this class, we will do just that.

After that, it is each student's responsibility to decolonize their own writing process. Do not appropriate the words, ideas, creative moves, or suggested frameworks of other people. Citations can be a radical form of collective activism. Cite the people who inspire you properly. Build an archive for others who read your work.

Always consider who you cite and why. You can find information on the Cite Black Women Collective here: https://www.citeblackwomencollective.org/ and in the "File" tab in our canvas classroom.[1]

Rice University has strict guidelines regarding plagiarism including but not limited to failure of assignments, failure of the course, suspension and expulsion. Read more about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, as well as Rice's policies, here:
https://gpsdocs.rice.edu/orientation/Plagiarism_Hewitt_document.pdf

In this class, you can refer to any source, including the required text, posted notes, your own notes, texts not assigned in class, or people not in this class, such as conversations with others, seminars or artist's talks, as long as you properly cite any and all information using Chicago Manual of Style format.

If you have any questions about the Honor Code for this class, or are wondering if a certain course of action is acceptable, please send me an email before assuming anything.

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[1] Gratitude to Dr. Victoria Massie in the Department of Anthropology at Rice University for sharing the resource "Cite Black Women: A Critical Praxis (A Statement)" with me so that I am able to share it with you! You can find this statement in the "File" tab of our shared Canvas classroom

Performativity, Possibility, and Land Acknowledgments in Academia: Community-Engaged Work as Decolonial Praxis in the COVID-19 Context

Sammy Roth and Tria Blu Wakpa

[We][1] acknowledge the Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (Los Angeles basin, So. Channel Islands) and are grateful to have the opportunity to work for the taraaxatom (indigenous peoples) in this place. As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahiihirom (Elders), and 'eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging.

—UCLA American Indian Studies Center

Liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of [people][2] upon their world in order to transform it.

—Paulo Freire

At the intersection of dance, performance, and Indigenous studies, this co-written article reflects on how an assistant professor at the University of California, Los Angeles—with the support of a graduate student researcher—has aimed to put an Indigenous land acknowledgment into praxis through community-engaged work within and beyond the COVID-19 context. Community-engaged work typically seeks to counter academia's historically extractive methods by nurturing reciprocal relations with off-campus community partners (Mahoney et al. 2021; Wallerstein and Duran 2017). Regarding land acknowledgments, Harmeet Kaur writes, "While Indigenous peoples have practiced land acknowledgments for generations, [']Westerners['] have adopted the custom relatively recently as they attempt to reckon with the harms brought on by colonization. Land acknowledgments are now routine in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, and are becoming increasingly prevalent in progressive spaces in the U.S." (Kaur 2021).[3]

At least several US universities, research centres, departments, and/or programs have recently adopted Indigenous land acknowledgments. In academic settings, land acknowledgments are often given prior to an event and/or may circulate on written materials, such as event programs, syllabi, letterhead, departmental and centre websites, and email signatures. These statements typically identify the Indigenous peoples whose land the university currently occupies and *should* be created in collaboration with Indigenous leaders from the tribe(s) who have often cared for that land since time immemorial. Universities sometimes invite Indigenous leaders to give land acknowledgments prior to events as well and may—read *should*—compensate them with honoraria for their expertise, time, and travel. Indigenous land acknowledgments can be important because they directly combat the injustice of settler-capitalist (Speed 2019), mainstream discourses, which often obscure Indigenous peoples and practices and/or relegate them to the historical past.[4] In other words, by bringing visibility to Indigenous peoples in the present day, Indigenous land acknowledgments can be a critical first step towards decolonization.

Sammy Roth is a dance artist and PhD candidate in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at UCLA. **Tria Blu Wakpa** is an assistant professor of dance studies in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at UCLA.

Yet, Indigenous people and Indigenous studies scholars have also critiqued non-Native land acknowledgments as "performative" (Robinson et al. 2019; Wark 2021; Kaur 2021; Wood 2021).[5] That is, without direct material benefits to Indigenous peoples, land acknowledgments can serve as empty gestures that "perform" university commitments to anti-racism, equity, diversity, and inclusion. In the context of this critique, "performative" and "perform" have negative connotations. Such "performativity" of land acknowledgments in university settings has led Dylan Robinson to "[propose], paradoxically, . . . that we decolonize acknowledgement—or more exactly what acknowledgement has become—in its formalization, bureaucratization, and rote presentation" (Robinson et al. 2019, 22).

In contrast to mainstream uses of "the performative" as an empty gesture, the fields of performance and dance studies frequently theorize "performativity" as a material action in the world, which can function both hegemonically and subversively (Austin 1975; Derrida 1988; Butler 1990; McKenzie 2001). Indeed, regarding the possibilities of land acknowledgments from a performance studies lens, Selena Couture has articulated, "This is key to land acknowledgements—they should not be about performing anti-racist declarations regarding the self; instead, they need to be an intervention in the way the world has been shaped through colonial policies" (Robinson et al. 2019, 28). Couture's suggestion offers the possibility of aligning non-Native land acknowledgments more closely with the long-standing Indigenous practice, which Mishuana Goeman has described as building "anti-colonial networks" that combat the destruction of relational epistemologies by positioning speakers in a "lived relation requiring responsibility" (2020, 57).

In this article, we build on these scholars' articulations of land acknowledgments as ongoing actions. Specifically, we take up Robinson's suggestion of approaching land acknowledgments as "an honest acknowledgement of how much decolonizing work [we] have done over the past month or past year" (Robinson et al. 2019, 21), while recognizing this work as an ongoing *process* which can always be strengthened in a predominantly settler-capitalist society and institution whose very structures obscure and subordinate Indigenous people(s).[6] We are in the University of California, Los Angeles's Department of World Arts Cultures/Dance. Sammy Roth is a White settler scholar pursuing her PhD in culture and performance, whose research focuses on the intersections of popular performance, White settler violence, and new media technologies. Of Filipino, European, and tribally-unenrolled Native American ancestries, Tria Blu Wakpa is an assistant professor in dance studies whose research often collaborates with Indigenous people and communities, uses decolonizing methodologies, and analyzes how movement modes—such as dance, theatrical productions, athletics, martial arts, and yoga—navigate the confines of social structures and institutions.

We met in Winter 2020 when Roth took the "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course created by Blu Wakpa. Subsequently, Roth began working as Blu Wakpa's graduate student researcher, which she has done for a total of eight quarters. Additionally, in Summer 2020, Blu Wakpa acted as Roth's mentor for a university program in which graduate students conduct research for their dissertation with the support of a faculty member and has continued to support Roth's work. In part because of Roth's sustained support with Blu Wakpa's work, and in particular Blu Wakpa's community-engaged work with California tribal people(s), Blu Wakpa offered to co-write an article with Roth as an expression of her gratitude and a continuation of their mentor-mentee relationship. While this article could be conceived of as "performative" in the negative sense because we may professionally and personally benefit from publicizing our process and publishing this academic article, we believe that sharing our process further combats "colonial unknowing"

(Goeman 2020, 52–53) by providing one model for moving beyond the land acknowledgment as a superficial statement.

Some versions of the UCLA land acknowledgment imply a commitment to implementing the land acknowledgment beyond the "performative," understood as an empty gesture. This version reads, "we are grateful to work for the taraaxatom (indigenous peoples) in this place" (UCLA American Indian Studies Center). Like Goeman's description of the Indigenous practice of "land introductions"—rather than a "land acknowledgment" —this language "moves us forward into a relationship of accountability and gain" (Goeman 2020, 56). Such a framing of the practice, which is grounded in place and positionality, then directs us toward a decolonial "praxis"—or, in the words of Paulo Freire, "the action and reflection of [people] upon their world in order to transform it" (Freire 2005, 79).

Specifically, we argue that community-engaged research, teaching, and service, which we view holistically, are key ways to begin or further the process of putting a university's land acknowledgment into action. While this thesis may seem obvious to some, it will certainly *not* be self-evident to all. Land acknowledgments are often created—or *should* be created—in collaboration with the Indigenous people(s) whose lands a university currently occupies, and a single department or centre (often American Indian, Native American, or Ethnic studies) may take on the majority or even the entirety of this community-engaged work. However, if the university then adopts a land acknowledgment at the institutional level, this can obscure the specific context from which the statement arose and the necessities of relationship building and redistributing "resources."[7] Without relationships and action, land acknowledgments can certainly operate as superficial statements.

The process by which universities adopt and implement land acknowledgments is often not available in the public sphere. This is perhaps because, as we have described, land acknowledgments are contested for several reasons, including acting as empty gestures (Kaur 2021). Describing the process of writing and implementing a land acknowledgment can also open up institutions and individuals to more critique, which many seek to avoid, particularly in the context of contemporary "call-out culture." However, receiving criticism for such work is virtually inevitable due to: 1) the limitations that settler-capitalist structures and institutions impose; 2) multiple and conflicting conversations in and beyond academia about the meaning of "decolonial" action and its best practices; and 3) the potential for misreading fluid actions that can be interpreted in different ways, especially by those lacking contextual awareness, which may not be disclosed for a number of reasons, including protecting Indigenous communities. There may also be a dearth of scholarship at the convergence of land acknowledgments and community-engaged work because Native peoples are not a monolith, and there is *not*—nor should there be—a one-size-fits-all approach (Robinson et al. 2019, 22). Further, the collaborations between faculty and the Indigenous peoples whose land the university occupies should be understood as a sustained and ongoing process.[8] Most of the existing literature about land acknowledgments instead describes these statements, the Indigenous and settler colonial contexts from which they emerge, their purposes and limitations, and how to perform them in a way that is largely disconnected from the praxis and process of enduring community-engaged work with Indigenous people (Asher et al. 2018; Robinson et al. 2019; Goeman 2020; Robinson 2020; Wark 2021).

We depart from such scholarship by delineating some of the work we did with Indigenous community partners throughout the 2020–21 academic year and foreground the ways that we utilized flexibility in our decolonial praxis, both by choice and out of necessity. In the next section,

we situate community-engaged work in the academy within longer histories of anti-colonial and decolonial praxes, describe our decolonial approach to community-engaged work, and provide a caveat on doing community-engaged work with Indigenous people(s). Then, we discuss the value of flexibility in nurturing good relationships with Indigenous people(s) and navigating settler-capitalist structures. Following this, we describe some of the decolonial work we have been doing in collaboration with California tribal people(s), which has provided a strong foundation for our community-engaged work to continue and develop. We close with a short reflection on how we hope to further this work in the future and the ongoing constraints leveled against those liberatory dreams.

A Decolonial Praxis of Community-Engaged Work

Our process of putting UCLA's land acknowledgment into action is made possible by the community-engaged work of visionaries who came before us. Scholars have described community-engaged research emerging in a variety of disciplinary contexts under several different terms, such as participatory action research, community-based participatory research, collaborative action research, and so on (Warren 2018; Flores et al.; Wallerstein and Duran 2017, 27–29); many have also identified a strain of this broad category emerging through internationalist, anti-oppressive politics of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Mahoney et al. 2021, 12; Flores et al. 2020; Wallerstein and Duran 2017, 27–29). Yep and Mitchell trace the origins of community-engaged pedagogy in the US to the 1968 Third World Liberation Front and the emergence of Ethnic studies in the California Bay Area (2017). The Third World Liberation Front was a "broad coalition of African American, Asian American, Chicana/o, Latina/o, Native American and white students," who were "inspired by anti-colonial movements in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America" (Yep and Mitchell 2017, 294). As Yep and Mitchell write, "organizing under the umbrella of 'to serve the people,' ethnic studies offered some of the first courses with political engagement that centered community and indigenous knowledges, ontologies, cosmologies, and epistemologies" (2017, 294). Following this push for research models aimed toward liberation, community-engaged pedagogy has brought community-engaged research into the classroom, often for the explicit purpose of supporting students to become more civically engaged (Rubin et al. 2012). Additionally, community-engaged research has been described as a particularly apt approach for conducting decolonizing research with Indigenous communities due to shared values of reciprocity, respect, and challenging Eurocentric knowledge hierarchies (Smith 2013, 125; Gaudry 2015; Mahoney et al. 2021, 12).

Building on this legacy, a decolonial praxis of community-engaged work can holistically integrate the categories of research, teaching, and service, which are the three primary criteria used to evaluate faculty. When these categories are perceived hierarchically, with research prioritized over teaching and service (Schimanski and Alperin 2018), it can particularly disadvantage faculty of colour and women who bear disproportionate service burdens (Social Sciences Feminist Network Research Interest Group 2017). In contrast, like the decolonial possibilities of land acknowledgments in university settings, community-engaged research and teaching can challenge settler colonial discourses by illuminating the contemporary presence of Indigenous people(s) as well as their knowledges and ongoing struggles for sovereignty. Such holistic work could then be understood as a form of "service" that counters settler colonial structures and discourses. Further, community-engaged research and teaching can also be conceived of as "service"[9] when they leverage university "resources"[10]—such as the university's prestige and its platforms, faculty and student labour, and funding in the form of honoraria—to support and strengthen off-campus individuals and

communities and further the projects that matter to them. At the same time, it is critical to recognize that providing "honoraria" for Indigenous people is no substitute for a living wage and structural change, including working toward more Indigenous faculty and students, who remain severely underrepresented groups (Tippeconnic Fox 2005, 51).

We specify our praxis as "decolonial" because far too often, Indigenous people(s) are excluded from discussions of collective "liberation," and even more specifically, "decolonization" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 2–3, 19, 21). In the context of this article and our community-engaged work, we define "decolonial" as collaborating with Indigenous peoples and centring them and their practices, acknowledging ongoing Indigenous sovereignty while working to shift power dynamics and the distribution of "resources" (including returning land)—which is inextricable from securing Indigenous futures (Wolfe 2016, 387)—and challenging longstanding, settler-capitalist, academic conventions and hierarchies. In this co-written article, we particularly strive to combat academic conventions and hierarchies, at times field-specific, through methodology and subject matter. For instance, in dance studies, unlike some other fields, it is atypical for a graduate student and professor to co-write an article. This is perhaps because, at least at some universities, co-written articles are worth significantly less than individually authored ones in terms of their value for promotion and tenure. Further, given settler colonial and institutional hierarchies, graduate student knowledge can be devalued and/or under-supported in academia (Patterson 2016).

In co-writing this article, we have made deliberate choices to counter norms in dance studies by engaging in the collective process of knowledge production from our respective positions and seeking to reduce power differentials. For example, our writing process has entailed multiple brainstorming sessions, writing and editing each other's work, dividing labour according to our skill sets, experience, and expertise, and explicitly making the least senior person who could benefit most from the publication, Roth, the first author. In this article, we also intentionally refer to the work Blu Wakpa initiated and undertakes with California tribal people(s) as "our work," because Roth's labour as Blu Wakpa's graduate student researcher has been vital in supporting this process, including relationship building with our California tribal community partners. Conceiving of this work as communal also supports our intentions to counter academic conventions, which promote possessive logics and individualize knowledge production (Smith 2013). Conversely, we maintain that knowledge is always created in relationship to humans and more-than-humans.

As a part of our decolonial praxis, we are explicitly sharing our process and opening it up for critique, knowing that others may adapt, expand, and refine this work. *Although we believe that decolonial work is for everyone, not everyone is for decolonial work*. For instance, not all university faculty will have the skill set, political and ethical commitments, or time to do community-engaged work with Indigenous people in a good way (Risling Baldy 2018, 23–24). Community-engaged work can often be more time-consuming than hegemonic approaches to research, teaching, and service in the academy (Jacquez 2014). Considering the at times vexed relationship between Indigenous people(s) and universities who occupy their land and at times imprison thousands of their ancestors (Public Affairs 2021),[11] community-engaged work must be handled with the highest standards of ethics, professionalism, and care, including cultural sensitivity. For this reason, we recommend a "start from where you are" approach to decolonial praxis (brown and Sheppard 2021). This could include the first steps, as Goeman describes, of "knowing your positionality and holding yourself accountable" (2020, 37) and learning the names of the Indigenous peoples on whose land you live and work. Importantly, to move beyond the negative connotations of the "performative," initial steps also

come with a responsibility to share this information with your community, including relatives, friends, colleagues, and, if you are an educator, your students.

Flyer from "California Tribal Dances Gathering," a 2021 public presentation planned in collaboration with and featuring our community partners. Photo provided by Deborah Sanchez; flyer created by Roth.

Before drafting this article, we asked for and were granted permission from the California tribal individuals and representatives with whom we work to write about our experiences collaborating with them. Due to historically extractive relationships between scholars and Indigenous peoples, as well as the critical intervention of a politics of "refusal" (Simpson 2014), asking for and receiving permission multiple times throughout our process has been an indispensable part of our decolonial praxis. In addition to requesting permission to write this paper, we have sought our community partners' informed consent for initially sharing their contact information with Roth, the language we used (including listing partners' names and tribal affiliations) in various materials—such as grant and course proposals, syllabi, promotional materials, and this paper—and our continued collaborations. Requesting permission throughout this process has added another safeguard against pervasive "colonial unknowing" (Goeman 2020, 52–53), which can mean that non-Natives are at times unaware of the ways in which their well-intentioned efforts may perpetuate colonial harms (Tuck and Yang 2012). In fact, perhaps the first step in flexibility as it pertains to decolonial praxis and land acknowledgments in university settings is recognizing that the Indigenous people(s) whose land your institution occupies may not want to undertake community-engaged work with you for whatever reason. If this is the case, you should respectfully accept their self-determination.

The ongoing dynamics of such "colonial unknowing" extend to our field of dance studies, in which Eurocentric bias has often led scholars to overemphasize "Western" concert dance and on-stage performances and to overlook Native American dance and how Native American pedagogy can inform dance studies, though there are notable exceptions (Shea Murphy 2007, 2017; Johnson and Recollet 2020). In contrast, several of the Indigenous community partners with whom we work often dance in Native and non-Native community settings. Additionally, there has been relatively little work at the intersection of dance studies and decolonial, community-engaged work in the academy (Loots 2021). Yet, the foundational principle for our field—that dance is valuable knowledge—is uniquely suited for decolonial praxis. This is because, unlike almost all fields, a primary methodology in dance studies, "choreographic analysis," conducts close readings of bodies and their movements, including kinesthetic experiences. That is, we read the connotations of bodies and their movements in a performance akin to how scholars might analyze a poem. Such an approach combats the Eurocentric construct of Cartesian dualism, which views the mind as separate from and superior to the "body." Given the challenges of physical distancing and online teaching and learning in the COVID-19 context, then, this article also suggests that dance studies can further "destabilize Eurocentric academic and pedagogical norms, which are reinforced during remote learning" (Shaffer 2022), by attuning us to bodily knowledge even when sitting still in front of a screen. In the next section, we discuss how flexibility—a form of bodily knowledge—can be a key tool for decolonial community-engaged work.

The Value of Flexibility in Decolonial Community-Engaged Work

Although flexibility as a commitment to change or accommodation can be understood as interlocking with reciprocity, which many Indigenous studies scholars have highlighted as necessary for decolonial, community-engaged work (Smith 2013; Mithlo 2012; Wilson 2008), we believe it is worth highlighting flexibility separately. We imagine that as universities continue to adopt land acknowledgments, more academics will consider the importance of conducting community-engaged, reciprocal, and sustained work with Indigenous communities beyond the mainstream, negative connotations of the "performative" (Barajas 2022). Yet, because of the fluidity of overlapping social structures, settler colonial strategies and decolonial tactics are not dichotomous but rather entangled and can even be contradictory (Blu Wakpa 2021; Robinson et al. 2019). This illustrates the challenges of resistance within dominant social structures and institutions in which false binaries—such as claims that land acknowledgments are only "performative" in the negative sense or "superficial" (Wood 2021)—can discourage people from decolonial modes of resistance with vital material benefits for groups who are structurally marginalized. In fact, writing about the need for an expanded repertoire of activist tactics within oppressive infrastructures, Keller Easterling notes, "righteous ultimatums or binaries of enemies and innocents that offer only collusion or refusal might present a structural obstacle greater than any quasi-mythical opponent" (2014). Relatedly, Selena Couture emphasizes, "educational settings are not neutral; they are actually central to the history of violence and exclusion of Indigenous people" (Robinson et al. 2019, 28); yet she also underscores that land acknowledgments in university settings can have decolonial possibilities that challenge and expose hegemonic power structures.

Given the entanglement of settler colonial strategies and decolonial tactics, we have found that being flexible in our praxis without succumbing to reductive binaries has increased opportunities for decolonial community-engaged work. For example, applying for university grants to conduct community-engaged work with Indigenous peoples could also be critiqued as reifying the settler-

capitalist system. Yet, building on Easterling's and Couture's observations and our experiences doing decolonial work, we offer that mobilizing funding from universities and philanthropic organizations for community-engaged work with Indigenous peoples can be used tactically and critically while working toward structural change.

Leveraging academia's shifting policies and politics for decolonial ends also requires contending with the ways that flexibility can be demanded by oppressive systems for hegemonic aims. For instance, as Anusha Kedhar has identified, institutions can exploit individuals by forcing them to be flexible, and they often impose increased demands for flexibility on people who are the most impacted by structural oppression (2020). Conversely, individuals working for these institutions have not always received the same flexibility in return. This is perhaps especially evident in the COVID-19 context, which, for instance, has required that faculty, instructors, students, and staff be flexible in adapting to online learning. At least some universities have unethically denied accommodations to individuals who are/were facing life-and-death circumstances (Hammontree 2021). In other words, these institutions refused to be flexible with the individuals willing—or coerced—to be flexible for them.

Flyer from "Powwow in the California Native Context," a 2021 public presentation in Blu Wakpa's "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course, planned in collaboration with and featuring some of our community partners. Photos provided by Tina and Jessa Calderon and Deborah Sanchez; flyer created by Roth.

Flexibility as a counter-tactic (Kedhar 2020) has been indispensable for us in building good relationships with community partners, which requires recognizing that Indigenous people(s) will have other commitments and priorities that at times trump their work with university faculty, staff, and students. This has been especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted Native American communities (Givens 2020; Morales 2020; Power et al. 2020). The inordinate spread of COVID-19 to Indigenous communities due to the US government's neglect is situated within a long history of genocidal colonial violence, which includes the manufactured contagion of infectious disease (Hedgpeth 2020). These histories serve as potent reminders of the ways flexibility has been a vital tactic that Indigenous people(s) have relied upon to bring an Indigenous future into being. At one of the public presentations that we curated as a part of our community-engaged work in 2021, Tina Calderon (Gabrielino Tongva, Chumash) shared, "We kind of had to be chameleons in order to survive" (Calderon et al. 2021). This metaphor powerfully implies how Indigenous people(s) have tactically negotiated surface-level shifts while their commitments to Indigenous futures remain consistent.

In the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, flexibility has been deeply necessary, particularly in recognizing and sometimes publicly acknowledging that people might be grieving or caretaking their loved ones as well as experiencing other challenges resulting from a lack of in-person interactions, including in online learning. Understandably, confirming attendance for a university event is not always a top priority in these moments, which has necessitated flexibility in preparation for public presentations, including planning for an alternative event should a guest be unable to show. Although failing to confirm attendance may seem "unprofessional" by settler-capitalist standards, being flexible and empathetic is necessary to maintaining good relationships. This also aligns with a dance studies approach that can illuminate the hard work and discipline required to enact flexibility (Kedhar 2020). Thus, relationships with community partners have been built on flexibility and understanding—not requiring that our guests adhere to strict university timelines.

