# Interrogating Eurocentric Ideologies - Colonial Conundrums and Teaching Selves Pondering on Lessons Learned in Canada's Indigenous Classrooms

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***Abstract***

Through autoethnography as qualitative research methodology, this article tries to capture my teaching experiences in two distinctly different places in my travels. While it bears witness, extrapolates, and uses direct content from a section in my master's thesis, titled *The Educator's body and the performance of whiteness,* this article further reflects my afterward - after the defence. After the M. Ed I had some time to go to the printed scraps of notes and contemplate why my experiences in Saskatchewan, Canada brought me full circle back to my teaching experiences in the Caribbean. And while my teaching experiences in the Caribbean were in Guyana, the structure of the education system in Guyana in greater parts mirrors that of the broader Caribbean region. Hence, while this article chronicles the complexities I endured in the classroom while teaching in Saskatchewan, it also focuses on the inherent struggles springing from a need for understanding the lived contradictions of belonging in one place while simultaneously exiled from that place. It tries to explore the torment of negotiating our positionalities in white ideological, educational spaces. Entangled spaces where our teaching selves are foreign, where the terror of losing our ancestral histories and narratives haunts us, where classrooms are sites of discomfort that strangely feel like home.

Key Words/Phrases: Autoethnography, Colonial conundrums, Decolonization, Enslavement, Eurocentric, Indentureship, Indigenous, White Ideologies

*Introduction*

In the fall of 2014, I did not enter the classroom in Saskatchewan to write a critical reflective analysis of my experiences. However, while teaching at high school X[1], a movement was happening, an awareness that called students, the teaching staff and myself into contradictory spaces. Spaces where we began to float into moments of contemplating how we were complicit in the very actions we were trying to decolonize. Taking on autoethnography as a methodology throughout this article enables me to contextualize and connect my teaching experiences in Canada and Guyana to the wider cultures of these communities. These connections hold and offer the language to make meaning of my embodied experiences and relationships with students and colleagues. Therefore, through autoethnography I can critically reflect on my schooling and teaching experiences and the colonial conundrums inflected upon our teaching selves through our histories. Colonial conundrums often sanitized within cultural contexts and education structures such as the one I was teaching in, in Canada.

[1] Throughout this chapter High School X, refers to the Ingenious School where I taught.

*Conceptual Framework Eurocentric / White Ideologies.*

In this paper, Eurocentric/White Ideologies refer to knowledge embedded within educators and me as good and sanctified. Within Eurocentrism, white ideologies are systemic and used as forms of indoctrination that assume other types of supposed racial and ontological characteristics as lesser and unsatisfactory to justify for what counts as knowledge. Hence Eurocentrism takes philosophies developed in the European cultural milieu and positions them as dominant, thus demeaning other cultures or ideologies.

Given the socially constructed nature of European epistemologies as valid knowledge, Indigenous peoples and minority groups have been coopted through histories of colonization to believe whiteness as the saving grace that will ease us from the daily injustices we face. Therefore, while whiteness functions as a historically socially developed construct based on oppression, power, and falsehood (Du Bois, 1920; Leonardo, 2002), Indigenous and minority groups continue to engage with Whiteness and Eurocentric thought as imbued practices with liberatory gains for society.

Naipaul, Caribbean novelist, struggled with his learned idea of the other. In his novel, The Middle Passage, originally published in 1962, description of the Negro on the train as grotesque (p. 11) signals how colonial histories and epistemologies have thwarted our view of one another. Like Naipaul, the colonial gaze runs deep. It triangulates the complications for educators who have adapted Eurocentrism's rhetoric as proper and good knowledge to emancipate ourselves from the ugliness that is our selves. In this article, I will work through this messy notion that holds immense power over others (Kincheloe, 1999; Di Angelo, 2010). Further, I will also explore how Eurocentric ideologies saturated through curriculum work often leaves us engaged in practices that conflict with our intentions.

*Indigenous Methodologies*

One of the most vital lessons I learned as a non-Indigenous educator in an Indigenous high school is that elders and community members must be a part of the work in indigenizing and decolonizing the curriculum. When Indigenous elders and I shared the classroom, I saw a shift in students' attitudes towards what they were learning and in their academic performances. "Indigenous knowledge systems stress relationality, connections, reciprocity, community building, appreciation, sharing, humility, social responsibility, and generosity as key or essential components facilitating the 'coming to know'" (Dei & Jaimungal, 2018, p. 2). Considering the benefits that can derive from pedagogical collaboration with Indigenous elders, I testify to the value of partnership as a tool to break the stereotypes associated with Indigenous students and their assumed inability to learn.

