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Article abstract

Ce texte examine les complications de la nomenclature entourant la formation d'identités autochtones et non autochtones dans le milieu académique de l'art et du design. L'argument principal est que les contextes coloniaux historiques créent un système binaire où les non-Autochtones sont toujours perçus comme étant des colons blancs, effaçant ainsi les autres personnes racialisées et leur relation à l'autochtonéité. Ce texte historicise également la sous-représentation d'enseignant.e.s racialisé.e.s dans les écoles d'art et de design et cherche à identifier des modèles efficaces aptes à rectifier cette inégalité. Suivant les principes de la théorie critique raciale et intégrant une critique des études critiques blanches, ce texte aborde des possibilités d'actions en matière d'équité à la lumière de la Commission de vérité et de réconciliation, et s'achève avec de brefs exemples de projets pouvant illustrer une voie progressiste à suivre.

Complicating Non-Indigeneities and Other Considerations around Race in the Art and Design University[1]

Ashok Mathur

Ce texte examine les complications de la nomenclature entourant la formation d'identités autochtones et non autochtones dans le milieu académique de l'art et du design. L'argument principal est que les contextes coloniaux historiques créent un système binaire où les non-Autochtones sont toujours perçus comme étant des colons blancs, effaçant ainsi les autres personnes racialisées et leur relation à l'autochtonéité. Ce texte historicise également la sous-représentation d'enseignant.e.s racialisé.e.s dans les écoles d'art et de design et cherche à identifier des modèles efficaces aptes à rectifier cette inégalité. Suivant les principes de la théorie critique raciale et intégrant une critique des études critiques blanches, ce texte aborde les possibilités d'actions en matière d'équité à la lumière de la Commission de vérité et de réconciliation, et s'achève avec de brefs exemples de projets pouvant illustrer une voie progressiste à suivre.

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1. On this topic, I am indebted to conversations with colleagues and compatriots I have enjoyed over the years with Shirley Bear, Ayumi Goto, Roy Miki, Peter Morin, Minelle Mahtani, Aruna Srivastava, Sarita Srivastava, along with a host of others. There are many ways to germinate ideas individually, but it requires collective nurturing for them into something that can make inroads into the social sphere.

Prologue: where we look back in order to look forward

This paper is an extended version of a pair of presentations delivered during two special sessions at the 2018 UAAC conference in Waterloo. Both of them were dedicated to contributions around race and under-representation, and both of them were intended to disrupt the normative patterns of arts education in the postsecondary scene across the Canadian spectrum. The first was a double session entitled "Enemy at the Gates: Decolonizing and Inscribing 'Culturally Diverse Communities' Perspectives in 'Mainstream' Artistic Discourses," a topic that drew down on contemporary rhetoric around decolonization as an organizing principle as well as insisting and insinuating a racialized presence in this discourse. This was jointly chaired by Harnoor Bhangu, Soheila K. Esfahani , and Yang Lim, and it spoke to a long silence in creative educational spaces on these issues, at least as constituted by subjects outside what we might refer to as the white imaginary of postsecondary arts institutes. The second, following immediately afterward, was a discursive session, "Tactical Actions for the 'Mainly White Room': A Long Table Discussion and Caucus-Building Exercise." My conclusion here incorporates some of the performative elements from that discussion and presentation.

I mention this as a preface to this paper because, while there is a pressing need for arts institutions to engage fully and productively with racialized communities, art and design departments, colleges, and universities, like many postsecondary sites of study, have remained entrenched in a strategy of good-willed inertia when it comes to instrumental change. This imparts a certain level of urgency to these debates, which these sessions spoke to, or intended to speak to, in a variety of fashions. While demographics and institutional whiteness are starting to shift, slowly and not without pockets of resistance, there has been a marked lack of radical transformation to address curriculum, the needs of racialized students, and the hiring and retention of racialized faculty and administrators. It was over a decade ago, through a joint Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Department of Heritage initiative, that a team of us produced a pamphlet based on research undertaken at the five English-language art and design schools[2] in Canada,[3] subsequently revised and republished a few years later in an anthology addressing humanities-based research/institutions.[4] I note both these versions to indicate that while the later version incorporated further analysis, the root problems remained the same after several years, and I would argue that the systemic nature of this inertia remains in 2019.