Further, flexibility has been essential to promoting Native sovereignty within our field while attending to the complexities that have emerged due to settler colonial policies. Native studies scholarship often places Native nations' legal sovereignty at the heart of discourses surrounding decolonization (Tuck and Yang 2012). While this is critical because settler colonial policies and discourses often override and obscure Native nations' legal sovereignty (Moreton-Robinson 2020), supporting the sovereignty of Indigenous people(s) can be much more complex. For example, settler colonial policies have often operated to deny sovereignty, detach Native people(s) from their tribal communities, and pit Native tribes and individuals against one another (Peltier 1999). Thus, flexibility—in terms of being open to working with tribal individuals and/or representatives of a Native nation—can help one navigate such friction.

Indigenous studies scholars have also delineated other forms of Indigenous sovereignty, such as "intellectual" (Warrior 1994), "visual" (Raheja 2015), "embodied" (Hokowhitu 2014), and "dancing" sovereignty (Dangeli 2016). Collaborating with Native individuals and/or tribal representatives can be a way of illuminating such expressions of Native sovereignty, which are interlocking with legal sovereignty (Blu Wakpa 2022; Dangeli 2016).[12] Foregrounding Native sovereignty in community-engaged work also combats a central critique of the superficial "performativity" of land acknowledgments. As Graeme Wood writes, "land acknowledgments are just words, and words can distract from real issues, in particular, the ultimate one, which is Native tribal sovereignty" (Wood 2021). However, Wood fails to recognize the fluidity of land acknowledgments and the active

"performativity" of language, in which words can also be an entryway into illuminating and addressing "real issues," including Native tribal sovereignty, by (re)mapping settler geographies for decolonial means (Goeman 2020). In the next section, we provide an overview of the decolonial community-engaged work we conducted throughout the 2020–21 academic year, sharing how these flexible practices have helped us promote Native sovereignty in institutional contexts.

Leveraging a University Land Acknowledgment to Promote Native Sovereignty

In this section, we describe the background, context, and logistics of our decolonial community-engaged work, which some might view as dispassionate and dull. However, activist and writer Victoria Law has clarified that "organizing is a longer-term commitment that isn't always visible, glamorous or fun" (Law 2014). Following bell hooks, we also maintain that "love is an action" (hooks 2018, 235), so it is precisely because of our passion for social justice that we do this seemingly unglamorous work, which continues the efforts of those who came before us. The Third World Liberation Front's achievements and their enduring repercussions in university settings nearly fifty-five years later have undoubtedly shaped Blu Wakpa's community-engaged work and decolonial praxis (Yep and Mitchell 2017). As a doctoral student in the University of California, Berkeley's Ethnic Studies Department, Blu Wakpa was introduced to community-engaged work as a Chancellor's Public Fellow leading undergraduate coursework under the mentorship of a professor. This legacy has continued through structural and financial support offered within the UC system to support professors' community-engaged initiatives and graduate student learning, now with Blu Wakpa as the professor and Roth as the graduate student aid. Specifically, university support, including grant monies and faculty, student, and staff labour, has enabled workshops in the 2020 "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course, public presentations often shared in its 2021 iteration, and private Zoom meetings focused on continuing and expanding this work in a 2023 course, which we discuss in this section.

In the context of our work together, Blu Wakpa has received pilot funding and the Chancellor's Award for Community Engaged Research from UCLA's Center for Community Engagement, which provided the resources necessary to begin and continue relationship building with Tina and Jessa Calderon (Tongva and Chumash). The Calderons are a mother and daughter pair of cultural artists and practitioners who have been our primary partners in projects since 2019. In 2019, as a tenure-track assistant professor in UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance, Blu Wakpa began discussing potential collaborations with the Calderons for her "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course, an upper division undergraduate and graduate level course in which Roth met Blu Wakpa in Winter 2020. An explicit aim of this course, which Blu Wakpa shared with students at the time, was to put the land acknowledgment into action through collaboration with the Calderons. In Winter 2020, the Calderons and Blu Wakpa hosted a series of four workshops on "Illuminating Tongva Embodied Knowledge and Sovereignty," which were well attended by the public. Specifically, these workshops were titled "Introduction to Native California in the Tongva Context," "Grass Skirt," "Clapper Stick," and "Dance." Following these workshops, students wrote reflections on their experiences learning about these topics, which were shared with the Calderons. Blu Wakpa dedicated the entirety of the pilot funding she received to provide honoraria for the Calderons to compensate them for their time and expertise.

> "I was struck by the way the action of yucca rope making for [Tina and Jessa Calderon's] grass skirt regalia altered my perception of time. As we learned how to wrap the pieces of yucca together and I began the repeated action of twisting and wrapping, my internal sense of time slowed down. [This process] created space to breathe, to let my mind wander, to talk with the folks around me, to in essence experience the moment while building community. Simultaneously, I was shocked when we were told it was time to finish the session. As time slowed down for me, it sped by on the clock, which was a further reminder of the ways colonization has sought to regulate collective understandings of time, especially to place these understandings of time under the framework of economic use. This led me to think about the ways this process of making the grass skirt refuses the framework of capitalist use value through its relationship to time. The skirt itself and the process of making exceed these colonial parameters, offering a different conception of value, time, and being-with [others] through the construction of sacred regalia."
>
> - Excerpt from Roth's student reflection paper from the 2020 "Grass Skirt" workshop with Tina and Jessa Calderon in Blu Wakpa's "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course.

The series of workshops on "Illuminating Tongva Embodied Knowledge and Sovereignty" from the 2020 course and continued conversations the Calderons and Blu Wakpa had outside the class built a strong foundation for their ongoing working relationship. In 2020, Blu Wakpa received the Chancellor's Award for Community-Engaged Research for a proposal developed based on experiences and discussions with the Calderons about what community-engaged research and teaching might offer Tongva and other California tribal people(s). The proposal leveraged the land acknowledgment to articulate why structural and financial support for community-engaged work with the Tongva and other California Native people is critical. Specifically, she discussed the valid critiques of land acknowledgments as "performative" in the negative sense and argued that community-engaged work with Tongva and other California tribal people(s) could be a powerful way of building reciprocal relationships with Indigenous people(s) whose land the university currently occupies. Importantly, this demonstrates how faculty can use university land acknowledgments to remind the institution of its stated commitments, which also require a redistribution of "resources," such as the university's prestige and platforms, faculty and student labour, and funding in the form of honoraria.

The primary aim of the award was to provide the infrastructure for each faculty recipient to create a community-engaged course, including building the relationships necessary to conduct community-engaged work. This further illustrates how the impacts of Third World Liberation Front organizing endure in select university initiatives that can structurally and financially aid professors in designing

and implementing community-engaged courses, while also enabling graduate students to support this work and develop skills as community-engaged scholars. In the proposal stage, the Calderons helped Blu Wakpa to identify California tribal individuals and representatives with whom they thought it would be beneficial to work. Allowing community partners to determine the topic for collaborative work is another way of being flexible and ensuring that the relationships are reciprocal and a good fit for community partners. In addition to the Calderons, the community partners gathered for work supported by the award in 2020–21 include individuals and/or representatives from three other California tribes, including the Chumash, the Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe, and the Winnemem Wintu. In working with Tongva individuals and other California Native people(s), Blu Wakpa's collaborations aim to acknowledge the debts the UC system has incurred as a land-grant institution in which the 1862 Morrill Act literally dispossessed California Native peoples from multiple locations throughout the state to provide land-as-wealth for establishing the university and continuing to grow its profits (Goeman 2020, 43–51). This points to the necessity of attending to specific local histories, not only of the land one is on but also of the settler-capitalist constructed geographies (such as California) and institutions (such as the University of California) within which one works.

Again, Blu Wakpa dedicated the entirety of the award funding to community partners' honoraria, which allowed Blu Wakpa to deepen her relationship with the Calderons and nurture relationships with other California Native peoples throughout 2020–21, including developing a future course with all of the community partners. The award also came with faculty support in the form of regular cohort meetings hosted by the Center for Community Engagement that included opportunities to discuss what community-engaged research is and why it matters, share about the process of planning for a community-engaged course, troubleshoot, create a draft of a new course syllabus, and receive feedback. By including Roth and the California tribal partners in the planning process for this work, Blu Wakpa then extended the cycle of graduate student mentorship afforded by such institutional initiatives and foregrounded Indigenous self-determination in each stage of the process.

In particular, the planning process was carried out in a series of private, monthly meetings in which we organized 2020–21 activities and developed the 2023 community-engaged course together. In the original vision, Blu Wakpa and our California tribal community partners aimed to host an in-person gathering with the four tribes, open to the public at select times when appropriate. This gathering would have followed California Native tribes' tradition of intertribal gatherings and provided an opportunity to be in community and celebrate the revitalization of each tribe's dances. This structure became impossible due to the pandemic's health risks and accordingly forced all of us to be flexible in how we imagined gathering and moving together. Thus, given the necessity of physical distancing to ensure the safety of our collective communities, we shifted this work to an online format using a holistic model of research, teaching, and service that included viewing "service" as central to research and teaching and rendered the boundaries between them flexible.

Flyer from "Contextualizing and Revitalizing California Tribal Dances," a 2020 public presentation planned in collaboration with and featuring our community partners. Photo provided by Jessa Calderon; flyer created by Lynn Tatum.

Specifically—with support from Roth as her graduate student researcher—Blu Wakpa organized a series of ten public presentations on Zoom, which featured Indigenous artists, dancers, activists, and scholars, including our community partners.[13] Evidencing the entanglement of research, teaching, and service, the public online gatherings were usually presented in the 2021 "Dance: Colonization and Confinement" course and often discussed the relationship of tribal dance practices to Indigenous sovereignty with a focus on contemporary revitalization efforts. Native cultural revitalization is salient, given the detrimental impacts of settler colonialism on Indigenous dance and other practices. Blu Wakpa often invited California tribal guests and/or community partners to speak for approximately fifteen to twenty minutes about an area of their expertise in relation to broad topics such as Indigenous dances or the revitalization of Indigenous dances in their community. By not requesting that participants speak about a specific dance form, Blu Wakpa was able to learn, alongside other panel attendees, what the panelists thought was most important for participants to understand. This approach also allowed community partners to navigate the complexities of what information to share, given that some knowledge is not appropriate to share with outsiders. Specifically, public access to these presentations placed additional demands to be flexible on our Indigenous partners to ensure tribal secrets were not disseminated without permission due to the legacy of settlers co-opting Indigenous knowledge for their own ends. Thus,

we aimed to mitigate the challenges public presentations might pose for our community partners by allowing them to select the topics and content they discussed.

Further, in addition to planning these public presentations, with the support of the Chancellor's Award throughout 2020–21, we developed a course titled "Dance and Decolonization: The Politics and Possibilities of California Tribal Dance" in our private planning meetings with California tribal partners. The title was initially decided during conversations between Blu Wakpa and the Calderons for the award application; it was later re-approved during internal meetings with the entire 2020–21 team. These meetings discussed how undergraduate coursework could be put to the most use for our partners and their communities, with a particular focus on the revitalization of their dances and other cultural practices. Roth took detailed notes throughout these meetings, which were shared with community partners for their use and updates in case there were any errors or additions needed. The notes were and continue to be utilized in the development of the curriculum for the course, which was launched in Winter 2023, and future community-engaged research. In the Winter 2023 course, undergraduate students have been gathering, organizing, and reporting on primary and secondary documents, which California tribal individuals from the Tongva, Costanoan Rumsen Carmel Tribe, and Winnemem Wintu nations will then build on to revitalize their dances, which have been detrimentally impacted by settler colonialism.[14]

> "In this course, students will gain and strengthen their existing research skills by conducting projects that are based on the interests and instructions of the California tribal individuals with whom the class partners. For example, the California tribal partners with whom we will be working have requested that students undertake literature reviews and archival research. Other California tribal partners have asked that the students organize the research materials, which the tribal partners have already gathered. The California tribal partners will visit the class early in the quarter either in person or via Zoom. They will introduce themselves and their tribes and provide background and context for why they are asking students to undertake a particular project. The California tribal partners will also return at the end of the quarter either in person or via Zoom, so that students have the opportunity to report back to them and receive feedback. Many of the California tribal individuals are also leaders in their tribes, so they will likely share at least some of the information that students provide with their communities. Because tribal dances are typically communal, this knowledge may reach California Native community members in other ways as well, such as directly through the dances."
>
> - Some background and context for student activities from a grant proposal for Blu Wakpa's Winter 2023 course "Dance and Decolonization: The Politics and Possibilities of California Tribal Dance," which Blu Wakpa designed in collaboration with Roth, Miya Shaffer (another graduate student researcher), and their California tribal partners.

In this way, the private planning meetings with California tribal partners and panel discussions open to the general public became our way to gather over the year. Though we repeatedly mourned our inability to meet in person, we were able to come together, pray, share, learn, laugh, and, when necessary, grieve together, deepening our connections while physically apart. In the public presentations, Indigenous storytelling was the main mode of sharing knowledge, along with discussing and depicting the movement of different dances through language, photos, movement, and video. With permission, we recorded all public sessions, which has generated an archive of primary source materials for Blu Wakpa's future research with our community partners and videos to share with students for pedagogical purposes in future classes. We have also shared all of the recordings with the community partners for their own use. The COVID-19 context made documenting these events even easier since they occurred on Zoom, where recording is as simple as pressing a button. All of this work sought to deepen decolonial praxis at the university while sharing Indigenous knowledges with on- and off-campus community members through flexible and reciprocal working methods.

Our process also held benefits for undergraduate and graduate students. By hosting the panel discussions during coursework, undergraduate students could learn alongside the off-campus audience members during the public presentations, who were often California tribal attendees. This opened the classroom space to conversations and Q&As directly informed and led by Indigenous people(s). For Roth, her work as a graduate student researcher has been deeply intertwined with graduate mentorship within this process, as Blu Wakpa increasingly gave her more responsibilities in the project and guided her through each phase. For example, conducting administrative work for online programming provided practical opportunities to learn about decolonizing methodologies and navigating institutional bureaucracy. Additionally, Roth often did tasks such as grant writing for community partners and co-creating syllabi with Blu Wakpa's guidance and editing, which strengthened her writing and offered additional experience in course planning and preparation. Roth can also use, adapt, and build on these co-created syllabi for her future academic endeavours. As each added responsibility built on previous work with direct mentorship, Roth repeatedly moved beyond her comfort zone to grow as a student and scholar while strengthening her practical actions for social justice in a context structured for accountability. Thus, our holistic and flexible model highlights how centring service as integral and inseparable from research and teaching and utilizing digital technologies can offer reciprocal benefits for students, professors, and community partners, elevate forms of knowledge historically excluded from higher education, and help build the skills and relationships necessary for creating more just futures.

At the same time, it is imperative not to romanticize this work. We made mistakes, especially in the transition to the Zoom format, which required technological skills that were at times new to us or beyond our skill set. For example, in the first public presentation with the California tribal partners, while rushing to manage all the technological needs at the start of the program, Roth exhibited her own "colonial unknowing" (Goeman 2020, 52–53) by prioritizing logistical needs over presence and reverence toward Indigenous protocols. In particular, she started recording the session during the land acknowledgment, working quickly without remembering that doing so would interrupt the speakers. Such moments required a re-evaluation of our working processes, such as setting a clear order for tasks at the start of sessions, and often included checking in with our California tribal partners about how we could better support them in these events and apologizing and taking responsibility for missteps when appropriate. This points to the reality that building accountable relations comes with moments of rupture and repair, some big and some small. In these moments,

flexibility can help us reorient our approaches to become better accomplices in decolonizing our institutions, as we inevitably all make mistakes. There is always more work to be done.

Conclusion: Decolonial Dreaming

Despite the growing support for land acknowledgments and community-engaged work in academia, faculty can still face many hurdles in implementing a decolonial praxis, particularly in regard to redistributing resources and shifting power dynamics. In other words, although settler-capitalist institutions seem more willing to acknowledge the contemporary presence of Indigenous people(s)—and, in some cases, their sovereignty—institutional norms, often embodied and reinforced by university faculty and staff, can significantly impede a decolonial praxis. For example, while a university may support faculty in their community-engaged initiatives, institutional and community norms and timelines are often incompatible, which can pose barriers to this kind of work. Institutional policies can also apply pressure to partnerships for fast and transactional rather than sustained, reciprocal relations or impose slow-moving timelines, such as payment processes, that can disproportionately impact community partners (Parker et al. 2018, 472).

In some fields, a holistic approach to community-engaged research, teaching, and service and a redistribution of resources can still be considered deviant and even a violation of university policy. For instance, in 2020, a senior scholar in another field wrote to Blu Wakpa that they did not think Blu Wakpa should use her faculty funds for honoraria and would be surprised if it were even allowed. Yet, Blu Wakpa had previously outlined her decolonial praxis in grant proposals funded by the university. The senior scholar's words prompted Blu Wakpa to double-check with administrators at both the departmental and school levels, where they confirmed that her praxis was indeed acceptable and *not* a violation of university policy.

At other times, institutional officials may deem a decolonial praxis entirely illegible. In 2020, in collaboration with Roth and their California tribal partners, Blu Wakpa applied for a multi-million-dollar external funding opportunity that sought to support imaginative and bold, community-engaged projects. The proposal sought to move from land acknowledgment to land back. In it, Blu Wakpa wrote, "Settler colonialism is about dispossessing Native peoples from their land, and while the return of that land may seem radical to some, many Native studies scholars and activists agree that it is the clearest path forward for Native peoples." Interestingly, the feedback Blu Wakpa received from the internal committee was that they could not determine whether the project aligned with the purpose of the call for proposals, which asked for radical approaches to equity, so they did not make a final recommendation about whether Blu Wakpa could proceed with the grant or not. Without this recommendation, that particular land back proposal has been left in limbo.

Yet, alongside universities adopting land acknowledgments, land back is occurring (Stock 2021), and in the meantime, we will continue decolonial dreaming and acting in collaboration with Tongva and other Indigenous people(s). When still a doctoral student being introduced to community-engaged work, Blu Wakpa once shared with a professor, "Sometimes I feel like being in Native/ethnic studies is like being a really big dreamer." To Blu Wakpa's surprise, the professor responded, "It can certainly devolve to that." Yet, from many Indigenous understandings, dreaming is a vital way of knowing (Posthumus 2018). Other liberatory movements have also articulated how dreaming is necessary to counter the epistemological violence of white supremacist norms (Kelley 2002), which are integral to the maintenance of settler-capitalist systems. In fact, danced dreams, like the

revitalization of tribal dances that have been detrimentally impacted by settler colonialism, can help bring Indigenous futurities into being (Lefevre 2013). Decolonial dreaming can mean envisioning an end to the settler-capitalist structure, breaking the capital relation, creating spaces of learning that ripple beyond the classroom, integrating and acknowledging community collaboration in academia, and implementing practices and policies that recognize and honour the land as a relative, which includes restoring Indigenous jurisdiction over all land. Such dreams can begin with "performing" and reperforming an acknowledgment of positionality, place, and Indigenous sovereignty, coupled with ongoing, accountable action.

Notes

1. To open this article, we have adopted UCLA American Indian Studies and American Indian Studies Center's land acknowledgment. Rather than "we," the unedited land acknowledgment states, "AIS and AISC at UCLA." Tria Blu Wakpa, an assistant professor and co-writer of this article, is affiliated with UCLA's American Indian Studies.

2. The unedited quotation specifies "men and women," which reifies binary gender norms. In contrast, "people" does not specify gender and is therefore inclusive of people who do not identify as male or female.

3. We have added scare quotes around "Westerners" because here, this commonly-used term—used to describe people living or originating in the West, in particular the US and Europe—problematically obscures the Indigenous people(s) of these lands.

4. Conversely, Kaur highlights that land acknowledgments may overlook Indigenous nations' sovereignty and "oversimplify [other] issues at hand" by not adequately addressing the history and politics of the land, including that it may be claimed by more than one tribe. For more, see Kaur (2021).

5. People have also critiqued land acknowledgments for other reasons beyond the scope of this article, such as that they "can obscure the actual history," "oversimplify the issues at hand," "overburden Native people," and "be seen as just enough." See Kaur (2021).

6. We use parentheses in our writing of "people(s)" because our tribal partners are not always representatives of their tribal nations, though some are. Throughout the article, this punctuation marks that we work with both tribal individuals and representatives.

7. We use scare quotes around "resources" because this settler-capitalist construction contrasts with how many Indigenous peoples understand land and other more-than-human kin such as air, water, nonhuman animals, and the cosmos—that is, as relatives. See Marshall (2014).

8. Robinson proposes people "consider how acknowledgement's form has a place within our lives and work that is always in relationship with the specificity and context of its use" (Robinson et al. 2019, 22).

9. While we use the term "service" in accordance with the categories through which faculty are evaluated, it is important that such "service" does not replicate ideologies of benevolent paternalism or saviorism. In our case, "service" is aimed at challenging hegemonic power relations and addressing the harm institutional structures have caused through accountable relationships that support the ongoing work of our community partners.

10. Changing power dynamics and the distribution of "resources" requires returning land to Indigenous peoples. See note 7 regarding why we use scare quotes around "resources."

11. We intentionally use "ancestors" rather than "ancestral remains." For example, according to Linda Rugg, "UC Berkeley holds the remains of more than 9,594 Native American individuals. . . . This is probably a significant undercount because there will be a count that counts a box, a burial site, and there may be several individuals in that burial site, for example. So it's probably an undercount. Of that 9,594, more than 9,000 were taken from California. So, the holdings of the university, the ancestral remains, are predominantly

California. And more than 2,000 of them come from Alameda County, where the university is sitting. And I should say that about two-thirds of these remains were taken from the counties surrounding the Bay Area, around five counties" (Public Affairs 2021).

12. This is because "within the context of U.S. assimilative policies and institutions, intellectual/visual/embodied/dancing expressions [of sovereignty] have provided crucial opportunities for Lakota and other Native people to perpetuate their physical and cultural survival, and by extension, their enduring fight for Indigenous sovereignty and freedom, including in the legal realm." For more, see Blu Wakpa (2022).

13. Presentation topics were selected by community partners and included events titled "Revitalizing Ancestral Practices: The Ohlone Tule Boat Project Film Screening and Discussion," "Contextualizing and Revitalizing California Tribal Dances Panel Discussion and Q&A," "Powwow in the California Native Context," "California Native Martial Arts and Masculinities" and more. The presentations were well attended by the public; however, it is important to remember that simply making something "open to the public" does not necessarily enable access to such an event. Given the historical and ongoing settler-capitalist dynamics in universities, wholescale transformations of implicit cultural norms are needed in order to actually welcome in the broader public, including dismantling white supremacy culture (Jones and Okun 2001) and providing much greater accommodations for different (dis)abilities such as live transcription and ASL interpretation. Additionally, not everyone has internet access, which is again disproportionately the case in Indigenous communities (Duarte 2017; Mattingly and Blu Wakpa 2021).

14. Notably, our Chumash community partner determined that the research they needed to complete for their revitalization project was not appropriate to share with outsiders and thus not appropriate for the undergraduate curriculum. Instead, they suggested the weeks dedicated to their project focus on any additional needs for Tina and Jessa Calderon's ongoing revitalization work, and the curriculum has reflected this request.