Indigenous approaches in this article refer to an ethically correct and culturally appropriate Indigenous manner of taking steps towards the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge about Indigenous peoples (Wilson, 2001). Moreover it recognizes, "the successes and challenges of embracing Indigenous methodologies in academia without losing sight of respect, commitment and accountability to Indigenous peoples and the institutions [where Indigenous knowledge] are offered," (Kurtz, 2013, p. 2). Also, in this article, Indigeneity is used as a framework that affirms

Indigenous methodologies and knowledge "in offering counter readings of schooling and education," (Dei & Jaimungal, 2018, p. 2).

*Analysis*

*Whiteness as an act of Dominance*

This article uses whiteness interchangeably with Eurocentrism, meaning whiteness goes beyond skin colour. Whiteness as a way of thinking, a set of ideologies inherited through systems of colonization and continues through forms of neocolonialism that position themselves as dominant and good. Neocolonialism refers to continued forms of colonial oppression in more overt ways, such as funding mechanism where the West sets the agenda for how education practices are to be organized and executed in historically colonized spaces. "Consequently, [historically colonized nations and people] vision of educational development and standards of knowledge production are based on [Euro]-Western epistemological schema and theories that are deeply rooted in, and informed by, colonial thought" (Nguyen, et.al, 2009, p. 6). Further educators' functioning within these culturally non-Euro-Western spaces tend to mirror Euro-Western ideals in uncritical ways. As such, "Education can either maintain domination, or it can liberate. It can sustain colonization in neocolonial ways, or it can decolonize. Every school is either a site of reproduction or a site of change." (Battiste, 2013, p. 175). While teaching in an Indigenous setting in Saskatchewan, my intentions were to decolonize and deconstruct the provincial high school English Language Arts (ELA) Curriculum through culturally responsive ways using traditions and practices relevant to the local Indigenous community. However, in my efforts to build spaces of collaboration grounded in Indigenous ideologies and methodologies, I quickly realized that students and colleagues around me were frustrated by my actions.

Hence, I found myself shifting back and forth between a Eurocentric education system and one that was desperately trying to use Indigenous methodologies for learning explorations. Through my initial struggles in the classroom, it was evident as I shifted in and out of the oppressor's ideologies that, my Caribbean roots born out of enslavement, indentureship and resistance did not excuse me, from viewing Indigenous students as lacking. I had "internalized the normativities and valorizations articulated by [European culture] and used these to assess [the indigenous community]" (Dissanayake & Wickramagamage,1993, p. 21). Looking back to my educational experiences, denying that my struggles in Guyana to teach in culturally relevant ways, even though subtle are not similar is to lie to myself.

While I was wrestling with my bouts of complicity through forms of compulsive conformity to the status quo simultaneously, I was learning through my interactions with the community, colleagues and students that being Indigenous did not guarantee that the Indigenous school systems were free from the practice of whiteness. My tenure in Saskatchewan brought me back to Guyana. Reflecting on my Caribbean heritage and my years as an educator in Guyana, the school system was and continues to be structured out of adopted systems stemming from colonization. Similarly, like the Indigenous school system I found myself in, Guyana, and by extension, the Caribbean is still largely wrapped in Eurocentric structures of testing and curriculum practices that separate educational experiences from the embodied experiences of Caribbean people. Thus "a major part of the crisis of the contemporary Caribbean is that while

we are aware of and have been engaged in the past with a battle for political and economic sovereignty we still have not yet come to terms with the need for "ontological sovereignty". (Scott, 2000, p. 136) [2]

While Saskatchewan and the Caribbean are geographically thousands of miles apart and experiences vary, it is worth noting the similarities of Indigenous peoples and Caribbean people in their struggles to liberate their education systems even though they may seem to have acquired the freedom to do so. Enslavement and indentureship are no longer forced upon people in the Caribbean similarly, residential schools and the stripping away of Indigenous languages and cultures are bureaucratically practices of the past yet in both contexts, we struggle to let go of the hegemonic systems and ideals that breed bondage.