In our article, we noted that each of these institutions had "made some efforts, ranging from feeble to vigorous, to address employment equity," but that none had done "nearly enough to incorporate an anti-racist pedagogy and practice into…its fabric."[5] Further, "[w]hen considering the implications of such slowness of progressive movement within the various cultures of research these schools attempt to champion, it becomes apparent that, unless concerted, systemic changes occur, there will be little to signify any progress in matters of equity [and it] remains to be seen how art schools will meet the challenge to nurture a vibrant and multi-faceted research environment that speaks to and from a variety of minoritized positions."[6] More pragmatic prediction than insightful prophecy, these statements reflected what many of us active in the field of progressive pedagogy in art and design fields recognized then, as we do now: that the road to equity is more arduous and fraught than simple changes to policy and practice. As Fran Leibowitz notes, the solution to inequity lies not in realignment of current values but radical reinvention of the basic building blocks that are, in and of themselves, part of the problem.[7] Thus, the intent of this paper is to reconsider possibilities within our current system, cognizant of intense resistances but also open to the potentials that present themselves to those of us who are looking, not just for a seat at the table, but a way to remake the table and all its settings.

How it all begins: naming ourselves

Setting aside the gargantuan task of such reinvention, I want to shift my attention here with a view to how, in the ever-changing nomenclature of racial identification (and mis-identification), the terms of identity have come to mean. As noted in my opening paragraph, I have used the term "racialized" as a not-unproblematic shorthand for those of us who are, for lack of a better determiner, outside the fold of whiteness. I subscribe to this term not to create a monolith that uneasily embraces any individual who is beyond the pale, as it were—for anyone who identifies as "not white"—but to understand the processual nature of race in a currency of naming. To be racialized is to be in a state of flux, to come into being as a subject but not to be fixed in that subject position. To be racialized is a verb-al rather than a noun form, announcing itself as a relational process rather than solidified aspect or attitude. It is also a term that invokes Althusserian interpellation, a hailing or being called into being. Up and until a particular moment of this putative hail, the acting subject is not inhabiting a particular racial designation for the same simple reason that any subject is not essentially *of* a particular race but *becomes known* as a member of a racially designated group, at least in part, through a social and consensual understanding driven by hegemonies of mainstream discourse.

In what he frames as his "biotext," *Diamond Grill,* poet Fred Wah writes: "Until Mary McNutter calls me a Chink, I'm not one."[8] Wah's narrator *becomes* a pejoratively racialized subject upon the utterance, a hailing, from a subject inhabiting a dominant position of whiteness. Of course, the act of racialization may not begin as a racist epithet, or is certainly not contained by that. Groups, communities, and individuals may take up that racialized subjectivity for a variety of motivations, including desires for belonging, collective empowerment, acts of resistance, and hopes for communal identity. But

2. The identified postsecondary sites were, from west to east and listed by their current names, as some of these have undergone name changes to indicate their university status: the Emily Carr University of Art and Design, the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, the Alberta College of Art and Design, the Ontario College of Art and Design University, and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University.

3. Ashok Mathur and Rita Wong, *Possibilizing the Impossible: Equity in Post-Secondary Arts Institutes* (Burnaby: LINE Books and the Centre for Innovation in Culture and the Arts in Canada [CiCAC], 2007).

4. Ashok Mathur and Rita Wong, "Employing Equity in Post-Secondary Arts Institutes," in *Retooling the Humanities: The Culture of Research in Canadian Universities*, eds. Daniel Coleman and Smaro Kamboureli (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2011), 113–32.