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Un/Commoning Pedagogies: Forging Collectivity through Difference in the Embodied Classroom and Beyond

Co-authored by Un/Commoning Pedagogies Collective: Dasha A. Chapman, J Dellecave, Adanna Kai Jones, Sharon Freda Kivenko, Mario LaMothe, Lailye Weidman, and Queen Meccasia Zabriskie

We Convene

Un/Commoning Pedagogies Collective are seven dancer-scholars who centre embodied anti-racist praxis in our teaching across the fields of anthropology, sociology, African American and Africana studies, gender, sexuality and women's studies, dance, and performance studies. Since 2019, Un/Commoning Pedagogies Collective has engaged in consistent, process-based collaboration around teaching, scholarship, movement practice, and collegiality. Together we have co-authored essays, facilitated workshops, and given talks and performances. We also share syllabi, strategies, stories, milestones, failures, resources, and friendship.

Our name and working framework, "Un/Commoning Pedagogies," emerged from our initial convening in response to the Dance Studies Association's (DSA) 2019 annual conference theme, "Dancing in Common." We desired a space for exchange concerned with what movement pedagogies offer to the work of "commoning" in ways that would promote our unique and varied experiences rather than homogenize or universalize. By centring the body, we remain committed to destabilizing notions of "the commons" that may elide difference. Our framing is also indebted to the work of Stephano Harney and Fred Moten in *The Undercommons* (2013). Building on Harney and Moten's call to action, we are inspired to create new ways of approaching education, *within* but not *of* the university, as the current options for education are inadequate at best and annihilating at worst.

As a cohort of educators, we assemble in commitment to activating embodiment in—and as—social justice education. In collectivity, we respond to the urgency of ongoing anti-Black racism, racist terrorism, and white supremacy. We aim to build spaces of connection without nullifying difference and positionality. This generative yet sometimes uncomfortable rub and tension of relation produce friction—like an itch that tells you, "things need to change." This conception is in conversation with Anna Tsing's framing of "friction," which calls attention to the "heterogenous and unequal encounters [that] lead to new arrangements of culture and power" (Tsing 2005, 5). This is how we work inside/as the undercommons—at the level of the moving, thinking, body, both in and out of the dance studio.

We critically position movement as a method for forging anti-racist collectivities-in-difference in our classrooms and beyond. We take seriously how the body moves, thinks, breathes, exists, and experiences its environments. We further acknowledge how white supremacy is experienced and

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patterned differently in our bodies. The technologies of racism and colonization have been disseminated, produced, re-produced, and constructed through our bodies, for the body has been the material "thing" on which white supremacist ideas have been built. We explore the potential of body knowledge and bodily practice in anti-racist praxis through movement. We are guided by the following questions:

- Why is body-based, intersectional anti-racist work so urgent for us, and for educators more broadly?
- What moments of friction have we experienced in our teaching? And what do these frictions show us about the possibilities and limitations of radical praxis in the classroom?
- What strategies do we use to remain open to and nimble in teachable moments?

Our writing, rooted in our ongoing collaborations, documents a co-generation of knowledge about the possibilities and tensions of teaching with and through our full-bodied selves. Moving beyond the syllabus, we offer you a glimpse into our concerns, commitments, experiences, and strategies as movement educators. We call you in to participate with us in a process of un/commoning pedagogy through embodied practice, dialogue, and reflection.

Movement Prompt #1: Movement starts with breath. This work is heavy. It can weigh on the body and immobilize. Let's first find some lightness and breath inside ourselves as a reminder of our ability to activate and engage from a place of ease. Get comfortable. Gently nod your head. Softly elongate the distance between your shoulders and your ears. With your eyes, easefully take note of where you are, physically and mentally. Take a deep breath in. Exhale.

Here in our performative writing, as we do in our classrooms, we invite you to think through your own moving, feeling, dancing body. We provide prompts for moving and sensing that make space for your body to show up. We encourage you to read, with attention, noting the ways our text lands in and on your body, in all its unpredictable messiness and layered experience.

Digging In

Why is body-based, intersectional anti-racist work urgent?

Movement Prompt #2: Find your ground. Whether you are standing or sitting, feel the soles of your feet on the floor, spread your toes wide. Drop your weight into the floor (and/or the chair), breathe in. . . . Hold it. . . . Exhale, making whatever sound comes up. Notice any emotions that are percolating within your body. From this emotive space, start to tremble from your torso. Like growing roots, let the vibrations travel throughout your entire body from your lungs to the muscles in your fingers and toes. This trembling is meant to release energy and release emotions. Shake as vigorously as you can. Stop. Notice what sensations linger.

ALL. Given the ongoing anti-Black state terrorism and global health crisis, the body is an important site for making sense of these larger forces and healing (Menakem 2017). Our classes teach about the ways white supremacy impacts bodies and embodiment. We do this in both content and method—through our bodies—which means we swirl in the depths of these impacts—in the eye of the storm, in the belly of the beast. Due to the psycho-somatic effects of affective labour, caretaking of all kinds, illnesses, career pressures and institutional DEI demands, we dwell in the valences of exhaustion and capacity that each of us feels. Showing up must take on different shapes depending on our social identities and the contexts in which we find ourselves. Thus, breathing, pausing, and reflecting are more important than ever (Gumbs 2020). The pause with breath offers a moment for

tuning in and for reflective recalibration. In our teaching/learning spaces, we witness white supremacy working its way in and through our felt physicalities and processes. In particular, white supremacy shows up in our students' default to Euro-American hierarchies of "proper" dance technique (Monroe 2011), their goal-oriented versus process-oriented approaches to class, their striving toward perfection, and their discomfort with the inherent messiness of process. We also notice how white students and students of colour take up space differently, as their assumptions diverge regarding how much physical, intellectual, emotional space one is free to take up—e.g., where and how students sit or move through the space (periphery or centre), whose voice is most audible, who speaks readily, who holds back their contributions. All of these examples inscribe how our students show up in their bodies in the classroom.

We practise strategies of "Digging In," as per Brenda Dixon-Gottschild (1996), to excavate layers of physical, social, and historical invisibilizations of Black presence and contributions integral to cultural formations in the United States, which requires we also examine the biases inherent in our positions. As Dixon-Gottschild instructs, white supremacy and coloniality function through binary logics (Dixon-Gottschild 1997). We aim to instruct the complexity and ambiguity of the learning process. Things do not always have one right answer or make sense in singular ways, nor should they. Part of the research we encourage for our students and ourselves is a practice of sitting inside the contradictions, centring how and why the contradictions can and do coexist. This practice of sitting with and reflecting on contradictions requires effort. An improvisation score or class activity that appears to be chaotic or disorganized is in fact ordered in ways students have not yet been trained to understand—much like the ways white spectators colonially perceived Black performance as unwieldy and untrained movement rather than virtuosic practices within a different set of aesthetic-philosophical principles that value contrariety, invention, improvisation, and collectivity (Dixon-Gottschild 1996). Fostering adeptness at improvisation and patience with process is urgent to un/commoning pedagogies.

DAC. These approaches that value emergence through process and improvisation mean that we often deviate from "the syllabus"—as the specific contractual document we give students at the start of a semester and the more generalized notion of a traditional educational agenda within neoliberal academic contexts. Navigating the unpredictability of teaching in un/commoning ways is not something for which we often have support. I put out the initial call for our first convening for DSA 2019 from a desire to generate some form of community around critical movement-based pedagogies and their potential in/as anti-racist praxis.[1] In dance and performance studies, our integration of theory and practice alongside integration of body-based, process-oriented knowledge production potentially poised us to centre movement in alignment with social justice and critical theory; however, our fields have historically not always fulfilled such a promise (see George-Graves 2020). At the same time, I was noticing that many anti-racist educational spaces were neglecting to acknowledge embodiment or incorporate movement, although this has been shifting in recent years (Menakem 2017, UBW/PISAB). As an educator, I felt the urgency of collectively addressing not simply *what* we are teaching in terms of content but *how* we engage said content. Activating anti-racism beyond the abstract and practising decolonial political formations from the inside out and in ongoing ways feel like urgent strategies, yet coalescing some form of coalitional community to support the experimentation inherent in the work was equally so. Therefore, our practice as UnCPC is to gather regularly to process embodied teaching but also to move through this work in ways that do not reinforce deactivated norms of academic knowledge production. These efforts nourish our ability to sustain and metabolize our approaches to teaching. Our meetings have only become

increasingly important to our collective thriving as times continue to intensify and the stakes of this work teeter between life and death for too many. And so, We Convene.

AKJ. First and foremost, I am frustrated with talk about decolonizing in the abstract. As a Trinidad-born, US-raised, always ready to *bus' a sweet wine*—here I am referring to the rolling-hip dance and not a bottle of fermented grapes—I am sometimes creole, unmarked as Latinx, and always already recognized as "Black" and "female." I am a Carnivalist, down to my very bones. It continues to be my experience, especially within the US, that there is a profound disconnect between decolonization as a lived experience and decolonization as a theoretical concept (Tuck and Yang, 2012; García-Peña and Lyon, 2020). We are intermeshed, entangled, and messy (Lugones 2003). As a colonized, Afro-Caribbean woman, it is important to foreground that the work of colonization is very intimate, and in my experience, people, especially in the US, often seem to forget—or don't recognize—that aspect of colonization. In turn, the work of decolonizing requires constant undoing, from how we see and address each other to what we propagate and legitimize as teachers. From this lens, I playfully enter the space, both here on the page and in the classroom. And please know that the business of "playing" is very serious, as it is a vital tool for undoing colonization practices. Here I am specifically referencing the strategies and logic of the Trinidadian Carnival. From play on words to playing masquerade, the act of playing uses pleasure to blur the borders that delineate hegemonic uses of power. Effectively, play shifts both *how* power is understood and *who* accesses power.

ML. Ayibobo, Ashe, Amen. I enter the Black studies and anthropology classroom of a minority-serving institution as a self-reflexive Black Haitian creative male-body with feminine tendencies and a non-American accent. I rely heavily on Haitian and Afro-Caribbean embodied knowledge. So, I hear you deeply on this, AKJ. I've encountered "decolonizing" used in creative workshops and practices wherein we will decolonize our bodies in the moment during our short time together. There might be an understanding for some that the session introduces a consciousness-raising approach, which acknowledges and aids in destabilizing colonizing aspects of lifeworlds and bodily practices. But what if others are unaware that this form of "digging in" demands sustained and methodical attention or assume that simply doing a workshop is decolonial? It's a start. Yet, as we rehearse here, through our individual and collective labour, it should be underscored that decoloniality is a performative: a cognitive and physical re-patterning countering racist, xenophobic, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, and ableist knowledge and techniques over space-times.

DAC. I circulate, I flow, I home, I bridge. I am a white American cisgendered woman, a child of the Jewish diaspora, at times read as biracial, and queer. I have long studied African diaspora techniques and moved through Black dance spaces, accumulating embodied knowledge transnationally and in relation. In action toward accountability and anti-racist praxis, I effort to maintain collaborative relationships that leverage my access to resources and platforms and move alongside ongoing struggles. I teach critical dance studies, performance studies, and African diaspora-centred courses that bring theory and practice together, working with both white and BIPOC students, aiming to offer approaches for acknowledging, analyzing, and undoing racism, facilitating knowledge produced in the body, and forging new collectivities. I am present.

Like AKJ, I am frustrated with the disembodied manner of presenting knowledge in educational settings and academic conferences. Personally, in my work of connecting students to the layers of their bodies, I use movement as a method for learning and engaging with theory, not just technique, end goal, or representative example. Faced with the continued barrage of violent assaults against BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ people in public and private spheres, I notice the effects these violences

have on my colleagues and my students. I witness how movement powerfully aids in our processing of such events and even fortifies us in persevering anew.

JD. I traverse academia as an impassioned interdisciplinary artist, scholar, and educator. I am a white, queer, first-generation student raised in a rural, working-class family. My gender identity shifts between nonbinary, genderqueer, and/or woman. I have been seriously dancing since I was two years old. I strongly believe that dance and performance studies offer rich sites of activism and activation. I am deeply invested in the long-term collaborative process of embodied racial justice work.

QMZ. I am a Black woman, a Muslima, and the mother of a joyful Black boy. I am a daughter, sister, friend, aunty. I am a sociologist, a dance and performance artist, and an anti-racist community organizer. As an educator, I employ an "engaged pedagogy" that works to create a classroom space where all students feel their contributions matter and "we honor all capabilities, not solely the ability to speak" (hooks 2010, 22). This Un/Commoning Pedagogies space is urgent because engaged pedagogy is often filled with tenuous and difficult moments, and, as an educator, I need spaces where I can make sense of these moments. As I work with students to increase understanding across differences and create "meanings through collaborative inquiry" (Brookfield and Preskill 2005, 24), many points of divergence in the larger social world play out in the classroom. Un/commoning pedagogies allows me to make sense of these points of divergence, share resources, and collectively create knowledge that helps me to continue to teach from/through a social justice perspective in the contemporary moment.

SFK. I live, make work, teach, and move in contingent ways. My white, Eastern European, Jewish, English-speaking but French-inclined Quebecker, American-educated, cisfemale body is pushing me to consider not what it is to be from a place but to be of a place. Through explorations in site-specific work and a critical approach to anthropologies of performance, I am recognizing how locally engaged work lays bare and destabilizes settler colonial logics of place-claiming. This inquiry is activated by my West African dance training, infuses my parenting, and mobilizes my interest in collaboration.

LW. I hover, crash, step into the dance classroom as a white queer nonbinary feminine body with Ashkenazi Jewish and Anglo-European roots. I am also a mixed-class person who has worked many domestic labour and service jobs along a circuitous, ongoing route with higher education and the professional experimental dance world. Currently, I teach at a transformative, precarious liberal arts institution where whiteness dominates and where students hold a wide diversity of gender, race, and class identities. I witness my students simultaneously seeking to learn, survive, and heal (both personally and intergenerationally) through their academic and creative work. This makes it necessary to question habitual modes of advising, feedback, and evaluation and to consider the students' dancing and dancemaking within a much wider frame than the one I was trained within.

Movement Prompt #3: To activate your body, tap your fingertips over your heart, at the centre of your sternum. Take this moment to remind yourself that you are here, you exist, you matter. Start with light taps, then increase the tempo until the sounds of your tapping echo through your chest. Continue tapping as you read the following . . .

Frictions

What are some moments of friction that you've experienced? And what do these frictions show us about the possibilities, limitations, and risks of radical praxis in the classroom?

ALL. When we consider frictions, something strikes us: What we do in our classrooms with movement is a "working-against" on multiple levels: against colonial parameters for knowledge, neoliberal norms of evaluation and success, student learning habits, white social decorum that evades addressing race and difference, our own positions of authority, and how people conceptualize what bodies do. Frictions occur between students and teachers, between students themselves, and within the Self. At their foundations, these frictions ignite between our work and the institutional norms of higher education and dance. We are actively creating friction against the purportedly empty space of the studio and kinetically rubbing against a strictly discursive mode of critical inquiry.

Movement Prompt #4: Notice where these frictions land in and on your body. In an effort to embrace the discomfort that might be arising, clench all the muscles you can. Squeeze your eyes shut, make fists with your hands, clench your jaw, hold your breath, curl your toes, etc. . . . Release it all with a deep sigh. Repeat, as you read the following.

QMZ. I often use embodiment exercises in the classroom to examine how macro and meso level social forces play themselves out on the micro level. Embodiment exercises also generate dialogue about emotions and how the very ways that we feel in our bodies are impacted by larger social forces (Collins 2004). I enjoy using one exercise I learned in a Congress on Research in Dance pre-conference workshop in Gainesville, Florida, that Urban Bush Women facilitated, where the artistic director Jawole Willa Jo Zollar engaged participants in an embodied dialogue about democracy. During the workshop, Zollar placed an object in the middle of the dance studio and said the object represented democracy. She then invited us all to position our bodies around the object in a way that represented our relationship to the concept. At the workshop, I was blown away by the depth of the dialogue and the complex emotions revealed through our sharing. I have since used this exercise in a variety of settings, using different concepts to generate dialogue and exchange.

Once, I facilitated the exercise in my class and experienced a moment that brought me to my growing edge and raised a number of questions about how to engage in anti-racist pedagogy with care. In this particular class, we were trying to engage in a collective inquiry into how white supremacy as a structure impacts all of us on a micro level. Students were told that the object in the centre represented white supremacy, and everyone in the classroom was invited to embody their relationship to white supremacy. I also participated in the activity because I feel deeply that if I am asking students to be vulnerable and share from a personal space, I must do the same.

The first time around, everyone shared without words. The second time, students were asked to state one word that represented some aspect of what they were embodying. The third time we shared, people were asked to embody their shape and talk about their motivations for positioning their body that way. We all shared a number of personal stories about white supremacy empowering, shaping, limiting, enabling, and constraining us in complex ways. It was an intimate sharing as folks often talked about events in their family, childhood, and daily life. It was an emotional sharing as we heard about individual struggles of trying to undo socialization and conditioning.

Many of the white students in my classes not only spoke about the privileges that white supremacy provides but also discussed how they were actively trying to undo how this structure shapes their own identity and interactions. Bodies in close proximity to the chair, leaning on the chair, standing on the chair, or hands and feet entangled with the chair . . . the white students in my class found complex and interesting ways of conveying their understanding of the advantages that this structure provided and how their own complex identities shaped how much and when they benefit. During one class, when explaining her position, a white female student uttered a problematic phrase she learned as a child from a trusted adult, and I could feel the entire class cease breathing temporarily due to the weight of her utterance. We had to address what she said. With caution, I asked her to explain the phrase a bit more. As she started to talk and reflect on her words, she became aware of their entanglement, which heightened the emotions. [*Fast audible inhale*] As an educator who invites students to share from personal experience, a high level of emotion is always a possibility. Additionally, how I hold and navigate these moments sets the tone for the entire semester and can be the difference between a student feeling marginalized in a classroom and/or engaged. In this case, I was having my own emotional reaction to what this student said, which impacted my ability to hold things together. We had to take a break to collect ourselves. I talked to the student privately to check in with her before we resumed the dialogue. I did my best to address her utterance because not doing so would further marginalize some of the students of colour and white students in my classroom seeking knowledge and belonging at the predominately white institution at which I teach. We proceeded with caution and discomfort as we reckoned with her utterance that took everyone's breath away.

ML. I empathize with this story. It intersects with how I contend with frictions between faculty and students of colour at my minority-serving institution. In the evaluation of my course on embodiment and performance in/as protest, a self-identified Black female STEM major disliked that "we needed to be open and trusting of our peers to think about issues too early and too often." She fidgeted and seemed lethargic during an embodiment workshop based on Haiti's undulating Yanvalou movements in preparation for a "living statue" installation on campus. Afterward, she stayed behind to express a sentiment much like the words above. Weeks later, she kept silent when students and I used our own experiences to think through Audre Lorde's "The Transformation of Silence into Language and Action" (2007). A high-performing student, her silence spoke loudly when she didn't submit a critical response to the text.

To be fair, she also noted the positive attributes of my pedagogy in the course evaluation. Months later, we spoke about how she has learned to appreciate what she perceived as "holes in my qualitative performance-based pedagogy." As a recent transfer student, she was going through some distress and felt very vulnerable on campus. I reiterated that it was her right to question and be vigilant about the instruction she receives insofar as her inquiries were made in a respectful, constructive, and generous manner. How fragile am I that her critique looms large for me? Is it because I assumed that her Blackness made us co-conspirators? Or that she would have accepted these experimentations from a white body?

Movement Prompt #4, revisited: Clench and release. Notice any residual sensations in your organs, muscles, and skin.

SFK. There is this strange expectation that a professor emerges from their doctoral education a fully formed academic and educator. Whether we choose to admit it or not, each of us in our own ways has had analogue experiences, experiences that fell flat and left us educators feeling astounded and

surely at times defeated by the fact that our best pedagogical intentions have somehow gone awry. As the semesters move on and my teaching ripens, I have come to realize that teaching critical thought through teaching critical movement is, just as my one-time student suggested, about taking risks. And risks, as calculated as they may be, have the potential to backfire, which, pedagogically speaking, is an incredible and challenging opportunity for learning, teaching, and growth. Making space for students to have the answers and preparing oneself to integrate student critiques in constructive ways might, in the short run, test our sense of instructor-ly expertise, but, in the long run, improve our teaching and models a performative suppleness that I believe is essential, most especially in this historical moment.

From classroom frictions and misfires, I am coming to realize that by setting the studio/seminar room/classroom as a container of learning FOR ALL, space is made for me, the instructor, to step off of the sidelines and into the inquiries. I remind my students that "We are all here to learn. There is newness for each of us in the material. And this includes me." And so, instructors and students alike should expect redirection from our missteps, our misnaming, our inadvertent biases, our triggering, knowing that our hard work of building together begins through moving dialogues in our spaces of learning.

LW. Thank you all for your vulnerability and realness. The learning I do with students and the work to be accountable to them is key to growing as an educator. It's essential to the kind of space I want to create in the classroom. And questions arise: Are there best practices for admitting shortcomings, acknowledging biases, and naming mistakes? What does accountability look like, and how can it be real rather than lip service? As a female young-presenting contingent faculty member, I find that many students aren't as likely to see me as an authority as my male colleagues, nor is there a general culture of respect for and understanding of faculty labour at the college. So, I'm often reticent to enhance this by naming my growing edges and inviting critique. Your writing reminds me that anti-racist, transformative pedagogy is necessarily humbling. And this humility is not the same as inadequacy. Sharing stories with other educators about what we're working on and don't yet know is a necessary part of the work.

ALL. There are many reasons why our students seem resistant, affectless, staid, or suspect to fully engage with what we teach. This work is impossible to anticipate and at times feels dangerous. Even if we have tools for doing this, the difficulty does not go away. The work is always a risk, but we are differentially risked, or at least are differentially received, based on our compounded racial, gender, class, and nation-based performances.

Remaining Open

What strategies do you use to remain open to and nimble in teachable moments?

Movement Prompt #6: Reflect. Using your whole body, notice what reflection looks, feels, and sounds like to you.

QMZ. Breathe . . . Breathe. I tell myself to keep calm and watch my facial expressions. I am committed to an open classroom where people can feel free to say challenging things and make mistakes. However, that sometimes produces situations where I experience pain from what someone has said; and, importantly, I can read the faces and body language of the students in the classroom and tell they are managing the weight of a fellow student's utterance. I tell my students that they can feel free to bring whatever they need into the classroom, but that we are going to "unpack" and

analyze what they bring in. I tell them that they don't have to censor their emotions, and even though this is not a therapy session (I am not trained as a therapist), they can be fully emotionally present in the classroom.

ML. I too breathe. As I near the classroom, I decelerate my pace. I practise several of the movements documented herein because, during the session, my body will contract and tense up. I will walk out of the classroom feeling sore. I take deep, methodical breaths before and after the class because I often forget to breathe in a relaxed manner as I facilitate questions, reinforce and correct answers, and encourage care, responsibility and appreciation of difference. I also encourage my students to be conscious of the necessity to breathe during situations that might trigger them to backbite rather than remain committed to be reflexive and to engage their interlocutors in collaborative work. For instance, my students participate in the following exercise, which focuses on stillness and active listening. After reminding ourselves of our class guidelines, students pair up and choose a current situation in local, national and/or world events that they are experiencing and in which at least two sides have been locked in enduring opposition and conflict. I remind the students that the onus does not fall on the bodies who feel oppressed and disenfranchised to activate the dialogue, nor is it an opportunity for some to use discriminatory and offensive language and behaviour as some play devil's advocate. Each presenter then takes a few minutes in silence and rehearses breathwork as they prepare remarks from their side. Then each speaks for their side with sincere, calm, and thoughtful persuasion and belief. As they do so, students are encouraged to take brief pauses to maintain a body-mind connection in regulating their breath and easing bodily tensions. They continue to do so as they absorb their peer's perspectives. Then, to interpret the situation and make change, they outline how they can find common ground as engaged humans and researchers. They breathe as they dialogue, pause, and reflect.