Whiteness is "not simply a category of identity, but a position of power formed and protected through colonialism, slavery, segregation, and oppression" (Nichols, 2010, p. 4). Therefore, through a history of colonization, which birthed the residential school system in Canada, the ideologies that we have embraced through our years of schooling are cemented in white narratives. Whiteness- as good, as the great equalizer, as necessary, as credible knowledge, as normative cultural practices, as the saving grace from assumed suffering. From a historical perspective, education systems symbolize oppression and the taking away of Indigenous cultures and languages. Colonialism still operates today in more subtle, less forceful, in ways, which pull us into the illusion that education is good for us. Through the illusion of education as good, we have been sanitized into viewing the methods of delivering education, even though foreign, as a normalized white practice endowed with freeing intentions to cure uncivilized people of themselves.

Similarly Caribbean, education practices are still structured in colonial plantation policies where education becomes learning experiences that condition educators and students alike to act and serve in ways that are separate from their lived experiences, in ways that are akin to hegemonic ideals. Research done by Smith, (2001) ascertains "that teachers in Barbados and neighboring island countries are often unaware of the Eurocentric standards that they have for students in their classrooms, an issue that illustrates the need for research-informed practices". In this approach to education, ideological reproduction becomes a huge outcome since knowledge is communicated as concrete, static and owned by those in authority. Students often are expected to accept information as absolute truth. "Once the information is accepted as absolute truth, questioning reality is discouraged," (Chisholm, 2001, p. 3).

Hence in spaces such as the Indigenous setting where I found myself during the years of 2014 - 2016 and the Caribbean, education policies have a moral responsibility to discern whiteness from a framework grounded in the emancipation of the mind. Heeding the lyrics of Bob Marley, we should as people who have endured oppressive histories, "emancipate [ourselves] from mental slavery [for] none but ourselves can free our minds." Heeding the lyrics of Bob Marley, for us to begin to change perspectives, there is an urgency to recognize that as the colonizer works

[2] Scott, D. (2000). The re-enchantment of humanism: An interview with Sylvia Wynter. Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism,4(2), 119–207

through ways to sustain the status quo, the colonized must work to uproot oppression that tugs at the core of our being.

Many researchers have stressed the importance of understanding how the body is affected by the constant rhetoric of the grand narratives, stories created by the dominant culture about its right of existence and other cultures that the dominant culture seeks to control (Giroux, 1992; Hooks, 1994). Therefore, most educators, regardless of their skin colour, if their beliefs and ideologies are shaped within a structure of white ideologies, assume a position of structural advantage. (Frankenberg, 1993).

In Nixon's (1997) autobiography, The Quest for Nothing, he said that while teaching at Crowsnest Consolidated High School that his "pedagogy had changed from a quest for meaning to a conquest for control. This time my own experience was to be firmly exiled, and my time was sold in its entirety to a system" (p. 16). Reflecting on what is mandated to educators to teach in the form of curriculum practices, some of us can relate to Nixon's feelings. Like Nixon, we may be wondering "[...] just what [we are] doing in the classroom, in this system, in this world of unconscious ritual where [we] now do as we are told." (Nixon, 1997, p. 16)

*Curriculum as Counter-Narratives*

The post-colonial curricula often by default tends to provide and facilitate the continued oppression of indigenous people and groups that do not fit the Eurocentric milieu among our societies (here I am referring to the indigenous groups in Canada and Caribbean society). Therefore, intentionally using curriculum design and practices to "offer tool[s] to contradict racist characterizations of social life [and] expose race [as a] neutral discourse, [revealing] how white privilege operates to reinforce and support unequal [racial relations]" Hunn et.al, 2006, p. 2), in society through creating counter stories of the dominant narratives are necessary.

While teaching in Saskatchewan, the strategy of counter stories revealed through deconstructing Shakespeare's Othello, provides an overview of how the dominant group exoticize the work to maintain order and teach what [we] are told" (Nixon, 1997, p. 16) (Reference: Othello was accused of witchcraft and therefore was not worthy of being loved by Desdemona). Applying Curriculum practices that counter the hegemonic themes that run through Shakespeare's Othello, we moved classroom discussions from the literal text to naming and challenging the stereotypes inscribed in our daily encounters with each other and the identities used by the dominant group to dehumanize us. Identities, such as savages and slaves.

Hence, in challenging and naming the injustices inflicted upon Indigenous peoples, students, and I, we found a sense of connectedness among our varied lived experiences as people stripped of our historical narratives and sense of selves through ideologies imposed upon us that were foreign and culturally indifferent.