5. Ibid., 115–116.

6. Ibid., 116.

7. In her 1997 Vanity Fair article, Leibowitz writes that the deep problematics of race politics call for radical reconsiderations: "The way to approach it, I think, is not to ask, 'What would it be like to be black?' but to seriously consider what it is like to be white. That's something white people almost never think about. And what it is like to be white is not to say, 'We have to level the playing field,' but to acknowledge that not only do white people own the playing field but they have so designated this plot of land as a playing field to begin with. White people *are* the playing field. The advantage of being white is so extreme, so overwhelming, so immense, that to use the word 'advantage' at all is misleading since it implies a kind of parity that simply does not exist." Fran Leibowitz, "Fran Leibowitz on Race and Racism," *Vanity Fair*, Oct 1, 1997. Accessed on January 1, 2019. https://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2016/01/fran-lebowitz-on-race-and-racism.

8. Fred Wah, *Diamond Grill* (Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1996), 98.

racialization must also be understood to be rooted in a politics where there is significant power imbalance, even while the subaltern may use it against the masters' house, to find common ground and perhaps a stance of resistance against that power block. Following from this, however, is the real and present danger of term-levelling, such that racialized subjects from diverse backgrounds are rolled conveniently into a single entity. This apparent danger has given rise to a resistance, from some, against acknowledging even the concept of racialization lest it homogenize and erase significant differences. That is not the intention of my employing this term, however, and it is imperative to understand that different communities are differently racialized, resulting in radically different material effects; indeed, individuals from *within* an apparently singular racialized group can and are also differently racialized, often due to a variety of intersectional politics that ascribe privileges and disadvantages in myriad fashions.

But if it is incorrect to paint all racialized subjects with the same brush, it is equally problematic to presume the term "racialization" refers only to subsets of non-white communities—indeed, even whiteness is arguably a racialized category, although the vernacular understanding is that a racialized subject is someone outside the encampment of whiteness. This is important, though: in the zeal to define ourselves, we may perform a race *away* from the concept of racialization, in tandem with a move *toward* a complicated self-naming under an essentialist gaze that does more to serve dominant forces than subjugated communities. In other words, if a community defines itself as *not* racialized in order to prevent itself from being banded under a common label, it may articulate an identity that is overarchingly determined by its binary opposite which, in dominant discourse, is whiteness. I would argue that this has been the case in some instances of racial identification—the rationale whereby a particular form of race-identity is perceived as solidified and immutable creates a fixed binary opposition between that particular racial group and whiteness.

While this happens in various racial identify formations, it is worthwhile to consider how this operates within the rubric of Indigeneity. It is understandable that a colonized community that has been identified as the "other" to the colonizing subject since first contact will inevitably identify the colonizer as its "other" in return, constructing this duality as naturally polarized opposites—particularly when the only two evident groups are those doing the colonizing and those living with the effects of colonization. But in a shifting reality that involves the building of pluralistic communities, those same formations can often retain their dyadic power, effectively placing new arrivals under erasure. While this is not the intent or desire of a colonized response, in that it precludes the potential for common fronts of resistance, it does maintain the imposed binary and reifies the power (through visibility) of the colonizing forces. Another way to read this binary is as the assumption that to be non-Indigenous is to be white, a concept that is in part favoured and borne out by colonial history, where, in many Indigenous spaces, the only significant incursions were by white colonizers. A corollary to this is the notion that Indigeneity holds a particular identity-value in opposition to the non-Indigenous, effectively casting all those who do not identify as Indigenous

(including Black, Asian, and other non-white categorized identities) into the self-same "settler" configuration. This nomenclature has carried forward into a current and vastly more diverse demographic where, in many cases, those identifying as white comprise a minority of the population, yet are still seen as the alter-ego of the Indigenous. In such circumstances, where does the non-white, non-Indigenous subject locate itself when working within or parallel to Indigenous spaces? This is the complication that we need to address, because if we do not, we will remain in liminality, enforcing a number of solitudes that prevent us from addressing the deep problems of race and power, both inside and outside the academy.