Movement Prompt #5: Pause. Notice what pausing looks, feels, and sounds like to you.

JD. Pause. Active Listening. Allow the sounds to come to your ears, to vibrate your flesh. Allow the words to be seen, let the images your eyes translate come to you rather than reaching out to them.

SFK. One of the things that I found challenging with the initial workshop we facilitated as a collective was that we really did not have a chance to PAUSE and REFLECT after our gathering was done. Our group reflections felt incomplete to me, and now, as we write together, I wonder if this is where our debriefing PAUSE is actually happening . . .

Pause

JD. I struggle with moments of the collective in relationship to cultural differences. I desire to be part of a we from our various complex and nuanced identities, without inflicting the harm that comes from a we that privileges white supremacist, colonialist, cisgendered, classist (and other) violences. My experience in most environments, especially in higher education, is one of exclusion and difference. A moment of respite aids me in moments of difference—notice your breath, the shape of the container of your body, feel your feet on the ground, the weight of your head.

Still mired in white postmodern dance, with its universalized experience, decentralized identities, and neutralized white privilege, I desire to continue to facilitate dialogues and experiences around strategies, tactics, exercises, and conversations about how to be together with difference in our collective movements (Chaleff 2018). How do we model something different together in our

differences? How do we exist in difference, together, with the utmost care? How do we promote inclusivity without defaulting to a universalism that is inherently white supremacist? How do we experiment and be open without expecting everyone to have the same experience? How do we un-privilege the calm rather than the anxious or uncomfortable?

The Circle[2]

Movement Prompt #7: Breathe. Move in a way that evokes what you are feeling in your body, at this moment. Pause. Whether you are standing or sitting, feel the soles of your feet on the floor, spread your toes wide. Reflect. Stay present to your experience. Inhale. Hold it. Exhale, making whatever sound comes up.

In this essay, Un/Commoning Pedagogies Collective emphasizes the urgent need to craft spaces for co-creating knowledge through our bodies and across our varied positions. As public political scrutiny of education intensifies, so too do the stakes of the work we do in the classroom. Our writing models the ways we build spaces premised on staying open and nimble in spite of the varied challenges we continually face. As we manoeuvre to transform our respective institutions, we recognize the pain caused by brushing up against structural inequities. We use the space of collective gathering and improvisational movement practice to air out, work through, elaborate, and co-create ways of moving intentionally against the grain of institutionalized white supremacy.

In this writing, we invited you to hone your bodily intelligence by toggling between your discursive cognition of what you are reading and what is resonating within your body. When facilitating experiential workshops, we invite participants into the work of addressing, unfurling, and tapping into the intersectional valances of the body in spaces of teaching, learning, moving, and becoming. In both our teaching practices and in our writing, we effort toward building a communal foundation; we do so by attending to the experiences, tones and tenors of our bodies, the strength of our differences, and our willingness to adapt/change/grow. Through dialogue, dance, embodied exchanges, and inquiry, we foster critical forms of collectivity that forge common ground, which feels even more crucial in this current political climate. Yet and still, we remain wary of commoning rhetorics that fail to address power differentials in the classroom and in our dance spaces. Our existence and humanity depend on these critical formations.

Seeds for an Embodied Anti-racist Classroom[3]

- Be present and stay engaged in one's body.
- Hold space for understanding, not for debate.
- Contribute to the listening process.
- Push ourselves to the growing, uncomfortable edge of teachable moments.
- Respect that we all arrive from different points.
- Acknowledge that our embodiments and words have real impacts.

ML. I make from, with, and through Haitian/Africanist ancestral legacies in teachable moments, within and outside academia.

AKJ. I continue to roll my waistline. Re-/Membering my hips, I wine to remember that this most intimate space houses a life-affirming portal between the spiritual and physical realm. Thus, with

each and every gyrating roll, I rebuild my heart and remember that my pleasure and power effect real change in the world, including my classrooms. And so, I endure.

DAC. I circulate, I flow, I home, I bridge—recognizing how my ease is structurally facilitated and reinforced, growing new pathways for courage and for my mobilities to subversively break through exclusionary barriers.

JD. I traverse—listening, activating, making in collaborative process with care while undoing white supremacy with urgency.

LW. I hover, crash, step into the dance classroom—working to be accountable to my imprint in the space, the history I carry in my bones, and the power of my location.

SFK. I move in contingent ways—honing nimbleness as I move toward expansive learning, teaching, and facilitating in collectivity.

QMZ. I move with polyrhythmic sensibilities—listening with head, heart, and soul to a multiplicity of expressions and organizing to collectively create knowledge and transform spaces.

***

Thank you for reading-thinking-moving with us.
The circle opens out, gains volume. You are now part.

***

Notes

1. I had been inspired by the generative Syllabus and Teaching Workshop at the Dance Studies Association Conference in 2016 at Pomona College facilitated by Rosemary Candelario, Meiver de la Cruz, José Reynoso, and Brandon Shaw.

2. The Circle is an Indigenous technology of gathering, participation, relationship-building, and knowledge production. As many of us are steeped in and influenced by Africanist aesthetic frameworks, we engage the circle as both strategy and metaphor for the recognition of lineage, building collectivity, convening equitably, and for the continuity and necessary ongoingness of this work.

3. These guidelines, which we offer as seeds to readers, emerge from our three-year process of working together and continuously refining the principles by which we want to abide. Our practice of devising agreements and guidelines adapts strategies from Urban Bush Women (UBW), the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB), and the Anti-Oppression Resource and Training Alliance (AORTA). Often called "collective agreements" or "community agreements," these guidelines should be agreed upon by an assembling group. They serve as important foundations for forging anti-racist and equitable spaces that allow participants from marginalized socio-political locations to be fully present and heard, while also decentering whiteness. This requires buy-in from the group with which you are working and should be continuously revisited and revised as needed. The agreement is an ongoing process and practice. In our classrooms, we devise agreements together with our students. When facilitating workshops and here in our writing, we share these principles as offerings for moving both outwards and inwards into the work of embodied anti-racist practice.

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Four Handouts

Ethan Philbrick

How does our teaching relate to our writing? For some scholars, teaching is thought of as a preparation for writing—a kind of workshop space to develop a bibliography and hone ideas in conversation with students. For others, teaching is a space to return to what we've already written—a space to share our process retrospectively with students and reengage with our formulations. I'm curious about exploring a different relationship between teaching and writing. Rather than thinking of writing as something that happens either before or after teaching, I want to consider the ways that writing is internal to the practice of teaching and meditate on genres of writing that occur within the scene of pedagogy. In particular, I'm interested in revitalizing a concept and practice of the handout. Often thought of solely as a dry, instrumentalized, and bureaucratized genre (i.e., a list of things to make sure that students know, a series of instructions, a prescriptive guide, etc.), the handout also poses the potentiality of being a more indeterminate and intimate space to explore modes of writing alongside and for our students. In what follows, I will engage in a brief reverie on the genre of the handout before offering four examples of handouts from my own teaching. I want to investigate the nature of the handout while also seeing what happens when writing meant for students circulates beyond the classroom or, in other words, when the handout is handed out more widely.

The noun handout has two primary meanings: first, financial or material aid given to a person in need, and second, a piece of printed information provided free of charge (Oxford English Dictionary 2021b). While this second meaning of handout is the version we typically evoke in our classrooms, part of what I'm interested in exploring here is how the residue of the first meaning—sharing out, giving gifts, redistributing material resources—might stick to the second meaning and how an acknowledgment of this significatory stickiness might reinvigorate our teaching practices. Handouts are a way to give material freely; they are offerings offered without indebtedness, gifts operating beyond the logic of exchange. In addition, the noun form of handout carries with it the verb form of hand—to hand in, to hand down, to hand back, to hand off, to hand over, to hand out. Handouts imply a haptic transfer, a taking hold, a moment of touch, a passing between hands. They suggest a kind of corporeal generosity akin to giving someone a hand—to help someone up or down a step, into or out of something (Oxford English Dictionary 2021a).

How might these definitional resonances vibrating around the sign "handout" invite us to write differently in and around the classroom? How might we free up our hands to write more imaginatively with students in mind? How might our writing offer a hand to readers inside and outside of the classroom? These are some of the questions I have followed in my own practice. In doing so, I am falling into conversation with recent handout analyses and handouts made public by scholars such as Roy Perez (2020) and Kayla Wazana Tompkins (2016). In September of 2016, Tompkins published "We Aren't Here to Learn What We Already Know" in the *Teacher, Teacher* forum in *Avidly*, the short form criticism off-shoot of the *Los Angeles Review of Books*. Tompkins'

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piece took a handout about how to encounter theory as a starting point for meditating on the politics of reading and knowledge practices. In a similar vein, Roy Perez tweeted a handout in September 2020 about reading theory as a thread (it begins: "theory is an effort by writers to make sense of phenomena for which we don't yet have sufficient language"). Perez's tweets circulated widely, clearly being used in ways that exceeded their initial engagement in the classroom. Both of these instances of making handouts and their analysis public took place in September, demonstrating an impulse from each scholar to begin the school year by opening the classroom beyond its institutional enclosure, encouraging more handing out beyond the walls that often delimit our teaching. With the hand that these handouts have given me in mind, I include the following four handouts from my own teaching as hopefully similarly inciting experiments.

1.

In the fall of 2020, I was teaching an online performance studies course in a theatre department, and my students were running into interpretive walls when we were engaging with works that were farther afield from the disciplinary habits of theatre. They asked for some tools to help them encounter these pieces, and the following questions were what came out:

Questions to Ask Art
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question formally: What are the foreground-background relations? What are the margin-centre relations? What is inside or outside of the frame? What is perceivable, and what is imperceivable? How does it navigate the relationship between representation and abstraction? How does it navigate the relationship between order and disorder? How does it look, sound, smell, taste, feel?

question materially: What are its materials? What kinds of technologies does it utilize? What are its processes? What are its contexts? What are its conditions of possibility? What are its modalities of spectatorship? Or in other words, how is it produced, circulated, and consumed?

question historically: How is it disrupting or confirming genre or medium expectations? How is it relating explicitly and implicitly to other artworks (contemporaneous or historical)? How is it going with or against an inherited idea of art?

question personally: What surprising feelings emerge in relation to it? What idiosyncratic associations does it evoke? What not quite articulated memories does it elicit?

question hermeneutically: What does it mean? (and what doesn't it mean?)

question performatively: What does it do? (and what doesn't it do?)

2.

When I teach performance-making studio courses, I want my students to find their own languages and impulses, but I also want to offer them shortcuts toward making works that feel rigorous and alive. In addition, studio courses are so much more enjoyable to teach when students are bringing in work that feels exciting and surprising to me, so selfishly, I wrote this with the hope that it might help me have more fun in the classroom.

Performance Composition Guidelines

Create from the conditions of your existence and work with what is at hand: your body, your feelings, your voice, your objects, your ancestors, your friends, your enemies, your stories, your obsessions, your curiosities, your texts, your images, your screens . . .

What are the political stakes of your work? What is the world you want to critique? What is the world you want to make?

Be in conversation with artists who have come before you—adapt, translate, cover, remix, cite.

Make work that makes you want to practise. Make work that makes something happen.

No skits or sketches. No nudity, blood, or fire (in the classroom). No performances that consist solely of you or your audiences writing on your body (unfortunately I've seen this too many times).

Technical difficulties are no excuse.

3.

I struggled for a long time to find a first-week reading for a freshman introduction to theatre studies course. I wanted something that posed big questions in challenging ways but was short enough to encounter quickly. I wanted something that would initially disorient their thinking but that we could then return to at the end of the semester to measure how their engagement with these questions had grown and developed. Eventually, I stopped looking and wrote the following axioms with my students in mind.

Theatre + World: 10 Axioms

1. There is no one theatre. Theatre means different things, takes different shapes, and does different things in different times, locations, and from different points of view. Understanding historical, geopolitical, and social contexts is necessary for understanding theatre.

2. That said, a few things we might be able to say about theatre in general: Theatre takes place in space and time. Theatre is an appearing before others. Theatre proposes a novel relation between bodies, texts, objects, and spaces.

3. Theatre is not political only if it is explicitly *about* a political issue—all theatre is political. Relatedly, politically engaged theatre is not only politically engaged if it depicts a political struggle or makes explicitly political statements. It can also be politically engaged in terms of how it was made (its mode of production and division of labour) and its formal disruptions (making something new perceptible, thinkable, and feelable).

4. Some say theatre is a mirror that reflects the world, some say theatre is a hammer that changes the world, some say theatre is a hammer covered in shards of a broken mirror like a disco ball, spinning in the light of an empty room.

5. Theatre is sometimes a space of fascist control and insipid diversion, sometimes a radical enactment of a more just world, and sometimes all the above.

6. Honour your pleasures, likes, and attachments but beware of sentimentality: just because something makes you feel something intense doesn't mean it is good.

7. If theatre confuses, disorients, or makes you uncomfortable, take that as the starting point of inquiry. The puzzles hold the keys. "I don't get it" is not a place of arrival, but of departure.

8. When you read a script, read it as a brilliant and yet indecisive director. Imagine all the ways it could be in space and time, and pay attention to details—read closely, deeply, and associatively.

9. Understanding theatre is a critical window into understanding the complex theatricality of everyday life and power relations.

10. Take the polysemism of the verb "to act" seriously. To act: take action; do something. To act: perform a fictional role. Blur these two meanings. Let acting training become action training. Confuse stage and world.

4.

I recently taught a more experimental course called "Groups, Collectives, and Ensembles." Here's an excerpt from the course description:

> This class is a hybrid scholarship and studio course that explores the political and artistic significance of collective authorship, ensemble performance, and group processes. Along the way, we will attempt to get willfully confused between form and content, between research methods and research objects. Or in other words, we will not just study groups; we will work

> as a group. We will not just investigate collective processes and ensemble performance but attempt to make ourselves into an artist collective and a performing ensemble.

To start the class off, I wanted to provide a text that could become a shared conceptual ground for our experiments, and I wrote the final handout included below to do the job. In addition, the conceptual and aesthetic concerns of this course overlapped broadly with a monograph I'm currently writing, and this handout, composed with my students' hands in mind, has become somewhat of a compass as I make my way in my own work.

Groups, Collectives, and Ensembles Axioms

1. To be an individual is to be always already a member of a group. Individuals are part of a grouping before they are individuals. Any group formation is a complicated process of regrouping.

2. Groups are both material and immaterial, both physical assemblies of subjects and the idea of the group, the feeling of affiliation.

3. The ground of the group is difference and finitude. Togetherness and belonging are potential side effects, yet dissensus and differentiation are of more value than consensus and cohesion.

4. Becoming more than one (forming a collective, initiating an ensemble, joining a group) is not a liberatory act in itself—it matters what you do and how you do it.

* * *

I hope these handouts can help encourage a broader tendency to write more loosely within our teaching practices; to give our hands out more freely. I also hope they can become part of an assembly of texts by scholars, artists, and teachers, such as Perez and Tompkins, who circulate the writing they do in and for the classroom beyond the classroom's walls. Let's keep passing things out.

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Pedagogies of Negation: Notes on the Politics of Refusal

Michelle C. Velasquez-Potts

"Politics of Refusal" started from the question: what if pain, debility, and suffering weren't states to be avoided but instead states that we embraced and used toward political and relational transformation? This question had long percolated alongside my primary research interest concerning the political history of force-feeding inside carceral institutions and the implications of medicalized modes of punishment for the practice of hunger striking. In one sense, hunger striking is concerned solely with refusal: refusing food, water, sustenance. In another sense, hunger striking is an embodied practice that is both self-harm and self-determination; it negates the givenness of the present while creating alternative possibilities. When the state, through the prison, takes away nearly all choice and all forms of relationality, hunger striking becomes a form of political protest to refuse state violence and control.

This course, like so many others, was motivated by my own research and political commitments. But this course also came from a place of curiosity: how would undergraduates approach "refusal" as a scholarly topic and an embodied practice? How might they understand vocabularies and performances of "refusal" in political struggles, protests, and visual art? How would they be able to see "refusal" beyond the binary frames of limited/generative and passive/disruptive that I operated within? I developed the syllabus to offer a multidisciplinary approach that engages with Black studies, performance studies, psychoanalysis, trans studies, disability studies, prison studies, and science fiction, among others.

We started the semester reading Saidiya Hartman's "Innocent Amusements: The Stage of Sufferance" from *Scenes of Subjection* (1997) and Tina Campt's "Black Visuality and the Practice of Refusal" (2019). Hartman's work laid the groundwork for the students to understand a pointedly Black feminist approach to refusal. *Scenes of Subjection* and Hartman's writing on the wayward, which concluded the semester, respectively problematized how Black pain and suffering are only discernable through the most grotesque and abject examples and illuminated the assemblage of Black refusal, movements, and sounds that imagine beyond state violence and abuse. Campt's work described and argued for various affective approaches to the politics of looking and listening to Black visual art. Indeed "listening" and other embodied modes of knowing and sensing theory, beyond merely reading for meaning, became a key feature of the way we approached course material in the weeks to come. Ultimately, both scholars helped students create shared language and analysis for considering how, when engaging with images of racial violence and suffering, there is no "pure" approach nor any escape. This is to say that there are myriad ways to approach images and texts, all of which are saturated within realities of violence, both epistemic and material. No approach overcomes power relations or our subject positions. Hartman and Campt suggest that the stakes involved in our individual and collective consumption of such representation are just that: stakes.

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Throughout the semester, themes of looking and witnessing violence took on different meanings as we engaged with authors such as Juana María Rodríguez (2011) and Chris Eng (2002, 2020). Their queer theorizations around racial abjection and submission helped us think about negation and pleasure in the work of artists Nao Bustamante (2003) and Xandra Ibarra (2014). In the final weeks of the course, we explored queer histories of AIDS activism and prison abolition. We read selections from the anthology *Captive Genders* (Smith and Stanley 2015) and watched the film *Criminal Queers* by Eric Stanley and Chris Vargas. And for our final class, we returned to questions of listening and discussed the sounds and poetics of the wayward in Saidiya Hartman's "The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner" (2018) and Octavia Butler's short story "Speech Sounds" in *Bloodchild and Other Stories* (2005). We felt encouraged by these texts to develop a reading practice around questions of violence and negation that is more sensorial and affective, returning us to Campt's practice of refusal that we began the semester with.

Because this was a course created for undergraduate students, my central objectives were first, for students to be able to analyze and describe each scholar's arguments and second, to apply these authors' critical tools to their own writing practice. But the most important objective was to challenge students to engage with theory such that they could develop the capacity and discernment to not only articulate but also confront forms of state violence such as anti-Blackness, institutionalization, and trans antagonism, among others. Some students openly wondered whether theoretical approaches could facilitate such an undertaking or if "Theory" was actually part of the problem, especially in the context of the university.

Below, I reflect on the trajectory of the "Politics of Refusal" class as the semester progressed. In particular, I pay attention to the dynamics of discussion as they relate to students' relationship to theory and to disability and care—topics that were ultimately the most salient throughout the semester. I consider what worked, what needed rethinking, and what possibilities were opened up for imagining new and creative ways to approach teaching theory during the COVID-19 pandemic. In short, the wisdom of disability justice movements and feminist pedagogy indelibly changed the content, possibility, and modalities for this class, and I hope to continue to identify practices to support all students' learning, even online, even in a pandemic and isolation, and even in an atmosphere that battles refusal.

Materialities of the Classroom: Notes on Refusing Theory

When I initially pitched this course before COVID, I was excited to share abolitionist approaches rooted in feminist/queer theory to guide the students' thinking around refusal. But by the time I had the opportunity to teach the course in the midst of the pandemic, my excitement had faded. I was worried about how to navigate and facilitate a course and syllabus structured so heavily around violence and suffering, and that its contents would cause burnout and fatigue. Indeed, in their introductory posts on Canvas, many students expressed apprehension about the emotional and theoretical weight of required course readings. On a personal level, I too was worried about the toll such a course might take on the students and myself.

Although the syllabus primarily focused on theoretical texts, it also included considerations of visual art. After the second week, however, it was clear that the course felt too conceptual and "abstract" for some students. Some voiced feeling anxious about being able to metabolize the material and contribute to class discussions. In response, I revised the syllabus, incorporating film screenings and

several guest speakers. After I let them know about the changes, students expressed relief. If I were to teach this course again, I would integrate even more visual culture into the syllabus because this mode of representation resonated deeply with students and often felt more stimulating than written texts did.

Still, many students did not want to speak in class. A few confided in me during office hours that they lacked experience reading queer theory, didn't understand the readings, or were embarrassed by what they perceived as their lack of knowledge around course themes. I was grateful for their honesty, but I tried to remind them that reading theory takes time and practice. Theory requires a technical skillset, much like math and science, yet the difficulty in these areas of study is always presumed and rarely resented. These conversations during office hours clarified the importance of cultivating more creative and expansive ways of approaching texts while supporting analytical skill development.

At the start of the course, I gauged students' interest in collaborative notetaking. Each week, students volunteered to take discussion notes on a shared digital document. I presented this mode of reading and recording as a disability justice-informed practice because it facilitated accessibility and created an archive of what we learned from the readings, lectures, and class discussions. This practice contributed to a sense of collaboration and thinking collectively among the eighteen students. This was particularly helpful to offset a dynamic where some students left class each week feeling that a handful of students knew everything while the rest didn't. Collaborative notetaking helped gauge the rhythm of the course. These notes also helped us to build trust.

Most importantly, collaborative notetaking was also the beginning of a semester-long conversation about the purpose of theory. For example, these were notes I wrote to myself during the third week of class while prepping my lecture on Lee Edelman's "The Future is Kid Stuff" (2004) and José Muñoz's "Feeling Utopia" (2006):

> Make a few comments regarding theory and fatigue. Moving forward, I'll signpost the next week's readings during class and whenever it's particularly dense, I will always provide a glossary of terms. But I also think it'd be interesting/worthwhile to spend some of our discussion talking about why dense theory is worthwhile or why it's not.

This pairing was intended to highlight the foreclosure/possibility aspects of pain and suffering from identity- and embodiment-based practices. Students noted and picked up the tension between the density of Edelman's anti-relational argument and the effervescent utopic promises of Muñoz's queer futurity. For instance, one student asked, "When there is a text as difficult as Edelman's, what is the point of it?" By the end of the discussion, the racial politics of the piece, and more specifically, the figuration of the "Child," became more pronounced and central to our discussion. For Edelman, Western politics is organized around reproduction and progress. As such, collective hope and investment in the future is narrativized through the figure of the "Child." We considered whether or not Edelman's polemic reproduced a kind of epistemological violence whereby the "Child" could only ever be reducible to the white child. Along these lines, the collective notes from that day ended with a series of questions:

> How does the author's own embodiment end up on the page? And what does this do for the argument? How do we push against figuration and what does this make possible, or more interesting, or more ethical?