*Whiteness In Indigenous Classrooms*

Often as educators cultured in a system of white ideologies, we are neutralized and therefore not aware of how they impact our daily classroom practices. The stories told to us, and the ones we

tell become embedded in our memories and serve as a language bank to describe how we view the world. Thus, our teaching practice becomes a task of textbooks, instructions, and restricted pedagogy. Over time, these stories told over and over become habitual.

We become the agents of our oppression; we agree to / with it and perpetuate it. "Dominant culture does not necessarily need to exert power over us through coercion, the threat of direct retaliation for not submitting; we do it ourselves, enforcing the values and codes of [the] dominant culture on ourselves and our communities." (Kaufka, 2009, p. 138).

With a practice based on autopilot rituals, educators are less reflective and more reliant on a "set of tools of whiteness, designed to protect and maintain dominant and stereotypical understandings of race-tools that were emotional, ideological, and performative" (Picower, 2009, p. 197). Therefore, addressing whiteness in the classroom requires us not only to be hung up on the idea of white(ness) as it concerns skin colour, nor does it need educators only to be passionate and articulate in the subjects we teach. Whiteness is complicated because it is not readily seen and externalized through touch and smell by educators operating in the framework of its structure. "We struggle over and over with the same issues as they repeatedly resurge all over our lives. We strive and strain to overcome our problems and time and time again, we 'fail.' We blame ourselves and further sink into cycles of self-deprecation." (Kaufka, 2009, p. 141).

Using counterstories to facilitate social, political, and cultural cohesion, as well as survival and resistance among marginalized groups are vital curriculum practices. By acknowledging subjugated discourses, we validate that there is more than one way to view the world.

In setting ourselves up to examine dominant stories, we are able through the process of critical reflection to rid ourselves from the idea of viewing teaching as a practice saturated in white worldviews that mask the ways we employ deficit theorizing[3] to Indigenous and minority students. Through contemplative practices, we also begin to teach through the flesh, where our experiences, vulnerabilities, and other ways of viewing the world become part of our daily classroom practice. Riding ourselves from the thought that as educators, we are separate from our teaching self, open room for us to thrive within a holistic framework. In this holistic framework we can more freely offer our students a model from which they see themselves not as impediments but as individuals with stories and histories that are worth telling and sharing.

Through a holistic framework grounded in contemplative practices of reflection and re-storying, educators position themselves to embrace the complexities of accrediting the differences among cultures through affirming practices that respond to students' lived experiences. By being critical of white beyond skin colour, we move away from an autopilot analysis of our daily encounters with internalized racism perpetuated through ideologies of whiteness. Internalized racism springs form internalized oppression. As a concept it describes and explains the experiences of those who are members of the subordinated, marginalized, or minority groups who have accepted and adapted both intentionally and unintentionally, the dominant group's ideology a natural, and

[3] Deficit theorizing is the belief that Aboriginal students, their families and communities are to blame for low achievement levels rather than the education system- (taken from: Understanding culturally responsive pedagogy imperative, by Margaret Pillay (2014)

inevitable'' (Griffin, 1997, p. 76). Therefore consciously or unconsciously they have accepted their status as a foil for propagating attitudes and behaviours that subjugate and demoralize their own minority groups. Therefore to counter act the powerful demeaning attitudes which render others as powerless demands educators to question and confront what torments our inner-selves and what projects outwards affecting our ability to become effective educators. To this end continuous critical engagements with how we were conditioned to teach in culturally diverse spaces offers Indigenous and minority students a model to examine their own lived experiences with the daily injustices they face. Pondering how whiteness as ideology and as a dominant way of thinking, which marginalizes Indigenous worldviews are vital reflective practices if we are going to have any equity and authentic valuation of Indigenous cultures, histories, and ongoing lived experiences in Canada. During my time teaching ELA in Saskatchewan, I learned very quickly that while I was deconstructing the Eurocentrism ingrained in prescribed texts and curricula documents simultaneously, I had to work to disrupt the performance of whiteness in myself learned and adopted through my own schooling experiences in Guyana. Whiteness as ideology embedded in my pedagogical choices and my relationships with my colleagues and students. Hooks (1994) wrote:

> Let's face it: most of us were taught in classrooms where styles of teaching reflected the notion of a single norm of thought and experience, which we were encouraged to believe was universal. This has been just as true for non-white teachers as for white teachers. Most of us have learned to teach emulating this model (p. 35).