The origin of names and where they leave us

The relatively recent acronym "BIPOC" (Black/Indigenous/People of Colour) carries with it a strategic purpose, though the term can also lack nuance and unintentionally exacerbate historical inaccuracy. We must remember that the first linguistic use of the term "person of colour" came from legal descriptions that document "free men and women of colour," that is, a distinction between enslaved and emancipated people from the African diaspora. In other contexts, it is read as a person of mixed-race ancestry who identifies (or is identified) with the African diaspora. It was not until the latter part of the last century that the definition of "person of colour" expanded beyond blackness. In more recent years, the term has come to mean and be adopted by non-white communities, effectively a parallel of the aforementioned form of "racialization." That said, there are good and defined reasons why activists have used the BIPOC acronym to create separate categories, although their use is still blurred and inconsistent. The argument is that those identified as Black or Indigenous are differentially and more harshly suppressed by white colonial rule than other racialized communities. Everything from rates of incarceration to community segregation to impoverishment speak to the differentiations, and these are indeed important to note. The fear of homogenization is very real and can speak to the erasures of communities that have been disproportionately affected by racist laws and practices. Indeed, we need to look no further than the officially sanctioned categories of multiculturalism and Aboriginal identity which were arguably created to serve government interests, containing communities and ensuring they function in relation to whiteness. Of course, this is not to say that the Indian Act or similar pieces of legislation should be read as a well-meaning effort by ruling governments to separate Indigenous people from other racialized communities! But we can see how both official and unofficial discourses struggle to retain unique senses of identity where it is advantageous to do so, either for governing forces or for the members of suppressed communities. While in the context of this paper and, indeed, in my ongoing work, I do not shrug off the use-value and efficacy of a term such as BIPOC, I similarly implore those of us engaged in discourses of racialization to be stridently aware of these histories—not to adhere to them, but to learn from them. If we do not, we run the risk of returning to a space where every instance of the raced imaginary is overdetermined by its relativity to whiteness.

From naming a race to naming a place

The first time I witnessed a land acknowledgement was in the 1990s in Australia at the University of Woolongong and, at the time, it impressed me as a sound-minded statement that at once recognized history, place, and people. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the proximity and connectivity of the Pacific Rim, the first time I witnessed this same act in Canada was at the University of British Columbia. In both and many subsequent instances, however, I was struck by the institutionalized grand gesture where Elders spoke elegantly, conference-goers listened attentively, but then? A return to business as usual, often with an evacuation of any embodied Indigenous presence in the room. Rarely, even today, is a territorial acknowledgement invoked or referred to *during* presentations, unless the entire event is predicated on land or Indigenous presence, and so I wonder how this practice is rationalized, and for whom. My cynical self says that it is an act of pure self-congratulation, an acknowledgement not of history, land, and people but of good citizens voicing contrition for past bad behaviour of their colonizing forebears. But whether it is noble or self-effacing, the question to be asked is: who is this for, to whom is it directed, and who reaps the benefits?[9]