Ultimately, our discussion began with "What's the point?" but by the end, it had shifted into a more meaningful dialogue about the epistemological stakes of Edelman's argument and the affective experience of reading a text that many felt refused to imagine a future for them.

Throughout this inquiry, many students suggested that theory itself seemed to function as a kind of negation. Some of this negation involved important critiques concerning accessibility and the politics of gender, race, class, and ability that have come to dictate whose knowledge production is deemed legitimate. Reading over the course's collaborative notes for that day's discussion, I was reminded of students' interest in what possibilities queer politics hold for a liberated, less (hetero)normative future. As one student wrote in the notes, "queer theory itself does not signify queerness, queerness is something that emerges from the everyday and is predicated both on praxis and embodiment."

This class was significant for two reasons. First, students were challenged by the difficulty and complexity of the texts. Second, rather than be dissuaded, students became more interested in the function, possibility, and limits of theory, even while grappling with the psychoanalytic vocabularies of the texts and how to converse over Zoom about such difficult material. Instead of leaving class frustrated by not immediately understanding all of Edelman's Lacanian vernacular, they were open to feeling out what was interesting and engaging about the texts—even if confusing. Together, we thought about when it was worth wading through the density of a text and when one might leave it behind. And as the semester progressed, we asked how to not only read texts but to listen to them, to the rhythm of the sentences and the sounds that emanate from them. This attunement to form opened up new ways to think and feel the limits and possibilities of language.

In so many ways, this was a class about the expansiveness of language, the language of theory, protest, the body, all the different organizing principles of refusal. What felt memorable for me facilitating each week was the attention we paid to how refusal shows up in an abundance of embodied forms. On reflection, it makes sense that, as one student framed it, they preferred Muñoz's utopic politics to Edelman's death drive because they understood Muñoz as saying, "things are fucked, but still, think about the beauty in the struggle." Of course, Muñoz and Edelman are only two thinkers, and not every group of students will respond in the same way when I teach their articles again. Nonetheless, I was reminded that so often, what we look for in the texts we read is a glimpse of ourselves. My students made clear that what they desired from theory was a blueprint for how to live. And that even if utopic, they'd refuse anything less.

Notes on Care as Refusal

It's not surprising that in the second year of the pandemic, our most animated discussions involved our relationships with disability and illness. For many, the pandemic continues to unearth ecosystems of care that have long been practised by those refusing to go along with the death-making of the state. And the responses to the pandemic, both by the state and interpersonally, have demonstrated the possibilities of care but also the individual and collective refusal to engage in long-term solidarity across disability and difference. Toward the end of the semester, we watched the video work of Mel Baggs, an autistic writer and artist who passed away in 2020. Baggs used a

communication device and identified as "non-verbal." At the core of their work was the idea that to fall out of normative modes of communication and language is to ultimately fall out of personhood. We watched two of their videos that explored the relationship between language and the human, ideas they expanded on in their essay "Up in the Clouds and Down in the Valley" (2010). For Baggs, to communicate in "legible" ways is to be considered a "real person." This question of legibility was important for the course, and we spent our time together that week discussing care and disability more broadly.

It was a particularly vulnerable discussion, and almost the entire class contributed. For the first time that semester, I could see my students really talking with each other as opposed to looking to me for approval. They shared their own experiences with chronic pain and illness, neurodiversity, and medicalization. The notes from that class centre on themes of abandonment and isolation. And there was a general feeling of being considered "too much" and a "problem" for many people in their lives. I was moved to see how my students responded to each other in these moments. There was a sense of recognition but also anger about how those of us living with disability or illness are seen as disposable and unworthy. I don't think every week can be this confessional, but I also know that this discussion shifted something for us as a collective, and the syllabus felt more material and alive moving forward. Or, as one student put it, "we must normalize care as part of being in relation to each other."

This experience made me curious about how to design syllabi that foster interrogations and practices where students engage with each other as opposed to solely with me as the facilitator. After all, this experience didn't result from something I did as a professor but rather from what students took from the readings and videos that week. The assigned materials invoked meaningful dialogue among students because they saw themselves reflected in the material. Part of what performance studies syllabi and radical pedagogies do is give students enough to consider, discuss, and refuse easy right or wrong answers. Put differently, what worked the best in this class was balancing assignments that challenged and developed students' analytical skills but also allowed them to provoke, contest, and stake out their intellectual investments and modes of communicating those investments.

Minor Modes of Apprehending the Social

The second year of the COVID pandemic was an intense period of mourning for students and faculty alike. I came to think of our syllabus for this class as one of mourning. Far too often, the readings for the week felt resonant with news of yet another instance of state negligence, violence, and/or white supremacy. Many of us were mourning family and community members that were ill or who had recently passed. I also realized that some of the authors on our syllabus had also recently passed away, adding to a collective sense of loss. The final assignment for the semester was a Blog Project where students brought image and text together to think through course material, and many of the students' blogs had a melancholic feel. However, what struck me most was their commitment to investigate the term refusal and not abandon it. How is it operative in photography, in gay rights discourse, in HIV/AIDS activism? What can the term do? So many confessed to having no idea what the term meant, and many returned to Tina Campt's definition or used the assignment to reflect on their own relationship to negation and rituals of mourning. One student created digital collages that imagined the resting places of poet Justin Chin and the Irish hunger striker Bobby Sands. They called it "A Place called Heaven." Another student created a playlist inspired by José Esteban Muñoz's text "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down" (2006). I was impressed by their willingness

to mobilize their grief toward creative practice and to approach the theories found within the syllabus as more than abstractions but as material realities of being in the world.

I also hoped the syllabus would facilitate experimentation in how we approach reading, writing, and listening to histories of refusal and political struggle. By the end of the semester, music playlists were being shared, and we were thinking sonically as much as visually, and in the realm of language. Zoom enables these different approaches to accessibility and engagement. It allows for the immediacy of bringing in voices from outside the syllabus without the anxiety of completely alienating those who haven't yet read or encountered the names. The interface fostered an openness to building connections from inside and outside the classroom. That the students were so willing and enthusiastic to go on this journey with me was deeply meaningful, and every week I found myself listening to the texts differently, developing an alternate attunement to how the sensorial presents itself in practices and moments of refusal. I found myself less preoccupied with "the body" than I thought I would be and more with how refusal shows up in language/communication and sound/noise and how each of these relates to the visual.

By the end of the semester, we were paying better attention to minor modes of apprehending the social that illustrate the beauty and devastation of trying to make sense of the different sounds that emanate from within us, trying to articulate that which might only ever be opaque. Perhaps this is what it means to be attuned to practices of refusal. The authors and artists we engaged with throughout the semester offered us ways to read and listen for moments of refusal in the archive while also providing the tools to consider how the archive—a text—is mediated by our own embodiments and positionalities. At its best, this is what theories of refusal offer us: approaches to how we might confront the unfolding violence surrounding us and the stakes involved in our engagement with violence. Ultimately, the constellation of theoretical texts and films we engaged with throughout the semester made us more thoughtful and critical of our desires to look and engage with refusal and negation. Most importantly, coming together around these authors and artists helped us consider what an ethical relationality might look like and what role pain, suffering, and negation play in such an endeavour.

Politics of Refusal

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Performance theorist Tina Campt defines refusal as "a rejection of the status quo as livable and the creation of possibility in the face of negation i.e. a refusal to recognize a system that renders you fundamentally illegible and unintelligible . . . using negation as a generative and creative source of disorderly power to embrace the possibility of living otherwise." Following Campt, this course examines how minoritized subjects have mobilized performative and aesthetic modes of negation toward political ends. In doing so, the course will advance critical approaches to what may appear in the contemporary moment as new forms of embodied practices that centralize abject states such as silence, self-starvation, pain, and debility in relation to not only artistic productions, but political protest as well. Students will engage a range of social, cultural, and political theory from feminist and queer thought to psychoanalysis and Black studies, all of which offer methods for analysis as well as objects of study. Assignments will include discussion posts, two critical reading responses, and a final blog project.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Canvas Discussion Posts

Less formal than the critical response papers, the discussion posts are an opportunity to pose interpretations and questions of that week's readings. I will offer a prompt or guiding set of questions to aid in your writing beforehand.

Critical Response Papers

Throughout the semester students will write two critical response papers that serve as an interpretation of concepts from that week's (or previous weeks') readings. These responses are less about rehearsing the arguments of the texts themselves (although it can be helpful to restate their claims carefully as you start your response) than it is a place in which you might risk a reading of your own creation.

Blog Project

Given the emphasis on visuality, students will reflect on course themes by creating their own online blog or website. Each student should develop a visual component for their blog. The visual component may include photographs (taken by others and/or by you), and could also extend to film, video, drawings, charts, maps, and beyond. Each blog or website needs to include at least five separate written entries.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Deviations may be necessary in order to benefit all of us, I will always notify you of any changes made)

Week 1- Introductions

Week 2 - Refusal and the Sensorial

· Saidiya Hartman, "Innocent Amusements: The Stage of Sufferance"

· Tina Campt, "Black Visuality and the Practice of Refusal"

Week 3 - Indigenous Refusals

· Audra Simpson, "Ethnographic Refusal: Anthropological Need"

· Nick Estes, "Indigenous Resistance is Post-Apocalyptic"

· Kim Tallbear, "Caretaking Relations, Not American Dreaming"

Week 4 - Futurity and Refusal

· Lee Edelman, "The Future is Kid Stuff"

· José Esteban Muñoz, "Feeling Utopia"

Week 5 - Desire/Negation I

· Film Viewing, *Children of Men*

· Octavia Butler, "Bloodchild"

· Samuel Delany, "Aye and Gomorrah"

Week 6 - Desire/Negation II

· Art Viewing, Nao Bustamante, "Neapolitan"; Xandra Ibarra, "Spictacle II: La Tortillera"

· José Esteban Muñoz, "Feeling Brown, Feeling Down"

· Juana María Rodríguez, "Queer Sociality and Other Sexual Fantasies"

Week 7 - Minor Feelings

· David Eng and Sinhee Han, "A Dialogue on Racial Melancholia"

· Justin Chin, "Bite Hard: Three Poems by Justin Chin"

· Chris Eng, "Apprehending the 'Angry Ethnic Fag'"

Week 8 - Trans/Queer Epistemologies

· Film Viewing, *Loxoro*

· Dora Silva Santana, "*Mais Viva!*: Reassembling Transness, Blackness, and Feminism"

· Giancarlo Cornejo, "Travesti Dreams Outside in the Ethnographic Machine"

· Guest Speaker, Giancarlo Cornejo

Week 9 - Spring Break!

Week 10 - Power, Protest, Destruction I

· Michel Foucault, "The Right to Life and Power Over Death"

· Banu Bargu, "The Silent Exception: Hunger Striking and Lip-Sewing"

Week 11- Power, Protest, Destruction II

· Film Viewing, *Hunger*

· Jasbir K. Puar, "Will Not Let Die: Debilitation and Inhuman Biopolitics in Palestine"

Week 12 - Visibility/Surveillance

· Frantz Fanon, "The Lived Experience of the Black Man"

· Ruha Benjamin, "Coded Exposure: Is Visibility a Trap?"

· Simone Brown, "The Feds Are Watching: A History of Resisting Anti-Black Surveillance"

Week 13 - Disability and Embodiment

· Video Viewing, Mel Baggs, *In My Language* (2007); *Being an Unperson* (2006)

· Mel Baggs, "Up in the Clouds and Down in the Valley"

· Christina Crosby, "Faithful to the Contemplation of Bones"

· Johanna Hedva, "Sick Woman Theory"

· Mia Mingus, "Moving Toward the Ugly: A Politic Beyond Desirability"

Week 14 - Queer Histories of Refusal

· Film Viewing, *United in Anger*

· Douglas Crimp, "Mourning and Militancy"

· Paul B. Preciado, "Learning from the Virus"

Week 15 - Refusing the Carceral/Prison Abolition

· Film Viewing, *Criminal Queers*

· Eric A. Stanley, "Fugitive Flesh: Gender Self-Determination, Queer Abolition, and Trans

Resistance"

· Mariama Kaba, "Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish the Police"

· Guest Speaker, Eric A. Stanley

Week 16 - Refusal and the Visualsonic

· Saidiya Hartman, "The Anarchy of Colored Girls Assembled in a Riotous Manner"

· Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds"

Acknowledgment

Thank you to the eighteen students who participated in "Politics of Refusal." The many forms that our weekly discussion, and your writing, took taught me new ways to listen and imagine being together in the classroom. Though mediated, I hope I did justice to our class's affective and political sensibilities. Thank you to Kel Montalvo, Sonya Merutka, and A. D. Lewis for reading drafts and encouraging me to finish. And all my gratitude to Karin Shankar and Julia Steinmetz for their comments, edits, and labour on this special issue.

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Pandemic Pedagogy: Snapshots from a Year of COVID-Impacted Teaching in Three Artifacts

Sharon L. Green

This article describes my experiences navigating the terrain of pandemic pedagogy—also known as academic year 2020–21—through descriptions of three artifacts derived from instructional materials I designed for my courses. Along with the hardships, fear, and uncertainties that permeated students' lives, the pivot to remote and hybrid learning required redesigning most of my courses—their content, mode of delivery, and foundational priorities. Questions with which I grappled as I tackled this work included: How could my instructional design prioritize building community, respecting mental and physical health, and creatively engaging with the topics of the course—in that order? How could I acknowledge and validate students' experiences of loss, grief, and collective trauma and integrate that into my instructional design? Community-based performance has been part of my scholarly inquiry, artistic practice, and teaching responsibilities throughout my career. Perhaps because of this—or perhaps because it suits me—my pedagogy has always been deeply influenced by Paulo Freire's theory of dialogic education and its inherent respect for students as co-learners. That grounding prompted other questions: What if students' emotional experiences during the pandemic became the subject of their critical inquiry and intellectual labour? How could I create assignments and activities that would do this? These three artifacts are some of what remains from the year, documents of my labour as I sought—often struggled—to care for students and support their learning. I am sharing screenshots of each artifact in its original form, without additional editing.

Artifact #1: *Fun Home* Memory Walk

My design for student engagement with the musical *Fun Home* was inspired, in part, by a workshop I took several years ago with Doris Sommer, professor and director of the Cultural Agents Initiative at Harvard. One of the programs of the Initiative, "Pre-texts," promotes literacy and innovation through its central prompt: "use a text as material to make art and reflect on the process."[1] I asked students enrolled in my course, "Contemporary Female Playwrights," to complete the assignment described below—posted on Moodle, my institution's course management system—which would result in a "work of art," in this case, a photograph. Those photographs then became the basis of our reflection and analysis of Lisa Kron and Jeanine Tesori's adaptation of Alison Bechdel's graphic novel turned Tony Award–winning Broadway musical (Kron, Tesori, and Bechdel 2015). I first devised this assignment in the frantic days of March 2020 as students headed home and we abruptly shifted to online, remote learning. The version below was revised slightly for spring 2021 when I taught the course again, this time as a fully online course.

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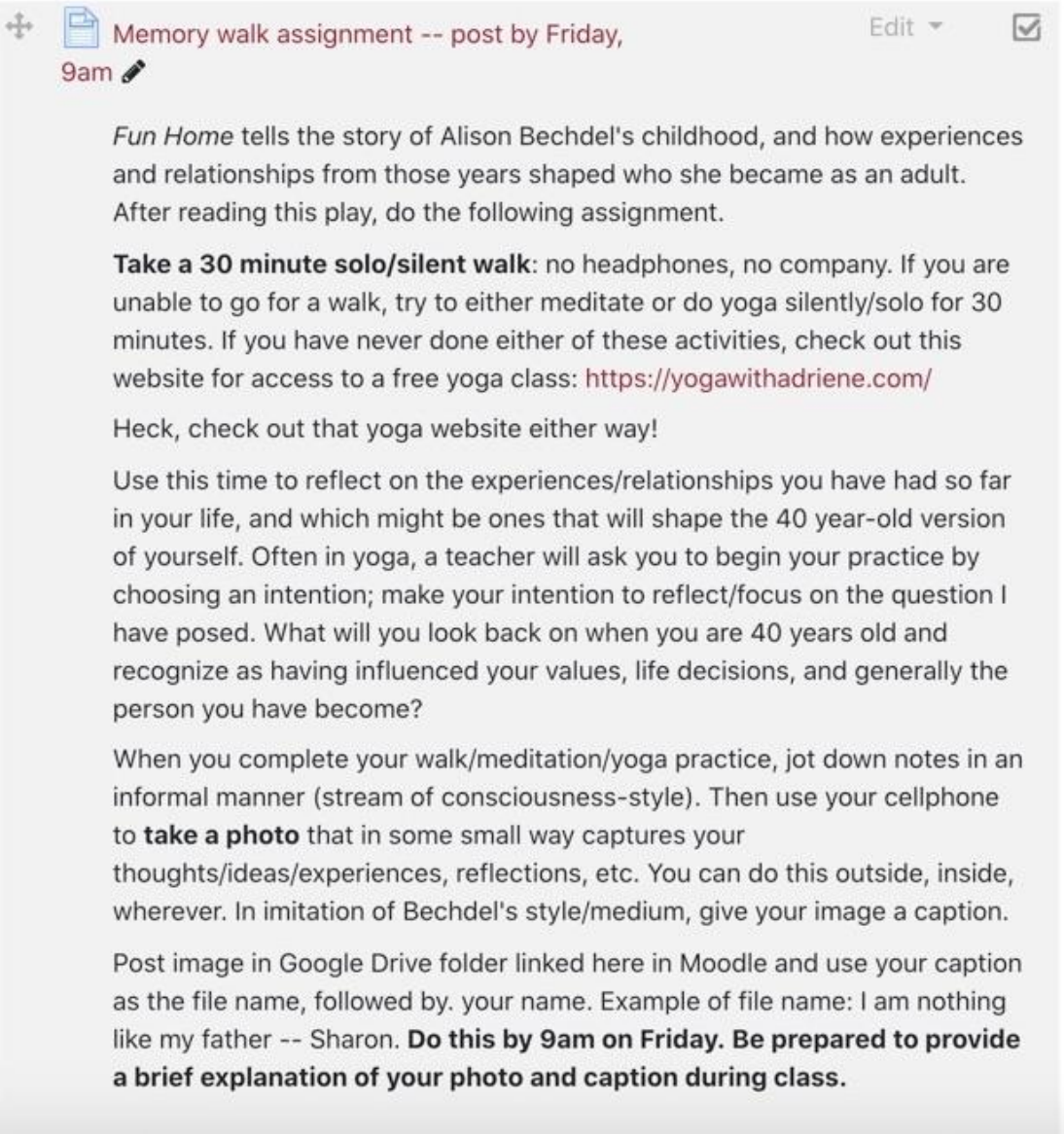

Memory walk assignment -- post by Friday, 9am

Edit

Fun Home tells the story of Alison Bechdel's childhood, and how experiences and relationships from those years shaped who she became as an adult. After reading this play, do the following assignment.

Take a 30 minute solo/silent walk: no headphones, no company. If you are unable to go for a walk, try to either meditate or do yoga silently/solo for 30 minutes. If you have never done either of these activities, check out this website for access to a free yoga class: https://yogawithadriene.com/

Heck, check out that yoga website either way!

Use this time to reflect on the experiences/relationships you have had so far in your life, and which might be ones that will shape the 40 year-old version of yourself. Often in yoga, a teacher will ask you to begin your practice by choosing an intention; make your intention to reflect/focus on the question I have posed. What will you look back on when you are 40 years old and recognize as having influenced your values, life decisions, and generally the person you have become?

When you complete your walk/meditation/yoga practice, jot down notes in an informal manner (stream of consciousness-style). Then use your cellphone to **take a photo** that in some small way captures your thoughts/ideas/experiences, reflections, etc. You can do this outside, inside, wherever. In imitation of Bechdel's style/medium, give your image a caption.

Post image in Google Drive folder linked here in Moodle and use your caption as the file name, followed by. your name. Example of file name: I am nothing like my father -- Sharon. **Do this by 9am on Friday. Be prepared to provide a brief explanation of your photo and caption during class.**

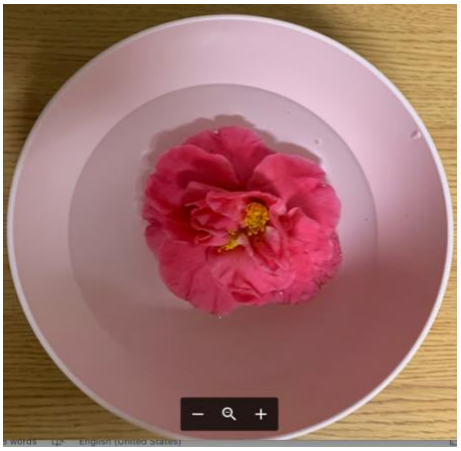
My goal was to get students to engage in the *work* of the play: reflection and analysis of one's past that gives way to evocative memoir. The assignment asks them to "walk in Alison's footsteps" and replicates the play's dramatic action but shifts the subject of focus to themselves and their own lives. In the midst of the challenges wrought by COVID-19, I wanted to validate student experiences and emotional responses to those hardships by reminding them that they could be the subject of art, perhaps even great art. While Bechdel's creative medium is the graphic novel, I opted to assign a photograph—with a caption—because it is a modality that is familiar and accessible to all students.

I also wanted to give students the space and time to *reflect* deeply on what they are experiencing *right now*—this was the rationale for a walk in the woods or a yoga practice. Often, students are encouraged to complete assignments, write papers, and just generally "get it done." In these pandemic times, I wanted to emphasize the value of slowing down for reflection and acknowledge its capacity to deepen engagement with the course material. Further, "assigning" activities usually reserved for leisure was my way of reclaiming their value in augmenting creativity and analysis.

This assignment requires imaginative, creative, and reflective engagement—all forms of labour that, in higher education, have traditionally taken a back seat to other forms of intellectual labour. By making students' own lives and experiences the mechanism of connection to the text, I hoped to demonstrate to them the value of those as well. In this pandemic moment, placing value on one's *self* and emotional experiences could be accomplished in the classroom, not just outside it. My design of the assignment was also intentional in focusing students' imaginative labour to a point in time *after* the pandemic was over—"imagine yourselves at 40." Spending time—even if imaginatively—focused on a post-pandemic future was a way of reminding them that despite its seeming all-consuming nature, there *will be* a post-pandemic world.

Student work in response to this prompt was the centrepiece of our class discussion; each student introduced their captioned photo and described its significance. In April 2020, just weeks after students abruptly left campus and all courses shifted online, then-first-year student Katie Stewart shared this photo she titled, "Because I knew you, I have been changed for good."[2]

She shared that the quarantine had a direct impact on her interpretation of this assignment: "I am stuck at home due to the pandemic and surrounded by more childhood memories than I would be at college, so perhaps that is why, on my reflection walk, I thought about all the important people in my life and how they shaped the person I have become today—my photo reflects my deep gratitude for all of them."[3] In spring 2021, sophomore Anna Kate Daunt shared the photo below, which she captioned, "Still searching for meaning."