Educators working at the grassroots level must choose to uproot the inscribed standardized education strongholds in the system through Eurocentric ideologies that have shaped curriculum and its implementation. Sims and Lea (2008) state, "whiteness [as] complex, hegemonic, and dynamic . . . ways of thinking, feeling, believing and acting [cultural scripts] functions to obscure the power, privilege, and practices of the dominant social elite" (p. 68).

In the highly charged emotional spaces of teaching and learning such as in high school X, where feelings of oppression are harboured deep within the knitted, conflicted structure of people and the institution, "educators must take responsibility and challenge both themselves and their teaching practice to confront ideologies and systems that hinder genuine, individual expression" (Cole, 2011, p. 11) in the classroom.

Educators bring a unique perspective to the conversation about whiteness in the classroom when discussing texts or explaining and guiding students to new concepts and ideas. Acknowledging that Indigenous students' cultures and worldviews rarely make it into curriculum practices because of Canada's history of colonization and the presence of residential schools is critical. Therefore, it is necessary to re-story how we choose to facilitate learning within (historically) colonized classrooms. The purpose of residential schools was never to collaborate with Indigenous peoples but to naturalize Indigenous children into European ways of understanding the world. Bringing to bear the savagery wrapped in Europeans good intentions in the West may cause some discomfort for educators and students as this paper shows. For while good intentions in modern societies may create spaces for activism and support and in days of treaty negotiations between settlers and Indigenous people groups may have evoked the idea of change within

Indigenous communities, "a key question we should reflect on here is were [and are] these good intentions limiting?" (Slater, 2013, p. 143)

While it is vital to bridge gaps in curriculum narratives to achieve cultural equity in classrooms, it is equally crucial to reflect through contemplative practices the rooted ideologies in the school's framework.

A central characteristic of whiteness as an ideological practice is a process of naturalization such that white becomes the norm from which other ways of understanding the world fall into the category of savagery and backwardness. Therefore, whiteness as worthwhile and credible are worth affirming placing it by extension at the heart of education practices within Indigenous settings. Trying to have conversations about inequity in education as a skin problem and not one that is heavily ideological, political, and ingrained simplifies the complexities inherited through years of colonization. Curriculum as counter stories "offers conceptual tools for interrogating how race and racism have been institutionalized, [normalized] and are maintained. It provides a helpful lens for analyzing the whiteness of teacher education and conceptualizing how it might be addressed" (Sleeter, 2017, p. 157).

Regarding conversations about whiteness, Mason (2016) tells us that "these stories are often messy, highly personalized, and always more complicated than an uncritical 'best practices' approach" (p. 1048). While intentionally mandated towards changing oppressive practices, the best practice approach is often superficial to more traditional Indigenous methodologies. Therefore, regardless of best practices and good intentions, the root of the oppression inflicted on Indigenous people remains alive. Thus, the work of critical reflection is replaced by an epistemology of ignorance, and we become busy educators with a seemly new mandate. To debunk Eurocentric ideologies and the practice of whiteness demands a radical shift to research, teaching and learning practices, necessitating a form of teaching to transgress. (See Hooks, 1994) Hence, it requires educators to labour in a different kind of reflexive praxis, enabling us to cross epistemological and ontological borders. (See Giroux, 1992)

*Whiteness in Indigenous and Caribbean spaces of Teaching and Learning*

Imagine the consequences of a powerful ideology that positions one group as superior and gives away First Nations people's lands and resources and invites churches and other administrative agents to inhabit their homeland, while negating their very existence and finally removing them from the Canadian landscape to lands no one wants" (Battiste 2013, p. 35).

From my teaching experiences in Saskatchewan and reflecting on my experiences with the Caribbean Curriculum, practices and teaching bodies go through bouts of complicity and complexity where they are in negotiation between theories of survival and change. Mulenga, (2008) noted that "During the era of colonialism, colonial educational institutions were used to augment the perceived legitimacy and propriety of colonial rule and to help maintain its power. Today, "post-colonial" context [such as Indigenous high schools] still largely entail such ideologies" (as cited in Abu-Shomar, 2013, p. 265). Hence presumably, "post-colonial educational institutions are still marked by Western modernism and still work within Eurocentric [ideologies]" (Abu-Shomar, 2013, p. 266). These dominant ideologies haunt Indigenous and

post-colonial Caribbean educational institutions and maintain themselves under the pretence of adding snippets of Indigenous and Caribbean resources and perspectives (See Battiste, 2013).