This carries past land acknowledgement to the current trend of self-identification that heralds the settler status of the speaker. More than a recognition, this is a call to shame, to mark oneself as the beneficiary of past injustice, and in so doing, what? Much as land acknowledgments are too often stated and then forgotten, the self-naming as a "settler" is frequently no more than a fleeting identificatory moment pre-pending an acknowledgement of the colonial state (as in, "I am a settler-Canadian"), and this particular form of discourse, I would argue, is situated in the shadow of whiteness. This same shadow can be cast over the racialized body, reifying the earlier stated notion of the dyad where whiteness is fixed and held in place by various putative "others." But then how does that racialized (non-Indigenous) body situate itself in the context of the racialized (Indigenous) body when both of these are being defined by/through whiteness? That is, rather than existing in a world of pluralities, these bodies are situated in a relationship that goes *through* whiteness as a defining qualifier rather than developing relationships *outside* of whiteness. In other words, as Malissa Phung acknowledges, while racialized "settlers" "are also participants and beneficiaries of Canada's colonial project, especially when they work towards achieving equality with Canadian settler subjects ... are they settlers in the same way that the French and British were originally settlers in Canada?"[10] I share Phung's ambivalence, wishing neither to erase the various complicities racialized immigrants have had with white colonizers in the abrogation of Indigenous lands and lives, nor the deracination of racialized subjectivities to effectively create a package of (white) settler identity. In all that precedes, I am not out to contest the worthiness of land acknowledgements (certainly, they represent a past-due reflection and must be taken even further) nor the positioning of settler identity (which can be opportune and valid) but to investigate the ends to which these practices are put.

9. âpihtawikosisân, "Beyond territorial acknowledgments," Accessed on September 23, 2016. https://apihtawikosisan.com/2016/09/beyond-territorial-acknowledgments; "CAUT–Acknowledging Traditional Territory–List–Territorial-Acknowledgement-by-Province.pdf," Accessed September 21, 2016. http://www.caut.ca/docs/default-source/professional-advice/list—territorial-acknowledgement-by-province.pdf?sfvrsn=12.

10. Malissa Phung, "Are People of Colour Settlers Too?" in *Cultivating Canada: Reconciliation through the Lens of Cultural Diversity*, eds. Ashok Mahur et al. (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2011), 289–98.

Following the yellow brick road

I want to indulge in a bit of a trip down memory/theory lane to illustrate what I am trying to get at in terms of complicating non-Indigeneities within an artistic discourse. In the late 1990s, largely through the practices of counter-storytelling and the refutation of master narratives, discourses around progressive thought were collated under the rubric of critical legal theory. The fields of critical feminism and critical race theory were also co-developing, perhaps not altogether unproblematically. The scholars and artistic researchers I knew, often racialized, found a foothold in these schools of critical thought, which were grounded not just in theoretical language but in practical applications. Legal scholars such as Richard Delgado and Kimberlie Crenshaw,[11] racialized practitioners within white-sanctioned spaces, developed convincing arguments to contest master narratives that spoke to the unearned and often invisible privileges afforded by whiteness. A crew of, and perhaps coup by, racialized academics was preparing to breach the gates (like any good committee of barbarians), and the spaces once so comprehensible within a white operational gaze were shimmering with change. If that metaphor is apt, then it follows that normative subjects, used to seeing their images perfectly returned to their optic receptors in that reflective surface, were suddenly treated to a distorted and dystopic vision. The white face, blurred in the shimmer of the new institution.

But what happened then is what has happened before. Call it circling of the wagons, or re-entrenchment of former values, but there was a noticeable shift in the types of stories told, of theoretical positions rolled out. We saw this in the academy in the 1980s on the heels of national independence movements that challenged colonial empires, where the "postcolonial," initiated and popularized by three white Australian academics, became the favoured position of new scholars.[12] And yet, the new experts were not spilling out from former colonies but from the suburbs and gated communities of white america and canada.[13] Post-Said, post-Spivak, post-Bhabha,[14] these were the soldiers of the new economy, critiquing empire while creating a model of liberal white subjectivity that empowered its purveyors to, once again, speak for (and speak over) racialized subjects. In the 1990s, a new generation of critics paying attention to critical race theory banded together to develop what was referred to as critical white studies: not a form of right-wing nationalism, but of a self-effacing, self-reflective critique of whiteness. These soldiers were progressive, anti-colonial, and pushing for change, but they were, almost exclusively, white subjects. The work they developed and presented—and I would include Noel Ignatiev and Richard Dyer in this lot[15]—was far from facile and did indeed contribute to an articulation and understanding of race and racialization and their concomitant privileges.