In class, she explained that while on her reflection walk, she came upon this flower, brought it back to her dorm room, and put it in a bowl filled with water. Only after doing so did she remember that her grandmother used to do something very similar: "She would constantly pick flowers and place them in a particular glass bowl and leave it on her windowsill. During my walk, I reflected on how my personal and familial history influence my present-day actions and decisions, and I realized the connection I possess to my ancestors exists in the person I already am today."[4] Both of these students shared something meaningful about who they are and who they imagine themselves becoming, which fueled our discussion of *Fun Home's* unique structure of representing three iterations of the same character at different moments in her life. While originally designed to compensate for the limits of personal and creative exchange I feared would be a part of online learning, a modified version of this assignment could fit into a future iteration of this course—whether taught online or in person.

Artifact #2: Engaging First-Year Students in the Language of Theatre

In fall 2020, I stepped into a new teaching responsibility as part of a team of six faculty members teaching an interdisciplinary humanities course for first-year students. The course enrolls approximately ninety students, and each faculty member takes responsibility for a three-week teaching unit inspired by the annual course theme. I joined this teaching team pre-pandemic, intending to develop a unit for the course's theme of "the body," that focused on community-based performance and Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed techniques. I planned to combine workshop-style practice-based work with historical and theoretical readings about the field, but in summer 2020, knowing the course would be taught fully in Zoom, I began to question my choices. With fall swiftly approaching and my colleagues' teaching units taking shape, I wondered, what if the things students have experienced and lost during the pandemic were made the subject of their inquiry? The introduction to Boal's techniques that I designed—facilitated four times, each with separate groups so I'd be able to see all participants on a single Zoom screen—did precisely this, and artifact #2 shared below is a snapshot from my planning notes.[5]

I began the workshop with exercises that introduced the basics of Boal's image theatre and then invited participants (my faculty colleagues joined the students) to consider a moment in their lives when they had experienced **isolation**. I asked them to choose a specific story they'd be comfortable sharing with a partner. In paired breakout rooms, each participant had three minutes to share their story while their partner actively and silently listened. They then switched roles. When everyone returned to the main room, with the video off, they made images in response to the story they *heard*;

specifically, I asked them to focus on how their partner was feeling at a specific moment in the story and create an image inspired by that. With everyone in the main Zoom room, I asked students to "pin" their partner's video—this Zoom function allows viewers to make a single person's Zoom square the only one visible to them—and had them share their images in their "semi-private" Zoom space. I then facilitated a few different activities—or, as Boal calls them, "dynamizations"—based on the images shared. For one dynamization, I asked participants to start with their image and add movement to create a rhythmic gesture. With everyone else's video turned off ("hide non-video participants" selected), and the Zoom screen as our makeshift stage, I invited students to share their gestures with others one at a time. I then invited anyone for whom the gesture resonated to turn on their video, come "onstage," and join in the gesture.

I planned this last step as a strategy to magnify one of Boal's central ideas—that an image starts in the specific experience of an individual but is also connected to the structures of power in which we all exist. But in this pandemic moment, the exercise intersected with my choice to focus on "isolation" in an unexpectedly moving way. One example of this was what happened when one student shared an image that, when dynamized, struck me as especially evocative of the deep pain of loneliness. I recall feeling a deep sadness watching him, as he so accurately embodied a feeling that I suspected many others were also experiencing at that time. But then, at my prompt—"if this gesture resonates for you and your experiences, come on stage and join in the action by doing the same rhythmic gesture"—first one, then gradually a dozen other students joined him onscreen, making the same gesture. There was something quite profound and moving that happened in that moment of performance—and in its unfolding, as each Zoom square popped up, one after the other—and it caught me off-guard. Watching a dozen bodies appear in a dozen small Zoom squares, simultaneously executing a gesture—each in their own way—inspired by an experience of isolation felt like a kind of solidarity. For the students to see that their peers were also experiencing these things and were willing to literally *stand with them* and say, with their bodies, "yea, me too, I felt that too," was more meaningful than I anticipated. Students made themselves vulnerable by sharing their emotional responses to experiences of isolation but found company and solidarity in that vulnerability. It was exactly the kind of togetherness we all needed; our bodies may not have been sharing the same physical space, but experientially and emotionally, we were deeply connected. It was a fleeting moment, for sure, but when, at the end of the workshop, I asked students to share a single word—written in the Zoom chat feature—that summed up the workshop experience for them, there was a flurry of "heard," "seen," "validated," "reassurance," and "community."

Artifact #2: From My Workshop Notes

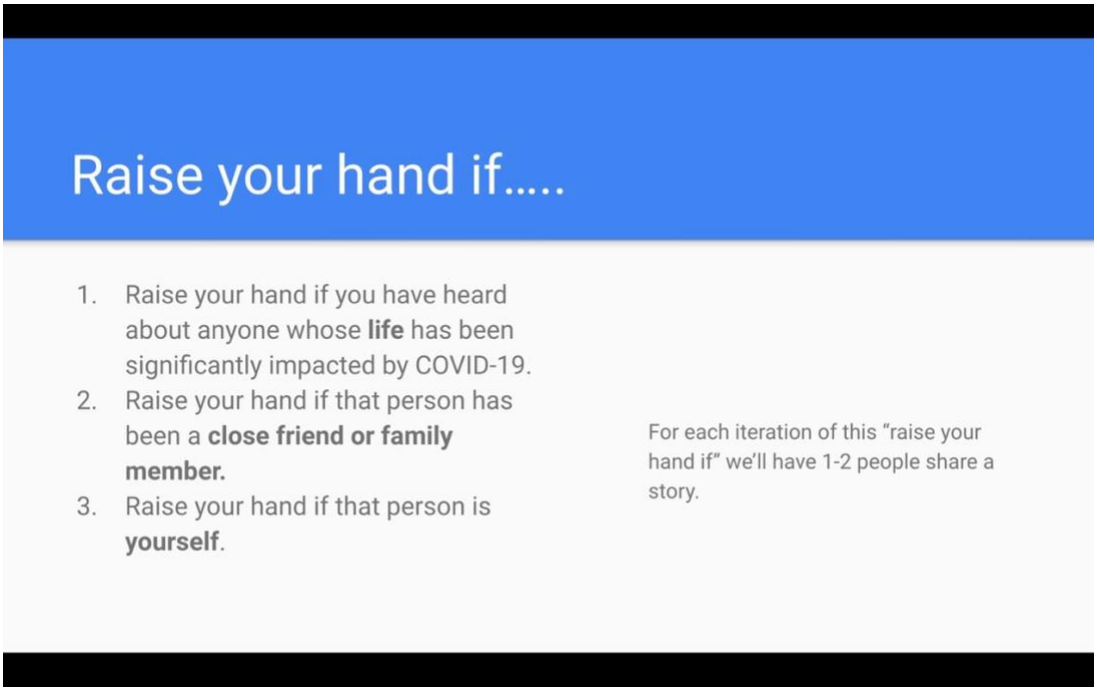
> STEP 1: Prepare breakout rooms of 2 (with 8 minutes on the clock). Eyes closed think of moment/event in your life when you experienced ISOLATION. You are going to share a 2-3 minute story with partner. PARTNER STAYS silent—active listening, but no questions. I'll let you know when to switch roles, then partner tells a story. Last 2 minutes for questions.
> STEP 2: SEND TO ROOMS
> STEP 3: ALL RETURN. Turn video OFF. COME UP WITH IMAGE—focus on how your partner was feeling at a specific moment in the story and come up with image of that. RETURN TO NEUTRAL, and turn video back on
> STEP 4: ALL SHOW IMAGES.

STEP 4A: NOW: PIN your partner's video and PERSON A share the image you created. Person B: TAKE A FEW Moments to observe your partner, and see/notice what they heard in your story. NOW PERSON B share image. Same process.
STEP 5: UNPIN AND RETURN. AT least one pair volunteers to demonstrate some additional techniques we could use to dynamize the images.
STEP 6: As pair shows images, others put in chat—words that describe what you see when looking at these images.
STEP 7: Dynamize—add movement/gesture. SHARE one at a time.
STEP 8: ONE person turns on video, shares dynamized image. TELL ALL OTHERS: IF the image resonates for YOU, if you have felt this too, turn on video and join the person "onstage" by doing the same gesture.
STEP 9: IF TIME allows: demo other dynamizations.

Artifact #3: Story Circle Prompt

Artifact #3 comes from my fall 2020 course, "Community-Based Performance for Social Justice." A class session in early November was dedicated to introducing students to techniques for community storytelling, including story circles.[6] In advance of our class meeting, I let students know that I'd be leading a story-sharing process focused on the theme "the impact of COVID-19 on our lives." I intended to examine the ways in which the pandemic had exacerbated inequities in the US and the range of impacts it had on students' lives. The exercise from which this artifact derives is based on a model I learned from Norma Bowles, artistic director of Fringe Benefits, a theatre company that uses theatre "to promote constructive dialogue and action about diversity and discrimination issues."[7] Unlike my previous two artifacts, this one documents the use of a familiar form—the story circle—applied to a new subject and conducted in an unusual circular formation.

I taught this course in a hybrid format. As this class session was one of our few in-person meetings, we gathered in a socially distanced circle in our studio classroom. A slide deck prompted students to "raise their hand" if they identified with the experience described, and it guided our work together. Artifact #3, which appears below, is the first slide in the deck and asks students to "raise your hand if you have *heard of anyone* whose life has been impacted by COVID-19." Slides adhered to the same structure seen below, each with three prompts of increasingly personal impact; the last prompt on each slide asks students to identify if the person impacted was *themselves*. After each slide, students who had raised their hands were invited to share a story about their experience. There were five slides in the deck, and in the subsequent slides, "life" is replaced with: job; housing; future goals & career plans; and lastly, mental health and psychological well-being. It was close to the end of the semester, and I knew some students were experiencing isolation and depression. I knew some were having a tough time concentrating and getting work done. I had intended for the storytelling to validate and acknowledge the range of impacts the pandemic was having on people, even if our small class size inherently limited the range of those experiences. Students shared stories of parents losing jobs or being forced to change careers, dire housing situations, and loss of expected income from summer jobs that evaporated.



When I posed the prompt about mental health and psychological well-being, I expected that many of them would know people in their lives who were struggling. But I was also aware of the stigma that comes with acknowledging mental health struggles, especially on a small college campus, like the one at which I teach. Because of this, when I asked them to "raise your hand if that person is yourself," I didn't expect many to identify themselves. *Every single student* raised their hand. The amount of pain, the struggle, all of it—I hadn't known. I was surprised by this discovery, and suddenly, I was so emotionally overwhelmed, unexpectedly, by the fact that they *all* were suffering that I wasn't sure how to move forward. I had to stop, breathe deeply, acknowledge my own feelings, and thank them for their honesty and willingness to share such personal material with the class. While the next step in our story circle process would have been—as it was with each other prompt—inviting those with raised hands to share a story, I didn't do that here. Perhaps it was the wrong choice, but it felt too invasive to go further; perhaps my own emotional response interfered with my facilitation and teaching that day. The revelation that we all were struggling, I decided, was enough. I reiterated the sacredness of story-sharing and story circles, but that moment was a turning point in my understanding of the range and depth of the year's impact on students.

Reflection and Conclusion

While I have spent the bulk of my professional life separating my teaching from my parenting, this pandemic moment requires that I acknowledge their interconnectedness. When I first became a parent—as a pre-tenure faculty member at an institution that didn't offer maternity leave—I knew I had to "hide" my parenting duties and the inherent conflicts they created with evening work obligations, rehearsals, open houses, and numerous other requirements. It became so much a habit that I continued to do it beyond necessity; even after tenure, I deeply felt the conflict between my identity as a mother and as a professional with work obligations that extended beyond traditional work hours. But this year has shone a light on the many ways in which my teaching benefitted from the insights gleaned from witnessing the pandemic's impact on my kids' experiences (and perhaps my parenting benefitted as I learned about my students' experiences, but the jury is still out on that

one). My sons—in grades 8 and 12—are very different learners, and watching their struggles this year informed and tempered everything I did in my classroom, from course design to student meetings and assignment leniency.[8] Initially, and wrongly, I had assumed that students suffering emotional and educational losses were those whose families had experienced housing or food insecurity and those who lacked reliable Wi-Fi at home or a quiet place to work. My kids had all these advantages, so I was surprised to discover the multiple ways in which *they* were struggling this fall—but this discovery increased my compassion for my college students by helping me see through the cracks and navigate ways to accommodate their losses. Through my kids' eyes, I watched hopes, dreams, and aspirations evaporate. I saw social relationships strained, changed, or erased. I saw uncertainty, fear, and self-doubt seep into their lives in ways I never expected, along with the pessimism and despair that followed. And I felt deeply the limitations of my own capacity to mitigate these impacts.

The challenges faced by students and faculty this year were enormous and divergent, and my own can't be encapsulated in these artifacts; these "curricular remains" provide only a glimpse into strategies I designed and deployed, but there are many stories about this year that they do not reveal. They don't tell you about how I fumbled as I tried to learn new techniques to keep students engaged or the number of times I failed. They don't tell you how demoralizing it often felt when pedagogical efficacy was measured by the ability to master new digital tools. They also don't tell you that for me, this was a labour of love: I love my students, I love teaching, and I love thinking creatively about new ways to engage with theatrical material. But it was also extremely challenging to feel my central priorities in constant conflict with one another—respecting students' limits and maintaining focus on course learning goals posed difficult choices every week. Skills I have cultivated throughout my teaching career of more than twenty years—community-building, lesson planning, curricular design, identifying students struggling either with comprehension/mastery of course content or mental and physical well-being—were upended by Zoom and social distancing. I was never sure what would work and what wouldn't because I had *never done Zoom teaching before.* I implemented a brief "check-in activity" every class session, which I hoped would provide useful insight into students' mental and physical well-being. One of those included asking students to use their hands and the borders of their Zoom square to show me how they were feeling (first physically/bodily, then mentally/emotionally/spirit-wise) on a scale from 1 to 10. Was this effective? It helped me to stay informed and to know who I ought to check in on after class was over—but never having taught in Zoom before, I had nothing to which I could compare its efficacy.

Reflecting on the conditions of pandemic pedagogy in an April 2021 podcast, scholar Miriam Felton-Dansky argued that the pandemic demands a re-examination of the work we all did this year and its relationship to our institutions' survival: "we need some kind of institutional reckoning with labor and with inequities of labor" (Bay-Cheng 2021). Importantly, in the same podcast episode, scholar Leticia Ridley pointed out that academics and artists of colour were *already* navigating a crisis before the COVID-19 pandemic: "for a lot of students and for a lot of teachers, we've been in crisis, with Black life continuously being taken. . . . There are those of us who are in these institutions that are constantly under crisis . . . all the time." Inequity and crisis pre-date COVID-19 and were also amplified by the pandemic's concurrence with the killing of George Floyd and the subsequent surge in demands for racial justice. The reckoning with racial and labour inequities, the legacy of grief and loss for those of us who make and study live performance, and what it means to stay engaged in the work of teaching amid a global pandemic will be remembered by what we leave behind, and by what we change as we move forward.

Notes

1. https://www.pre-texts.org/.

2. Katie is intentionally referencing the lyrics from the song "For Good," from the musical *Wicked*.

3. Katie (Davidson College, class of 2023) kindly reminded me of this explanation in an email dated December 21, 2021.

4. Anna Kate (Davidson College, class of 2023) kindly reminded me of this explanation in an email dated December 10, 2021.

5. These evolved over the four workshops—though I tried to keep the experience similar for all students, I learned ways of more effectively engaging with the Zoom medium in each workshop and so tweaked subsequent workshops to take advantage of my own learning. Some of those tweaks are visible in the highlighted bits in artifact #2.

6. To read more about story circles, see Roadside Theater, "About: Story Circles," *Roadside Theater*, June 6, 2014, https://roadside.org/asset/about-story-circles. This was an assigned class reading for our session.

7. For more on Fringe Benefits Theatre, see: https://cootieshots.org/

8. This essay was written in May 2021, and these are the grades my kids were in at the time.

References

Bay-Cheng, Sarah. 2021. Episode 48. *On Tap: A Theatre and Performance Studies Podcast*. Podcast. April 21, 2021. http://www.ontappod.com/.

Kron, Lisa, Jeanine Tesori, and Alison Bechdel. 2015. *Fun Home*. New York: Samuel French.

"Pre-Texts." 2022. www.pre-texts.org.

Roadside Theater. 2014. "About: Story Circles." https://roadside.org/asset/about-story-circles.

Stewart, Katie. 2021. Personal email to the author. December 21, 2021.

Collective Curation across Difference: Performing Live with Race, Gender, and Sexuality

Sandra Ruiz

Before the Making of the Syllabus: Curiosity and Conflict

Syllabi often materialize from both curiosity and conflict—neither feeling antithetical to the other and both possible entryways into transformative relationships between the educator, pupil, institution, and the politics of study. As a trained performance studies scholar, I have been riding the line between curiosity and conflict in Latinx studies for close to a decade but also riding a similar line within conventional aesthetic sites across the university. Studying minoritarian experimental aesthetics has been challenging for reasons that reveal how interdisciplinary units often unconsciously mimic disciplinary paradigms. Or, how fields built from states of emergency often fall into institutional traps that uphold methodological and epistemological hierarchies, and by consequence, militarize study, curiosity, community building. That is to share that the aesthetic is often conceived of as an afterthought to intellectual, social, and political critical labour and not the driving force behind life-altering movements. And, of course, there's the other side to this as well: as an ethnic studies scholar engaging aesthetics, I have felt similar struggles within normative museums and galleries on campus whereby race, gender, and sexuality are overdetermined and culturally subsumed by the aesthetic practice itself. So, in rethinking interdisciplinary predispositions, I have had to physically carve out space as a thinker, writer, teacher, and curator of contemporary minoritarian performance.

This course began by thinking about how marking space from within Latinx studies might alter the field's epistemological and ontological landscape and place pressure on more dominant art spaces to receive experimental art by artists of colour. Could creating this independent gallery within Latinx studies, which focused on experimental and queer aesthetics, reimagine this (inter)discipline's own ideological boundaries? Could reshaping the field reshape community formation and curatorial politics? How could this new space alter the larger institution's reception of art by artists of colour, minoritarian subjects?

Moved to find answers to these questions, during the spring and summer of 2018, I guided a community of seven women—artists, queer women of colour, and feminists of colour—from across the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus, to transform an atypical space in the Department of Latina/Latino Studies into a self-sustaining art gallery. From staff, advisors, student interns, alumni, and artists, ranging from the ages of twenty to fifty-eight, we collectively redesigned a copy machine/computer room into La Estación Gallery. For six months, we worked intentionally to reshape the room's architectural structure, mount devices by paying special attention to light and sound systems, investigate the artist's archive with the artist on site, assemble furniture, install technology, create on-site installations with the artist herself, curate our first exhibition, and secure

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funding from across the university. For all of us, this was the first time we had undertaken such an ambitious project, but we managed through the ebb and flow of place-making, ensuring that we created from a domain of deep conviction and vision, and that while evolving with the process, still placed pressure on stable categories of difference.

Reestablishing the parameters of infrastructure, labour, and curation would be necessary in uniting our respective communities. By reshaping curation into activism and collective reformation, we began to see its role as building networks and, by that consequence, redesigning kinship, as opposed to simply consisting of objects displayed against a white wall. This redistribution of power became essential to dealing with highly experimental art from within a unit often adverse to such practices, and it would essentially serve as a refuge for artists and students existing on the margins of more popular aesthetic sites across campus.

The syllabus below was created after the gallery's first successful year of programming, which included a retrospective of artist Erica Gressman's work, artists' residency, workshops, master classes, cultural events, and a live performance by the artist at the Krannert Art Museum—an event organized by the gallery. The syllabus below is a response to such success and allowed students to curate and create their own work in year two of the gallery's existence.

Collective Creations & Curations: Performing Live with Race, Gender, & Sexuality

This advanced undergraduate and graduate practicum/experimental seminar will teach students how to create their own art and performance pieces and then work collaboratively to curate a group exhibition of said art/performance. Moving between artist and curator, teacher and learner, this course requires that we abandon conventional ideas of making, displaying, organizing, and learning with aesthetics. Specifically, we will engage, create, cultivate, and share aesthetic work that extends a deep and critical understanding of the interplay between race, gender, and sexuality by thinking of modes of difference as an ensemble of entangled parts. Following a performance studies compass, we will approach both art (especially experimental and performance art) and contemporary curation—including exhibitions and media arts—through the lenses of critical theory, embodied practice, and collective learning.

We will work closely with one another as well as with visiting artists, scholars, teachers, and curators, to gain insight into the performative methods that will enhance a collective exhibition in La Estación Gallery, an independent aesthetic site housed in the Department of Latina/Latino Studies, and built from the ground up by staff, students, alumni, and artists. The gallery privileges experimental artwork by minoritarian performance artists, with a particular focus on queer Latinx art. Placing in conversation activist curatorial practices, aesthetic-life-worlds, and collaborative ways of learning and making, we will collectively create an exhibition in which students' work will be at the centre of attention. We will all learn how to work theoretically, creatively, practically, and collectively, always moving from a space of curious care and rigour into an intellectual awareness of self, aesthetic practice, and a responsibility to one another, including a commitment to our objects.

Gallery Social Media Sites

La Estación Gallery Website: https://laestaciongallery.weebly.com/
Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/la_estacion_gallery

La Estación Gallery Podcast (run by gallery member s.g. maldonado-vélez): SoundCloud & iTunes! @ La Estación Gallery

Internship Credit

After successful completion of all course requirements, including taking on a curatorial duty and making one's own art object/performance, students will receive a certificate in curating performance that is signed by the professor, LLS academic advisor, and an LLS executive officer.

Internship duties/gallery work will reflect the strengths and interests of students. For example, those interested in installation design will work closely with the installation designer; those interested in social media/graphic design will lead that area; those interested in writing will work closely with me to develop curatorial descriptions, wall tags, etc. As we learn how to both create and curate together, students' needs and interests will be considered and addressed. While welcome, no prior knowledge of making art or curating it is needed to be a member of this seminar, receive internship credit. No student will be turned away if there is a fierce desire to learn and work collaboratively.

Gallery Mentors

Throughout the semester, we will work closely with La Estación Gallery mentors to both create our own objects and figure out how to collectively display them. Dr. Vouloumis and Erica Gressman will be with us throughout the semester and available to meet online. Dr. Rodriguez will work as our consultant on internship duties, installation, and artmaking.

Readings

1. Curatorial Activism: Towards and Ethics of Curating, 1st ed., by Maura Reilly, Thames & Hudson, 2018.
2. *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse*, edited by Paul O'Neill, Lucy Steeds, and Mick Wilson, MIT Press, 2017.
3. *The Artist as Curator: An Anthology*, edited by Elena Filipovic, Mousse Publishing, 2017.
4. *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, by José Esteban Muñoz, University of Minn. Press, 1999.
5. *Whitewalling: Art, Race, & Protests in 3 Acts*, by Aruna D'Souza, Badlands Unlimited, 2018.
6. *Performance*, by Diana Taylor, Duke University Press, 2016.
7. *After the Party: A Manifesto for Queer of Color Life*, by Joshua Chambers-Letson, NYU Press, 2018.
8. Hold it Against Me: Difficulty and Emotion in Contemporary Art, by Jennifer Doyle, Duke University Press, 2013.
9. In Rehearsal, by Autumn Knight, Krannert Art Museum, 2019.
10. Basquiat's Defacement: The Untold Story, by the Guggenheim, 2019.
11. *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study*, by Fred Moten & Stefano Harney, AK Press, 2013.