Battiste, (2013) Indigenous scholar reiterated:

> "There is a [deep] need for constitutional reconciliation from the Eurocentric institutions that have marginalized Indigenous knowledge systems. All Indigenous communities are in recovery today from a deep colonizing culture of superiority and racism, and while there are new and emerging forms of that coming back Indigenous peoples are now reconciling with what had denied us, our knowledge and languages that lead us to the deep truths about ourselves and our connections with all things" (p. 2).

Darder (2009) argues that "nothing short of liberator ruthlessness can free us from eugenic dominance of Western modern Eurocentric epistemological perspective" (p. 1). Therefore, if some form of epistemic violence, is required, where "different ways in which violence is exercised through the production, circulation and recognition of knowledge" (Perez, 2019, p. 2) then it can be argued that the sheer systematic oppression of the language of whiteness as structural violence cannot be interrogated by just the "add-and-stir model of bringing aboriginal education into curricula, environment, and teaching practices" (RCAP in Battiste, 2013, p.28) . Indigenous and Caribbean education systems continue to be many layers of Eurocentric and Western ideals, although these systems are built on the rhetoric of Indigenous and Caribbean reconciliation and sovereignty.

While high school X is built for Indigenous students and administered by the band system through cognitive imperialism white rigid structures such as the Indian Act often trigger patterns of exclusion and inclusion.

Hence, while there is a call by Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators for change within the education systems, we inhabit we wear two personalities: (a) one that is constantly negotiating and re- negotiating "the diverse set of racist practices that hold in place the hegemony of whiteness, and (b) another completely unaware of them at an implicit, automatic level" (Berlak, 2008, p. 51). Berlak captures my experiences in Saskatchewan very well as I intentionally tried to Indigenize the ELA curriculum. It was as if on one hand my efforts were acknowledged and supported by the education community but on the other hand students and colleagues were on auto pilot insisting on Eurocentric ideals to further their educational gaols. Turning to Tuck (2009) comment which reminds us that the experiences of Indigenous people are still saturated in "a history that still offends [Indigenous people's] deepest sense of [their] humanity?" (Smith, 1999, p. 13) because of the ways they were taught to embody themselves and their cultures as valueless within the confines of European thought.

*Towards where!*

In these heightened times of racial reckoning on a global scale many educators may ask what now and towards where. Recent (2012, 2019, 2020) news reports from Barbados, demonstrate a call by Education Administrators for the ridding of the Common Entrance Exam, (CEE), a summative exam students write to determine placement at the high school level, noting its

relations to colonial histories. Professor Warrican, Director of the School of Education at The University of West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, refers to the CEE exam as a "demon in education" calling into question the exam's colonial historical motive. According to Warrican, "the CEE was not just a demon in the education systems throughout the region, but it holds people in decision making positions in its clutches, seduces them into believing that it is an objective means of transferring students from primary to secondary education and blinds them to the injustice that it perpetuates in society," (Warrican, April 25, 2012, at Frenches House).

While in Canada, in 2015, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission produced a document that outlines a framework where Indigenous histories, their epistemologies and ontological ways of knowing and being in the world would not only be taken into consideration but be prioritized. However, "the language of reconciliation has been cited as a settler "move to innocence" (Tuck and Yang, 2012), which eases the guilt for the settler society of benefiting from Indigenous people's erasure, dispossession, and assimilation, but without addressing the ongoing colonial violence," (Fast & Gagneè, 2019, p. 96).

Throughout this article, I have narrated the complexities of disturbing whiteness at the root. Through a history of colonization, the ideologies that we have come to embrace through our years of schooling are cemented in white narratives- whiteness- as good, as the great equalizer, as necessary, as credible knowledge, as normative cultural practices, as the saving grace for assumed suffering. Therefore, to critically deconstruct how whiteness has reduced our ways of understanding the world and each other, we need to apply pedagogies to produce counter stories that tell different narratives. We need, according to Darder, 2009, to "labour in the flesh". If educators can envision their role as complicated yet not impossible, then we can take back our vocation as educators, not as technicians, then we can offer students a model to return to their stories of home.

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