But I want to place such critical thinking under a strategic lens and again ask who benefitted from these rigorous analyses. Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital (which links to academic and economic capital), illustrates how, in the critical landscape of the postcolonial, the critical white reader created a polyglot subject capable of speaking, and permitted to speak, from various positions—a *raison d'etre* for those white bodies entering the academy from stage left. Validated by language of the rhizome and multiplicity, of enhanced

11. Kimberlee Crenshaw et al., eds., *Critical Race Theory : The Key Writings That Formed the Movement* (New York: The New Press, 1996); Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory : An Introduction* (New York: NYU Press, 2000).

12. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 2000).

13. I use lower case to refer to these nation states for a plethora of reasons, but mainly to decouple the colonial nomenclature from the lands they claim to represent.

14. Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978); Gayatri Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York and London: Routledge, 1988).

15. Richard Dyer, *White: Essays on Race and Culture* (London: Routledge, 1997); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

and slippery subjectivities, critical white studies reinforced a particular form of binary that was itself made real through European schools of thought that enforced a regulatory dyad of the Self and Other. Not innumerable selves and cascading others, but capital S and O, Self and Other. Today, when the complexities of identity are arguably more nuanced and formerly repressed peoples are pronouncing their subjective stands, we have arrived at a moment in which global Indigeneity is being reckoned with in the academy. Knowing that the language of the postcolonial is woefully inadequate, incomplete, and in some regards, downright untrue, and that institutionally sanctioned practices such as critical white studies do not adequately address the regional and communal necessities brought to the fore by Indigenous agency, the academy scrambled to re-invent itself. Let us not forget that the early entry of Indigeneity (although not Indigenous agency) into the academy was through white anthropology and white readership of Indigenous literature. Well before the presence of Indigenous professors and students came the content resulting from the study and theft of Indigenous stories, art, and bodies. In this scramble to retain academic jobs and control over disciplines, the term of settler, or settler-colonist was borne. Having already parsed this term somewhat, what follows is a brief review of the initial trigger points that led us here.

Conciliation, redux

Those of us who have followed government action (and inaction) over the years are likely familiar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools and its resultant 94 calls to action,[16] as well as the response from institutions (educational and otherwise) that have enacted policy shifts and practical changes in their operations, with various levels of success. Less familiar to many of us, though, are the global and national antecedents to the Canadian TRC. On the global scale, of course, the most famous was the South African TRC upon which many African and other TRCs were based. An interesting lesson of history is that the very term "reconciliation" in South Africa has become so out of favour as to be now deemed retrograde, or at least ineffectual, and its theoretical successor now is the cultural problematics of xenophobia and violence.[17] Also lesser known outside of academic/reconciliation circles is that, nine months before Prime Minister Stephen Harper stood up in the House of Commons to offer the apology that set the TRC wheels in motion, PM Kevin Rudd did the same in the Australian House of Commons, with considerable differences. I would argue that the Canadian TRC blindsided many mainstream Canadians, who were either blithely unaware of the legacy of residential schools or unmoved by their devastating and genocidal impact on Indigenous communities, while the Australian TRC was a direct result of mainstream Australians taking to the streets to demand the nation take responsibility for the government actions that resulted in the Stolen Generations. Arguably, Rudd's installation as PM to replace a resolutely unapologetic PM Howard came about largely, if not exclusively, because a nation demanded political action on this issue. But there are other antecedents within a Canadian scale that are deeply pertinent here, and they both take the form of apologies within the House by a sitting Prime Minister: in 1985 to the Japanese Canadians wrongfully interned during the second world

16. "Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action," Accessed on December 31, 2018. http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

17. Loammi Wolf, "The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the Context of Xenophobia, Cycles of Violence, and Epigenetic Trauma," in *Prosecuting International Crimes: A Multidisciplinary Approach*, ed. Bartłomiej Krzan (Leiden; Boston: Brill Nijhoff, 2016).