Additional Reading Materials

Most required readings will be made into PDFs and emailed to the class, or several copies will be on reserve for students. In certain cases, and given the length of the specific reading, some readings will be made into hard copies and distributed during class time for your convenience.

Department & Gallery Contact Information

For access to the gallery, materials, available funding, please contact me (sandruiz@illinois.edu) and gallery managers and collective members: academic advisor & administrative coordinator Dr. Alicia

P. Rodriguez via email at aprodrig@illinois.edu or M. Laura Castaneda, office specialist via email at mlcastan@illinois.edu. They will be working closely with us throughout the semester (ordering supplies, advising on space, planning events, coordinating workshops, publicity, and offering feedback on planning for the group exhibition). They will also be helping us mount the exhibition. They help manage the gallery and will advise us throughout the process.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance & Active Participation & Conferences & Curatorial Practice

Active, careful, and thoughtful participation is central to the success of this course. Coming prepared to class will be how most of your participation is assessed. This means that you are given credit for thoughtfully participating when you attend class. Active participation includes participating in class and small group discussions, encouraging your peers to join the discussion, asking clarifying questions, sharing performance work, participating in curatorial processes, etc. Since class discussion and group work will be essential to this course, I cannot stress enough the following: our classroom will operate as an intellectually rigorous space where ideas are created and shared in the spirit of honesty, integrity, compassion, patience, tenderness, rigour, and generosity.

Performative Sketchbook/Notebook

Each of us will keep a performative sketchbook/notebook in which we will draw, diagram, and/or paint our ideas on topics discussed in class, on sites visited, and readings. This sketchbook/notebook is not meant to require any premeditation; it is to serve as a complement to reading notes, final performance ideas, and theoretical rationale. Approach the blank pages with curiosity and creativity, understanding that the only limits to thinking and dreaming are the colonial grammars we ingest and place on our own imaginations.

Final Performance & Theoretical Rationale

Each student will produce an original art object (this may include live performance, video, sculpture, photography, music, etc.) to showcase during the group exhibition. This art object must be in conversation with readings/theories/workshops learned throughout the semester; and, indeed, should reference the influence of said work in one's theoretical rationale and even on gallery wall tags. Citational practice is an ethical, political, and aesthetic project and should be honoured when engaging legacies of ideas, art projects, and genealogies of work.

Grading Distribution

Attendance & Active Participation & Curation: 45%
Performative Sketchbook/Notebook/Journal: 10%
Final Object/Performance & Theoretical Rationale: 45%

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Please note that the schedule below is merely a rough skeleton of our course. This syllabus is subject to change during the semester in accordance with both individual and collective needs. Given the nature of this course, class hours will be extended for workshops, master classes, and the curatorial process. Please commit to reserving Fridays for this class and be prepared, during the end of the semester, to work over hours as we create a group exhibition, and you complete your internship credit. Food and snacks will be provided by the gallery.

Class #1: Feeling Space: Curatorial Choreographies
Homework: See *Art Since 1948*, an exhibition at Krannert Art Museum, located on the main level, Rosann Gelvin Noel Gallery.
Assignment: Sketch out the layout of the exhibition; chart the art pieces temporally and thematically. How do race, gender, and sexuality participate in the essence of the exhibition? How do history and time interface curatorially? What do you notice about how you are asked to choreograph your body in the space? How is your body hailed, silenced, or welcomed, and what does this tell you about contemporary curatorial practices? Do you, too, feel staged? Stage yourself in the scene you've sketched.
Reading: *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse*.
(Read this entire book after seeing the exhibition.)

Class #2: Curatorial Activisms
Readings: *Curatorial Activism*

Class #3: Curatorial Ethics & Fugitive Study
Readings: *Whitewalling: Art, Race, & Protests in 3 Acts*, & excerpts from the *Undercommons*

Class #4: The Performance of Politics & Politics of Performance
Readings: *Disidentifications* & *Performance* (sections)

Class #5: Minoritarian Performance & Aesthetic Freedoms
Readings: *After the Party*
Meet the thinker: phone call with Joshua Chambers-Letson (we will be able to ask the scholar questions about his new book).

Class #6: *Curation and Creation in Resonance*
Visiting Curator & Scholar: Dr. Hypatia Vourloumis (Dutch Art Institute)
After Class: Gallery Workshop: 4:30-6:00 p.m.
"Resonating Practices: A Workshop in Rigorous Connectivity Across Aesthetic-Life-Worlds" by Vourmoumis (artist-scholar-curator)

Readings: "Repeating Brokenness: Repair as Non-Reproductive Occupation, Improvisation and Speculation." (w/ Gigi Argyropoulou). In "Repair Matters," special issue, *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization Journal*, June 2019.

"Processing Mary Zygouri: The Performance of Performance." *Venus of the Rags 2014 Eleusis: Mary Zygouri*. Fondazione Pistoletto, 2017.

"(Non)performance as Method." Introduction to Performancescapes: Fugitive Athens and the Arts of the Possible symposium, October 2016.
Research Centre for the Humanities in Athens, RCH site, December 2016.
https://www.rchumanities.gr/en/hypatia-vourloumis/.

"Settings and Steppings." (w/ Gigi Argyropoulou). Editor's introduction to "On Institutions," special issue, *Performance Research Journal*, August 2015.

"Ten Theses on Touch, or Writing Touch." In "The Haptic: Thinking through Texture," special issue, *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, December 2014. https://www.womenandperformance.org/ampersand/ampersand-articles/ten-theses-on-touch-or-writing-touch-hypatia-vourloumis.html.

"Come and See What We Do: Contemporary Migrant Performances in Athens, Greece." *Theatre Journal*, May 2014.

Class #7: Difficulty as Method: Creation & Curation
Readings*: Hold it Against Me,* Jennifer Doyle.

Class #8: The Artist as Curator
Readings: Sections from *The Artist as Curator*

Class #9 & Class #10: Making Space/Making Things
Making/Rehearsal Time: We will all meet and work together to start creating individual or collaborative art objects or performances to be displayed during the group exhibition. You will move between the seminar place and the gallery to start imagining your object and how it might work in the space.

I will be available during these two weeks for individual and group meetings with students during and outside of office hours. These will be two intensive weeks where we work closely together to be sure that singular/plural needs are met.

Class #11: Sound & Light in Performance & Curation
Master class with performance & sound artist/design engineer Erica Gressman
Artist website: https://www.ericagressman.com/
Reading for your reference: https://performancematters-thejournal.com/index.php/pm/article/view/100/167

Bring your work, object, performance-in-progress to class
1:00-4:30 p.m. Class Session Extended

Class #12: Making Space/Making Things
Rehearsal Time in Gallery

Class #13: Curatorial Write-Up Workshop

Class #14: Exhibition Preparation

Class #15 & Class #16: Exhibition
Final Performances/Two-day Exhibition Opening for *Objects Who Hold/Objects Who Let Go*

Across College Student Exhibition
Objects Who Hold/Objects Who Let Go

The group exhibition *Objects Who Hold, Objects Who Let Go*, curated by Sandra Ruiz and Collective Creations & Curations seminar, with special thanks to and guidance by Alicia P. Rodriguez, M. Laura Castaneda, Erica Gressman, and Hypatia Vouloumis, asks the audience to suspend their senses into the life-world of objects; objects who both carry and release personal stories of suffering, pleasure, desire, and abundant afterlives. How does holding onto a feeling, an entity, also force one to let it go? How can we learn to both withhold and let go of the very memories that bridge gaps between permanence and ephemerality? This show drives the spectator to embrace this tension of holding on and letting go as one engages with experimental works that demand a tender and critical understanding of race, gender, sexuality, and the exuberant life and death of all their differences.

For de Leon in *A spoonful of brown sugar*, the history of cultural pain speaks to the future of social change. Her ceramic installation addresses the frustration of being a minoritarian subject in everyday life by disidentifying and riding the fine line of invitation and confrontation. In gripping history tightly to preserve inherited memories, Segev in *Mielczarskiego 5, Łódź, Poland (subtractive charcoal translation)* embodies and resurrects kinship by both remembering and interpreting the past through charcoal drawings. In the three iterations of *the champ,* s.g. privileges the ephemerality of touch and being touched by activating queer failure and questioning the limit and potentiality of radical intimacy in video, sound, and live performance in the tight space of a bathroom.

In Coby's multimedia *Griefwork (Red Ice),* the animation of loss reveals the self-consuming, but also universal quality of mourning. For this artist, griefwork is inherently lonely; it's the object's presence that renders this singular act a plural engagement with the senses. In *Breathe with Me*, the quotidian act of breathing forces one to feel the burden of queer and Brown existence over an old tape recorder on loop. Reyes leaves one breathless in order to exhale a different modality for living under the precepts of colonial exhaustion. In a desire to be wanted in a world that renders certain life-forces invisible, Netti welcomes the spectator to share a breath with her. *Inhaling Over Time* sculpturally blurs the thick line between matter and life, human and institution through a press, a gentle prod, an opening and closing. In *Lengua Madre,* Camacho Valencia's mother tongues demand to be heard; in listening for the viewer's affective responses through video art, she restructures language, sound, and sight, staging scenes between a given discourse and a performed identity. For Contreras, meaning is material and spirit, feeling and becoming. In *waterless borders,* a photography-sculptural piece, cultivating a community requires unearthing landscapes for possibility by declaring an intention for something other.

All objects who hold on are also objects who will eventually let go. From video and sound art, sculpture and live performance to multisensory installations and performative drawing, these artists embrace the dynamic interplay of object, subject, and spectator in an attempt to forge affectionate new worlds.

Name	Title of piece	Material used	SHORT Exhibition Text/Description	Duration
Paulina Camacho Valencia PhD, Art Education	***Lengua Madre***	Beef tongue HD Video, Stereo	Gloria Anzaldúa teaches us that "it's not on paper that you create, but in your innards, in the gut and the living tissue" (*Speaking in Tongues*, 1981). Making art through the gut is at the centre of this piece, for your interiority is an extension of your flesh.	18 min.
Melody Contreras BA, Latina/Latino Studies & Theater	***waterless borders***	Dirt, collected seeds, photographs	This piece invites the audience to consider what it means to belong/not belong. As each person drops a seed into the dirt, we are left to wonder about the conditions that allow for anything to grow when material elements are lacking.	
Laura M. Coby PhD, English	***Griefwork (Red Ice)***	Red Ice: acrylic, metal mallet, light Soundscape: the ice that crackles, the ice that breaks; heartbeats & buzzing; a daughter's breath, a mother's laugh	The labour of mourning is often put onto women or femme-presenting individuals, and while griefwork is laborious, it is also an honour to carry our lost ones. Though any permanent recreation of ice is always already inanimate, this communal memory project is animated by our collective mourning, griefwork, and life-giving.	23 min.
Alicia O. De León MA, Art Education	***A spoonful of brown sugar***	Brown sugar, ceramic bowl and spoons, note cards	By providing a simultaneously private and public invitation to self-analyze and admit wrongdoing, this piece destabilizes notions of complicity and intends to quietly convict every single spectator. The audience is invited to select their own dosage of sugar, a spoonful; and while the sugar functions as a chaser to help swallow an ugly truth, it also symbolizes the sweetness that awareness, redemption, forgiveness, and knowledge inspire.	

s.g. maldonado-vélez MFA, Poetry	**Sound piece: *the champ: the sun stood over me all day (for f.a.)*** **Video piece: *the champ: hands into fists, buds into flames*** **Live piece: *the champ: to touch and be touched***	Cotton hand wraps, water, bowl, stools, flashlight, boxing gloves, bathroom, electric razor, electric guitar	These pieces explore the life experiences of The Champ, a Latinx genderqueer boxer, who deals with the implications of transphobic language/actions as well as trying to survive by fighting both physically and spiritually. The Champ attempts connection with their opponent through touch before a fight, enacting what Dr. Hypatia Vourloumis states in her third thesis on touch, "Desire to touch and be touched by the amorous other is always also the desire to touch another world." Includes excerpts from "On Boxing" by Joyce Carol Oates (pub. 1987) and "Transgender Dysphoria Blues" by Against Me! (2014)	Sound piece: 6 min. Video piece: 5 min. Live performance in bathroom: 7-10 min.
Katie Netti MFA, Sculpture	***Inhaling Over Time***	Wire armature, plastic, styrofoam, bellows	This piece is about navigating resilience as one discovers the importance of nurturance from those around them. While the source of this strength is often unknown, it lives deep in the chest of the body. As the spectator activates the bellows, a new sense of purpose is pumped inside the figure and metaphorically inflated with optimism.	
Tamar Segev MFA, Painting	***Mielczarskiego 5, Łódź, Poland (subtractive charcoal translation)***	Audio recording, charcoal, kneaded eraser, paper	In creating this performative drawing, I listened to an audio recording of my great-aunt speaking in Hebrew about her hometown of Łódź, Poland and her experience as a Jew during World War II. This piece is a record of embodied listening, interpretation, and the physical burden of inherited memory.	2 hrs.
Daniel Reyes BA, Latina/Latino	***Breathe With Me***	Recorder, cassette tape, headphones, artist's breath	This piece demonstrates the tiresome and everyday act of breathing for Brown and queer subjects. By asking the listener to lend a patient ear and	17:38.87 min. On loop

Studies & Psychology			to breathe with the artist, the viewer is pushed to the limit of their own exhaustion.	

Photos by Alicia P. Rodriguez

Pedagogies of Praxis: Exercises in Embodying Social Justice for Performance Studies Seminars

Serap Erincin

In my performance studies courses and seminars, I strive to create an intimate and intellectual atmosphere for a thriving professional and artistic community: these rigorous student-centred classes equip students with critical abilities that allow them to appreciate social and artistic performance as a force for change. Theories introduced in the classroom connect to practical examples out in the world, and students create work that they contextualize with reference to both local issues and global events and networks. I encourage students to approach cultural, critical, or visual analysis of performance and media with the aid of contemporary theoretical texts I introduce them to—ultimately, to analyze their own world. I also use embodied exercises to help students ground such analysis through praxis and connect their own actions to critical theories they learn and their broader concerns.

The following three exercises offer up a material trace of the embodied, praxis-oriented pedagogy that I centre in my seminars focused on analyzing and making social justice performance. In courses such as Performing Human Rights and Performing Activism, I bring together rigorous study of the foundational and cutting-edge theories in the field, analysis of sites of performance that exemplify such work, and affective exercises that allow students to embody these theories through their lived experience. My main goal as a teacher is to guide my students in becoming activist artist-scholars and critical thinkers. In what follows, I discuss exercises I developed to help students create projects that emerge from their personal convictions, desires, and concerns while relating to local, national, and global issues of social justice.

The Beloved Object Exercise: Locating the Political in the Personal

"Beloved Object," an exercise I developed over the course of a workshop I led with a group of theatre and dance practitioners at the International Istanbul Theatre Festival, provides means for university students to explore the connections between the significant personal stories they wish to share and the sociopolitical concerns they are invested in. At its core, this exercise builds on intuitive ways of doing and knowing. I help students identify, articulate, and generate work on the sociopolitical contexts that already undergird their emerging performance practices.

This connection is often not readily visible to them. Nearly always, they consider their personal stories to be emerging solely from their own struggles, personalities, and specific life experiences rather than stemming from and connected to larger social structures. Through doing the "Beloved Object" exercise they understand and *feel,* in an embodied way, that their personal stories, performance practice, and social justice concerns are intertwined.

Serap Erincin, an artist scholar from Istanbul, is an assistant professor of performance studies and cultural studies; affiliated faculty in women's, gender & sexuality studies, screen arts, and African and African American studies at Louisiana State University; and the vice-president of PSi. She is the editor of *Solum and Other Plays from Turkey* and publishes widely on experimental performance and social justice performance.

I usually schedule the first part of the exercise a month into the semester. By this point students will have already learned about core concepts in the field such as performatives, speech acts, presence, ephemerality, embodiment, and affect and the significance of various interdisciplinary frameworks, including queer futurity, decolonialism, and Marxism. Additionally, they will have analyzed multimedia performances, such as *Cornered* by Adrian Piper, which places significance equally on the artist's lived experience and identity (as a biracial artist scholar and woman) and broader social structures and issues (discrimination and racism in the US).

Step 1: Choosing a Beloved Object

The prompt is brief and simple. At the end of the seminar session, unrelated to any other reading or activity, I ask students to write down what their most beloved object is. I then ask students to share what they wrote. Very rarely, a student will have trouble identifying an item. Almost always within a few minutes, they respond to the prompt. Descriptions of objects sometimes imply their value—for example, "the last letter my grandmother wrote to me," "the necklace my dad made and gave me," "my wedding ring," and so forth. In almost every group, a student suggests an object of high economic value—for example, my car, my phone. I ask that students reconsider such objects or articulate why they should be their most beloved object. For instance, in one situation, a student referred to the significance of connecting with her mother through her phone and continued the exercise with her object. In another situation a student wished to continue with their car. This worked when in the next steps of the exercise, they used their car keys. Several times, students' most beloved objects were their companion dogs. For the most part though, at this point, students share descriptions of an inanimate, tangible item that they can easily pick up and carry as their most beloved object. Once everyone in the group identifies their most beloved object, I then ask them to write down why this is their most beloved object. The sentence needs to be formatted as such: "I love the bracelet my mom gave me because. . . ." Then they share these sentences one by one. At the end of the session, I ask that each student bring their object in for the next class.

Beloved Object. A graduate student with their companion dog and an undergraduate student with their plush toy dog practicing the "Beloved Object" exercise as part of Performing Protest. Photo: Serap Erincin.

Step 2: Thinking Big about Social Change

While the first part of the exercise asks students to tap into very personal connections, thoughts, and experiences, and connects to their past, this next step asks them to identify a connection to larger issues and encourages empowering imagination. This articulation is to be made independently of their choice of "beloved object." The following week, I ask them to think of something they would really want to do and to think big, as if there are absolutely no limits. I suggest they think about this as one of the wishes they would ask a genie if they could. I provide guidance that this should also be something broader and bigger socially or culturally in some way. I ask them to perhaps think what they would do if they had a superpower. The proposals need to be within the realm of possibility even if entirely improbable—for example, "ending hunger." I ask them to write down these wishes and help with the phrasing so they form clear goals. They then share and speak these wishes with one another.

Step 3: Embodying Impassioned Activism

I ask students to move around the space (ideally a black box or studio space but the exercise will work in any setting), choose a location, a position, and a way to share why they love their beloved object with the world. I encourage them to make their bodies and voices big, animated, and out of everyday movements and sounds as they do this if they wish. Students stay in their positions, and I ask them to swap the words that refer to or name their object with their wish. For instance, "my grandmother's necklace" and "ending hunger." The results are frequently awkward in some way, yet they always make sense. While practicing this exercise, students transfer their affective states to their broader wishes when they juxtapose the commitment and emotions they have for their beloved objects with the activist goals they have separately identified. The connection between the personal and the political in terms of activist performance happens through the embodiment. We certainly also discuss the ramifications of social policies on individual lives—for example, when we cover activism around AIDS, the work of ACT UP, and the writing of Douglas Crimp. Students intellectually and theoretically know and observe these are related; yet in doing the exercise, they also gain an embodied way of knowing this connection. I do not need to ask them to identify why they care about the goal of their performance—or papers they may choose to write as their final project. The connection is in their body.

The Obstacle Exercise

I developed the Obstacle Exercise by building on a prompt offered by a fellow actor while I worked with Kumpanya*,* one of the most renowned experimental theatre companies in Istanbul, Turkey. The company existed between 1991 and 2006 in Istanbul Sanat Merkezi (Istanbul Center for Art) until it lost its space. As a lab/research theatre with a long rehearsal process, training was a continuous part of the performance season, and actors would create and lead exercises as a part of the training. The theatre space we worked in was in an old building that had long wooden floorboards. These planks would often creak as we walked on them. The proposed exercise required one to walk from one side of the space to the other while imagining that there was a cat sleeping on the floor. Our goal was to not make any sound while crossing the space, creaky floorboards and all. This requirement introduced a minor conflict and tension to the simple situation of walking across the room, making it a theatrical event.

My seminars Performing Activism, Performing Protest, and Performing Human Rights focus heavily on minoritarian performances and also theories of civil/silent/still/peaceful resistance performances

of disobedience. One of the goals in these classes, then, is to establish why civil disobedience is effective in creating progress and fomenting change as opposed to more common and popular forms of protest—for example, protests centred around a march or a gathering and involving slogans and signs rather than silence or stillness. I developed "The Obstacle Exercise" to achieve an embodied way of learning why and how peaceful resistance works and how it operates differently than other methods of resistance.

Step 1

I start by asking for two volunteers to stand at opposite sides of a section of the room, with about twenty feet of space between them, facing each other. Then I give each student a different prompt, without the other hearing the prompt. I tell Student A that their goal is to reach the wall behind Student B. I tell Student B to not let Student A reach the wall behind them. We go through pairs of students and something similar usually takes place in this first step. Student A tries to force or trick their way past Student B either by pushing against or passing "through" Student B, who, in turn, tries to block Student A with their body or distract them with quick and nimble movements. The struggle is one of power which is achieved through superiority of either physical strength or speed. We repeat the exercise with the roles swapped. Student B tries to reach the wall behind as Student A tries to prevent this from happening.

Step 2

I ask the same pairs to perform the exercise. Except this time, I give an additional prompt to Student B. I ask them to, for instance, drop or lay down on the floor in front of Student A as they approach them trying to cross, rather than trying to stop them through a hold or blocking. In the nearly twenty years that I have had students perform this exercise, I have almost always witnessed the student who is trying to reach the back wall stop when the other student, without any force, simply lies down in front of them. Once in a while, a student will just walk past or walk over their peer who is on the floor in front of them. Even when that is the case, this seemingly indifferent action shows how peaceful resistance operates through revealing the actions of the oppressor. To a similar end, I asked some students to give a hug to the student trying to cross to the wall or turning their back. After a couple of pairs redo the exercise with these prompts, the following pairs come up with their own methods of civil resistance. In experiencing the difference between forcible resistance and "passive" affective resistance, students learn the significant differences between traditional and often cathartic means of protest and those that employ peaceful means—often the only way in which minoritized groups can protest and enact change.

The Obstacle Exercise, Step 1. Students performing the first part of the "Obstacle Exercise" as part of Performing Protest. Photo: Serap Erincin.

The Photo Exercise

Borrowing and building on an exercise in an Introduction to Performance Studies seminar taught by José Esteban Muñoz that I took during my graduate studies at New York University, I developed what I call "The Photo Exercise" to help students engage with materiality in their projects. I ask students to read Roland Barthes's book *Camera Lucida* and focus on his distinction between the *punctum* (an aspect of a photograph that affects one individually) and the *studium* (that aspect that is visible to everyone) through photography. I ask them to think of a photograph that "pricks" them in the way Barthes describes, and ask that they bring a physical copy of the photograph to the next class session. The following week, each student introduces the photo they have chosen. I then ask them to expand on the *studium* and the *punctum* in these photographs.

In the following round, we hear what everyone considers to be the punctum in each photo. Just by hearing how each of their peers is affected by something different in their own photo, through one simple exercise, students gain an embodied understanding of subjectivity, poststructuralist theory, and intentionality. I suggest that they consider if they wish for the spectators of their projects to make the performances their own or if they want to communicate a very clear message that will be understood similarly by all. I ask them whether they want their performances to become an experience or to tell a message to the audience. The photo exercise intrinsically teaches students how to create spaces of imagination in any multimedia medium to allow spectators to make the material their own, have an affective experience, and become personally invested. Students who mainly wish to create awareness about social justice issues through their performances can choose to allow less spaces of imagination and be intentional in choreographing specific messages in their works. Others who desire their performances to result in action and involvement may choose to create more spaces

of imagination in their performances. The exercise helps students become aware of their own agency in ways of enacting change.