war, and in 2009 (just before the June apology to survivors of residential schools) to the descendants of those punished by the Chinese head tax. Without these apologies, Harper's words, many of them lifted directly from Rudd's text, but delivered without emotion, may not have been uttered.[18]

One final note on this, however, is that governments are in the business of governing, which is not always compatible with performing ethically or morally, and it's not conspiratorial cynicism that tells us that the apology and subsequent TRC (and attendant compensation) was performed not out of good will but out of economic necessity; the class action suit that would have resulted without the TRC compensation would have far exceeded the monetary value of that package, and even of the Kelowna Accord, which was introduced by Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin but brought down by PM Harper. So it was good for business to pay a little rather than a lot, and to do so while appearing both contrite and magnanimous.

Investing in Universities and University Investment

"Good for business" is another way to look at recent and current events within the academy. Universities such as UBC and Toronto are not about to perform acts of contrition that compromise their land base, so there has to be another way for the white academy to compensate, to pay a little rather than a lot. I will return now to the terms settler and settler-colonialist to try to comprehend what these terms mean and who they effect. First off, they are in and off themselves terms that recognize historical inequities. When white academic bodies rise at the podium and announce that they are settlers, this presents—like a land acknowledgement—the facticity of history. Here we stand, bodies who have arrived at this land through the colonial enterprise, and we make that clear and present. But in that grip of identity (and here is the crux of my argument), the subjects identify both "as" and through their negative iteration, as what they are not. A settler-colonist cannot exist without the lands violently settled, the peoples colonized. A settler-colonist is defined—let's say, made whole—by the present, absent, and imagined Indigenous body. This is to say, the utterance of being a settler-colonist does not require an Indigenous audience any more than does a land acknowledgement, and in the current academy that absent but imagined audience is often very much the case. Similarly, the Indigenous body finds itself defined by the non-Indigenous, but this non-Indigenous entity is always already configured as the white body. In sum, this tightly wound binary has no room for the non-white, non-Indigenous body as it cannot be explained or contained by this dyadic frame.

Thus, in this post-TRC world, now that the commission has presented its report and recommendations, certain deeply troubled binaries continue to be perpetuated. One of these is the paradigm which equates, often explicitly, the term "non-Indigenous" with white-settler, effectively erasing or ignoring multiple sets of communities—racialized, refugee, immigrant—and re-emphasizing a reliance on definition through dominant whiteness. Historically, despite (or perhaps because of) the underwritten presence of other racialized bodies, the "non-Indigenous" was indeed the embodied whiteness of settlers and their governments, so it is understandable that this shorthand continues to this present moment. And if the term non-Indigenous is so full

18. Scholars of these speeches will note the uncanny similarity, not just in concept but in direct phraseology, suggesting that speechwriters rationalized identical language to retain a common agenda.

of whiteness, that leaves racialized subjectivities in a state of limbo or erasure, *outside* of a relationship to indigeneity. From my own experience attending numerous regional and national TRC events (admittedly anecdotal), there seemed to be a consistent lack of non-Indigenous racialized presence, once again foregrounding the white/Indigenous paradigm.

I would re-emphasize that non-Indigenous racialized bodies are dis-placed because there is no mode by which they can be placed in relation to Indigenous subjectivities. If to be non-Indigenous is to be white, then to be racialized is to either be distanciated from Indigenous spaces or to be co-opted into that non-Indigenous whiteness. I think of the great canadian sport of curling, where the safe space is to curl a stone behind the protected guard: this is the position of many racialized academics and citizens as we negotiate our way onto the rink. It's a parody of Bhabha's "white but not quite." Racialized subjects find themselves trying to fit into the narrative of settler-colonial identity, however deep the irony that, in some cases, that would mean inhabiting the same colonial identity that these bodies have actively resisted. Mimic men indeed.

Projecting into the future

During the "Mainly White Room" longtable presentation referenced at the beginning of this article, I wanted to present a visual mapping of how the racialized body is read (and reads itself, in the practice of du Boisian double consciousness) in the upper echelons of academic leadership. Using a google image search, I had sourced out the many faces and identities that were to be found under searches for "Dean" and "Graduate" and "Fine Arts," which produced a bundle of headshots (some of them close colleagues of mine) that were remarkably homogeneous in terms of evident racial composition. That is, a vast majority of the faces belonged to white men and women. I collated these head shots and had a colleague use a mini-LED projector to map them onto my face, in a less-gruesome *Silence of the Lambs* parallel, as I extemporized on the reality of extreme lack of diversity within these ranks. I admit that this performative act ran the same risk of exclusive binaries that I have referenced earlier in this paper, that is, placing my own racialized subjectivity in dyadic opposition to whiteness. But my performative act, contextualized by historical and wearisome narratives of race in the arts academy, was intended to illustrate and also to discomfit white perspectives that "require a re-thinking … of the historical relations of power that prompt emotional resistance to discussions of race."[19] This projection, then, served two purposes: to literally present white faces masking my own as a (perhaps facile) way to manifest the overarching whiteness of the discipline; and to use this visual mode to unsettle normative readings which suggest that, despite extreme inequities, "we" are all on the same page, in some tacit and unwritten agreement that demographics have to change. Breaking out of that mode, though, we might be able to see not just a need for a modest, begrudging change (the inclusion of racialized bodies in small and containable numbers) but a radical rethink in which Indigenous and other racialized thinkers enter into the arts academy with agency to make real change and not be relegated to a minor blip on a white-zoned radar.

19. Sarita Srivasata, "Tears, Fears and Careers: Anti-racism and Emotion in Social Movement Organizations," *Canadian Journal of Sociology / Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 55-90.

As we move within complicated realities and identities, it is imperative that we find ways to resist the binary and enter into new and more complex forms of relationality. As my face morphed through various forms of passing, I made the argument that I put forward now: artists, performers, and other creative thinkers inhabiting BIPOC spaces have been developing inclusive models to address this static pattern by insisting on everything from collaborative productions to working spaces to better understand (and complicate) these relationships. Projects such as the *o kinādās* residency[20] in 2016, the Beyond Reconciliation SSHRC research-creation project (2013–18), and the Primary Colours initiative[21] (2015–) are all key indicators of how this difficult work can be undertaken, forging new connectivities between Indigenous and other racialized communities. The *o kinādās* residency brought together some 20 Indigenous and other racialized artists to think through the Tahltan notion of "walking around" as it affects us, individually and collectively, in contemporary realities; Beyond Reconciliation produced numerous investigative projects, theoretical and creative, to explore connectivities between various communities striving to think outside the relationship to whiteness; and Primary Colours brought together varied groups of Indigenous and racialized artists and cultural organizers to plan for ongoing and future opportunities, similarly wresting control for such work out of mainstream hands and making us the controllers of our own destinies. As exemplary as these projects are in terms of subverting dominant academic and artistic paradigmatic practices, they are essentially underground movements, borrowing from critical race theory, counter-storytelling, liberatory pedagogy, and anarchist practice. These, then, are less solutions than signposts, pointing to a direction we may wish to undertake on larger, grander scales. But minor as they are, these are three of numerous projects generated in the past few years which have the potential to re-address our cultural landscape and develop into what many of us have prescribed for decades as a salve to the intensity of inequities that have defined us, despite our protestations and desires for a future beyond such restrictive dictates. ¶

20. O kinādās, "2017 SUMMER INDIGENOUS INTENSIVE," Accessed on December 31, 2018. http://rm-ooc.ca/tag/o-kinadas/
21. "Primary Colours / Couleurs Primaires," Accessed on December 31, 2018. http://www.primary-colours.ca