The Obstacle Exercise, Step 2. Students performing the second part of the "Obstacle Exercise" as part of Performing Protest. Photo: Serap Erincin.

I consider this same question while preparing my assignments and course materials. Certain exercises and assignments exist to provide students with valuable context and to introduce them to genealogies of ideas within the fields of performance studies and social justice. Other exercises, such as the three examples I offer above, aim to create spaces for imagination and allow ways of doing so that the students can make the material their own, metabolizing the learning material through their lived experience and approach embodiment as a tool for worldmaking.

References

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Bathtub Dramaturgy: An Experimental Syllabus for Theatre and Performance Studies Classrooms

Chloë Rae Edmonson

On March 22, 2020, Madonna uploaded an Instagram video of herself in a bathtub filled with milky-white water sprinkled with crimson flower petals. The international pop superstar made the post just nine days after former US President Donald Trump declared COVID-19 a national emergency. At the time, many Americans were either in their first week of lockdown inside their homes or risking their health to report to essential jobs, and countless businesses and public institutions had closed for the foreseeable future. Madonna's posture in her tub embodies the tense cultural atmosphere; with knees bent to her chest and hair pulled back from her face with a barrette, she grips the faucet knobs and holds a downward gaze towards the opaque water. She glances up only a few times to make eye contact with a handheld camera, which shakily records her from above. With foreboding piano music by Roger and Brian Eno playing in the background, Madonna speaks slowly and in a serious tone, portending that COVID-19 would be a "great equalizer" because it would not discriminate based on social markers such as wealth, fame, education, or beauty. Of course, quite the inverse came true, as the virus proceeded to disproportionately devastate poor and minority communities across the globe.[1] Indeed, Madonna's bathtub monologue was immediately and widely criticized for its tactlessness—both in the comments on Instagram and by the tabloid media—and the video was eventually deleted. Today, portions of it remain viewable on YouTube, a surreal relic of the early days of the pandemic, when so much was unknown.

From a historical perspective, Madonna's video earmarks a cultural moment when celebrities littered the Internet with all kinds of cringeworthy content attempting to wax poetic over the new global health crisis. Like so many Americans living in isolation, these famous personalities were grappling to make sense of the chaos; however, some celebrities performed these anxieties in very public online spaces and with little acknowledgment of the enormous wealth and privilege they possessed relative to the general population. From a performance studies perspective, what especially piques my interest about Madonna's video is its location: her bathtub at home, an otherwise private space rendered public by the extraordinariness of the moment. The background footage captures the stunning whiteness of her pristine bathroom: white tub, white walls, white votive candles, and a folded white hand towel perched on the smooth white tile ledge behind her. This exquisitely hygienic theatrical set provides an ironic contrast to the pop goddess's closing adage that "if the ship goes down, we're all going down together." In response, one commenter drily posed the rhetorical question, "do you really think we're going down together while you're in your bathtub having people working for you to be there?" (Owoseje 2020). Their observation reveals how bathtubs are at once universal in basic functionality, yet infinitely divisive in design, accessibility, and context. For example, Madonna's ability to use her bathtub in private and without assistance already entails the particularities of her privilege and abilities. The bathtub can be a multivalent container for performance, especially during an era of acute collective anxiety around hygiene practices and inequities surrounding wealth, housing, and healthcare.

Chloë Rae Edmonson teaches theatre history and leads the student dramaturgy program at the University of Central Florida. Her forthcoming book *America Under the Influence* investigates the intersection of drinking cultures with theatre and performance, particularly in immersive environments.

Yet Madonna's infamous Instagram post was not the first bathtub performance to ever exist, nor would it be the last in the context of our global pandemic. As a practising dramaturg and college theatre educator, this video brought the genre of bathtub performance to my attention, not only as a scholarly topic of interest but as a pedagogical means of analyzing social performances in their cultural and historical context. Like many educators in the spring of 2020, I was struggling to adjust to online teaching and feeling overwhelmed by the task of curating virtual content for my students. Below I present a selection of bathtub performances I began collecting in 2020 as part of my own dramaturgical and scholarly practice. I have discovered that the odd topic of bathtub performance presents opportunities not only for broad coverage and deep engagement in the classroom but also for case studies and assignments that motivate student imagination and critical thinking. As a methodology, I propose a teaching approach grounded in dramaturgy because it confounds the apparent dichotomy between theory and practice. My own creative practice has led me to the conviction that dramaturgy is best learned by doing; this syllabus allows students to develop their dramaturgical skills around a common theme (bathtub performance). In the remainder of this essay, I will demonstrate how professors and students might employ dramaturgical methods within units comprising a class entitled "Bathtub Dramaturgy." The ultimate goal of this essay, though, is to put forward methods that can be applied across an expansive range of theatre and performance studies topics.

Dramaturgy, Teaching, and Learning

Many educators working in the fields of theatre and performance studies will recognize two pedagogical quandaries at the heart of this essay. First, there is the relatively universal challenge of creating syllabi that balance breadth (the amount of content covered) with depth (the duration and degree of engagement with individual concepts). Indeed, some instructors must meet departmental requirements in terms of breadth; on the other hand, as specialists, we are often excited to share with students the deeper nuances within our various areas of study. Yet research shows the best learning outcomes occur not necessarily when students are assigned more content but when they are motivated (Beghetto 2004), engaged in active learning (Cronin 2014), and when their curiosity is aroused (Bain 2014). A second pedagogical concern is one perennially at the heart of our disciplines: the perceived divide between theory and practice. In many theatre departments, for example, there are classes on literature and history operating quite separately from classes on acting and directing. In performance studies, we might witness an antagonistic relationship between "critic" and "artist" manifest in class discussions. I imagine a classroom that empowers students and instructors to navigate these fundamental tensions (breadth vs. depth and theory vs. practice) together, and the experimental syllabus below offers some strategies for the theatre and performance studies classroom. The course reflects my view that dramaturgy offers tools not only for teachers designing curricula but for students in pursuit of answers to the intellectual and artistic questions that matter most to them. Dramaturg and professor Peter Eckersall similarly claims that dramaturgy productively "blurs distinctions" between ideas and practice and can be applied not just to theatre but "to a diversity of artistic practices and media as well as social activities and the everyday" (Eckersall 2018, 241). This opens the question: *what is dramaturgy?*

Many scholars attribute dramaturgy's foundations to German writer Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, an eighteenth-century collection of essays on theatrical theory, performance methodology, and the social function of theatre. Today, there are as many approaches to dramaturgy as there are dramaturgs, and definitions vary widely across individuals and

institutions.[2] Some professional dramaturgs specialize in developing new works in collaboration with playwrights and other artists. Others work directly as members of production teams to conduct research that grounds and contextualizes a particular performance. Still other dramaturgs (sometimes synonymous or overlapping with the role of "literary manager") work in-house at regional theatres, writing grants and aiding in season selection. Despite variables in the profession, certain core practices are essential to good dramaturgy: research, development, world-building, engagement, and performance. By developing these foci in a classroom environment, students of all disciplines (not just aspiring dramaturgs) can gain valuable writing, critical inquiry, and presentation skills. Below I have organized my experimental syllabus in units coinciding with these essential dramaturgical practices. The performances I have selected take place in and around bathtubs, which I believe to be a rich site for analysis, especially in the context of a pandemic that has drastically altered the usually embodied relationship between artist and audiences. Thinking toward future curricula, however, I believe we can apply dramaturgy as a pedagogical methodology to an array of timely content, depending on the course, the interests of the students and professor, and the institutional context.

On Bathtubs

There is no bathtub inside my home in Orlando, Florida, but my thinking turned to tubs in March 2020 after viewing the Madonna video and the consequent public scandal. Weeks later, in May, Erin B. Mee (the artistic director of This Is Not A Theatre Company and a colleague from my days in New York City) fortuitously invited me to attend her company's show *Play in Your Bathtub: An Immersive Audio Spa for Physical Distancing*. The short audio play is meant to be experienced while taking a bath or footbath, featuring an auditory mélange of sounds, poetry, singing, and music designed to soothe and inspire. It is theatre as self-care, designed to soothe a multitude of stressors brought by the new (at the time) pandemic upon our minds and bodies. I participated in the performance using a large plastic bin as a footbath, and the experience reminded me of another performance entitled *Broken Bone Bathtub*, a solo bathtub show by artist Siobhan O'Loughlin I had seen in Winter 2019 while teaching a "Performance in New York City" course at New York University. O'Loughlin's live piece, which she performs while taking a bath, is based on her own experience after a life-altering bicycle accident; it is what you might call site-responsive because it simply requires a host, their bathtub, and a small audience (the size of which depends on the capacity of the bathroom). Like Mee's *Play in Your Bathtub,* O'Loughlin's performance centres on themes of healing and self-compassion during and after personal hardships. In January 2019, O'Loughlin kindly agreed to visit my class to talk about her work, and one particularly valuable insight she offered students was to think outside the budgetary and institutional constraints of making proscenium theatre in an established venue. She suggested that aspiring artists can make art not only in bathtubs but in parking lots, kitchens, and other found or public space. Little did we know, this advice was especially prescient in advance of COVID-19, which enormously compounded the existing pressure on artists and venues to save money, find space, and compete with virtual forms of entertainment.

With these two performances in mind, I began to think about how bathtub art transforms the domestic space of actual, functional bathrooms into live performance spaces. I considered how the tub can be a site of meditation and reflection, where we can be alone with our thoughts, even if for just a few minutes of the day. Sometimes, the silent solitude of the bathtub leaves us alone with our deepest fears and anxieties for the future. Of course, the bathtub is also a splashy place for joy, song, and child's play. For some, it is a space for childbirth. The bathtub can also be a place for nakedness,

sensuality, and sexual expression. There are acts of care and domesticity playing out in bathtubs across the world, such as the intimate act of bathing an elderly or injured loved one. As I began to construct a broader genealogy of bathtub performances, I realized how much daily life plays out in these mundane spaces—cleansing, rejoicing, crying, praying. At the same time, however, bathrooms more generally have become increasingly politicized as US legislators have attempted to advance or block "bathroom bills," which dictate who can and cannot use public facilities based on their gender identity. Therefore, although bathtubs may be relatively ubiquitous, we cannot presume any universality in their meaning or accessibility. The "Bathtub Dramaturgy" syllabus below explores such paradoxes and complexities through individualized readings and in-person discussions.

Each unit in the proposed course explores a different facet of dramaturgical practice with corresponding assignments that challenge students to practise essential research, writing, and communication skills. These assignments culminate in a final project: the presentation of students' own devised bathtub performances. What distinguishes this course from other devised theatre and performance as research classes, however, is the application of dramaturgy as the operative methodology; specifically, the course frames dramaturgy as the dynamic labour of building relationships with and between playwrights, technicians, designers, directors, actors, audience, communities, and institutions. As such, this course tasks student dramaturgs to consider the wider impacts of creating and presenting a given performance. In practice, this means that each unit contains at least one class session in which students collaborate with a peer dramaturg, who will actively listen and ask questions designed to strengthen and clarify the performance piece. In this same vein, the course also includes an excerpt from Chelsea Pace's *Staging Sex,* a pivotal text on intimacy training, which is dramaturgical in the sense that it focuses on fostering healthy and safe channels between performers, directors, collaborators, and viewers. Lastly, the final unit implements Liz Lerman's techniques for constructive criticism—another essential dramaturgical skill. These approaches lay the cumulative groundwork for students to continue fostering creative collaborations using dramaturgy as a guiding method long after the course has concluded.

For many of us, the pandemic intensified the emotionality of daily life by isolating us from friends, loved ones, and even strangers with whom we would normally share embodied experiences. As restorative pedagogy, this syllabus envisions an in-person classroom where students can collectively explore the relationship between public and private through bathtubs as a microcosm for the complexity of human experience.

Bathtub Dramaturgy
A Syllabus

Such a lovely day
And I'm writing just to tell you
I only slipped and drowned
In the bathtub of the world

—Tyler Burkhart, "In the Bathtub of the World" (2015)

Learning Objectives

This course investigates various sites of bathtub performance using dramaturgical methods. In this class, students will:

- Conduct, organize, and present original **Research** on performances and their context.
- Hone strategies for the **Development** of new works and works-in-process.
- Develop collaborative and solo processes for creative **World-Building**.
- Practice methods of **Engagement** with artists and audiences.
- Devise and present a unique **Performance** using the dramaturgical approaches above.

Assignments

Unit 1: Mini Casebook
Unit 2: Guest Artist Interview Questions
Unit 3: World-Building Song Assignment (Small Groups)
Unit 4: Audience Engagement Proposal (Partners)
Unit 5: Public/Private Written Reflection

Final Performance (in stages)
Stage 1: Research of the Self
Stage 2: Developing the Self
Stage 3: World-Building Wish List
Stage 4: Rehearsal Journal
Stage 5: Final Performance and Casebook

Content

Unit 1: Research

Many dramaturgs are researchers at heart. The research we do gives valuable context to the play or performance we are working on. While it is relatively easy (in this information age) to collect a wealth of research on most any topic, a larger challenge lies in organizing, synthesizing, and presenting our findings without overwhelming audiences with too much information. As foundational readings for this unit, we will mine excerpts from Wayne Booth's *The Craft of Research* and Michael Chemers's *Ghost Light* to hone strategies for conducting and presenting research findings.

Then, as a preliminary assignment, students will assume the role of dramaturg by finding and researching one art object (performance, writing, visual art, music—any medium) involving a bathtub but not bulleted here on the syllabus. Students will come to class prepared with a 1–2 page "Mini-Casebook" on the art object. The casebook should explain what the thing is, who made it, and other details about the creative process. It should also attempt to describe its impact: what the thing meant in its original context and what it might mean now to audiences today. In class, students will give three-minute lightning presentations of their individual casebooks, culminating in an intertextual discussion on how they all relate.

Students will then be introduced to a triptych of pandemic-era bathtub performances:

- This Is Not A Theatre Company, *Play in Your Bathtub: An Immersive Audio Spa for Physical Distancing* (Audio play, 2020)
- Todd Buonopane, "Bathtub Theatre" (YouTube series, 2020)
- "Swan Lake Performed in 27 Bathtubs!" (Dance Recording, 2020)

The three performances above originated in 2020, when social distancing requirements dictated by the COVID-19 pandemic were relatively new and artists everywhere struggled to reimagine a world without live, embodied audiences. Aesthetically, these performances are very different. The first is an audio play designed to be experienced individually and from the comfort of one's own bathtub. The second is a YouTube series by Broadway actor Todd Buonopane, who performs a series of popular songs and monologues from his bathtub. Each recording begins with a dramatic swish of Buonopane's shower curtain, revealing him once again in his tub. The final performance is a collaborative collage of professional dancers offering unique renditions of *Swan Lake* in bathtubs around the world. In class, we will use our research skills to endow these performances with additional context and gain a deeper understanding of their impact.

As a conclusion to this unit, students will be introduced to their final project: a devised bathtub performance of their own. This performance assessment is scaffolded into five stages, one due during each unit. The first stage of this assignment is entitled "Research of the Self" and requires students to apply elements of Booth's *Craft of Research* toward an autoethnographic portfolio of research. The objective of this self-research is for students to cultivate a set of themes and issues that matter deeply to them and to lay a meaningful foundation upon which they will devise their final performance. In class, students will pair up with a partner who will act as a dramaturg for their peer's "Research of the Self" project. The dramaturg will actively listen to the presenter's autoethnographic research and then ask a series of questions for clarification and development. Then, the students will switch roles.

Unit 2: Development

Dramaturgs often function as mediators between creative process and product; this is especially true when dramaturgs work with artists and playwrights to develop new works. This unit considers a multitude of approaches to developmental process but is grounded in Suzan-Lori Parks's concept of "Repetition and Revision" (1995) and Heidi Bean's notion of "dramaturgical arousal" (2015).

This unit provides three opportunities for exploring development via three different art objects:

- Siobhan O'Loughlin, "Broken Bone Bathtub" (Performance, 2015)
- Adrian Howells, "Foot Washing for the Sole" (Performance, 2008)
- Patrisse Cullors, "Respite, Reprieve and Healing: An Evening of Cleansing" (Performance, 2019)

These three performances explore themes of vulnerability and cleansing. This unit will feature a class visit with guest artist Siobhan O'Loughlin, who will discuss her solo show *Broken Bone Bathtub*. In preparation for that interview, students will watch footage from the performance and submit a list of five "Guest Artist Interview Questions" for O'Loughlin about her performance development

process. Finally, we will read and discuss two pieces featuring Howells and Cullors on how they developed their performances and an excerpt from Chelsea Pace's handbook on intimacy training:

- Adrian Howells, "Foot Washing for the Sole" (*Performance Research,* 2012)
- Makeda Easter, "Q&A: Patrisse Cullors on Using Performance Art to Confront Exhaustion" (*Los Angeles Times,* June 21, 2019)
- Chelsea Pace (with contributions from Laura Rikard), Introduction to *Staging Sex: Best Practices, Tools, and Techniques for Theatrical Intimacy* (2020), 1–15.

This unit culminates in the "Developing the Self" assignment, the second stage of the final performance project. Building on the research collected in unit 1 and drawing from the creative process strategies explored in unit 2, students will take a field trip to Orlando's local Turkish Baths. Reflecting on their experience and preparing for their final devised bathtub performance, students will submit a vision board or other creative reflection on their process. This submission should be accompanied by a calendar or other structured written plan for the development, creation, and rehearsal of the final project. In class, students will again partner with a peer who will function as a dramaturg by asking a series of questions about the presenter's "Developing the Self" assignment in the interest of clarification and development. Then, the students will switch roles.

Unit 3: World-Building

Once an artist or ensemble has laid the foundation for an imagined world, a dramaturg may be asked to step in and help build it out. Using Elinor Fuchs's "Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play" (2004) as a guide, this unit focuses on the dramaturg's role in bringing ideas and theories into practice. We will discuss three art objects:

- Lola Arias, "Maids" (Performance Series, 2010)
- Don Herron, "Tub Shots" (Photography Series, 1980)
- "Bathtub Dramaturgy in Music" (Spotify Playlist, 2021)

We will discuss how the first two performances reveal worlds that are otherwise hidden: Arias's *Maids* explores the often-invisible lives of workers who clean hotel bathrooms, while Herron's Tub Shots captures celebrities in their private bathtubs. The "Bathtub Playlist" is a collection of musical interpretations of bathtubs; working in groups, students will pick one song from the list on which to apply the questions listed in Fuchs's article. The resulting "World-Building Song Assignment" will be a design for a "World" rooted in and inspired by the song's aesthetic. Finally, groups will present or perform their world in class and explain its genesis in their chosen song.

This unit culminates in Stage Three of the final bathtub performance project. As the foundation for their material performance "world," students will synthesize the themes generated in Stage 1 with the visions imagined in Stage 2 of their projects. As a deliverable, students submit a "World-Building Wish List," which provides a short narrative of this synthesis and outlines the material items needed to create the final performance. As in Units 1 and 2, students will pair up in class to perform dramaturgical reviews of each other's Wish Lists.

Unit 4: Engagement

One reason why Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie* is so foundational to modern dramaturgy is because it was one of the first European treatises on engaging theatre audiences. More recently,

theorists like Erika Fischer-Lichte and Teresa Brennan have contemplated the mechanisms by which audiences and artists interrelate with each other. There are multitudes of ways to involve audiences around an art object: program notes, talkbacks, lobby displays, workshops, artist interviews, and social media campaigns are a few of the more common methods.

We explore four objects in this unit—one sculpture, one performance piece, and two modern operas:

- Jeff Koons, "Woman in Tub" (Porcelain sculpture, 1988)
- Yann Marussich, "Glass Bath/Bain Brisé" (Performance, 2013)
- Christopher Alden and George Freidrich Handel, *Aci, Galatea e Polifemo* (Opera, 2017)
- Du Yun and Royce Vavrek, *Angels' Bone* (Opera, 2016)

All four of these performances use bathtubs as flashpoints for themes that are shocking, intense, or complex in some way. Working in pairs, students will develop an "Audience Engagement Proposal" around one of these four performances.

This unit also provides time and space for devising, rehearsing, and revising the final performance projects. As evidence of their progress, students will submit "Rehearsal Journals," which are dramaturgical self-reflections on their own creative process and specifically how they intend to engage their audience. Time will be allotted in class for the collaborative dramaturging of each other's audience engagement proposals and performance pieces.

Unit 5: Performance

Too often, dramaturgs are depicted as bookish types remaining behind the scenes of a piece's development and presentation. Yet, as this course hopefully demonstrates, the work of a dramaturg is often deeply creative, passionate, involved, and embodied. In his essay "Doing Time," Tim Etchells writes that as a dramaturg, he is "flesh, and bones, not just ideas" (2009, 72). Building on this notion of embodied dramaturgy, this unit provides a platform for sharing and evaluating the devised performances students have built over the semester.

Our final art objects for analysis are two paintings and nine iconic scenes from cinema:

- Frida Kahlo, "What the Water Gave Me" (Painting, 1938)
- Jacques-Louis David, "The Death of Marat/Marat Assassiné" (Painting, 1793)
- "Bathtub Dramaturgy in Cinema" (YouTube Playlist, 2021)

The bathtub performances above stand out from the others in this syllabus in that they are widely recognizable. They demonstrate the popularity and universality of bathtubs, which is one reason they are so prolific in art both historically and today. Indeed, as sites of performance, bathtubs occupy a uniquely tenuous position between public and private. Choosing one object of focus, each student will submit a two-page "Public/Private Written Reflection" on what makes that bathtub performance both deeply personal and widely popular.

In the final weeks of class, students present and workshop their final bathtub performances (live or recorded) to the class. Their peers, many of whom have been actively contributing as dramaturgs to the development of these performances, will respond using Liz Lerman's Critical Response Methods

to build and sharpen the world of the performance. Finally, students will submit "Final Casebooks" containing documentation of each stage of the performance process.

Closing Thoughts

While the "Bathtub Dramaturgy" syllabus would be an obvious fit for a course on dramaturgical methods, I suspect aspects of it will be relevant across disciplines. While the bathtub may at first seem shallow in its ability to accommodate robust inquiry into broader topics, I hope the abundance of performances surveyed above reveals a surprising potential. Although it is a very specific milieu, the productive constraint of focusing only on bathtub performance presents us with an opportunity to confront the pedagogical tension between the breadth of content and depth of engagement. For educators, this suggests value in "zooming in" on niche topics. Furthermore, as a practical methodology, dramaturgy enables teachers and students to shuttle between theory and practice in a way that breaks free from traditional pedagogical divides. Most importantly, my hope is that this kind of teaching approach engenders a classroom dynamic that supports the collective healing of teachers and students in the wake of the grief caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Notes

1. For more information on healthcare inequity and the pandemic, see https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/health-equity/race-ethnicity.html.

2. There are a variety of good Internet resources on dramaturgy, but one of the best places to start is LMDA.org, the website for the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. There you will find student resources, employment opportunities, conference information, and other helpful information relevant to dramaturgical practice today.

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