2022

Assembling Place: White Supremacist Formations at a Place-Based Educational Institution

Emma Terwilliger

Assembling Place: White Supremacist Formations at a Place-Based Educational Institution

An Honors Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology

Colby College

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Arts

By

Emma H. Terwilliger

Waterville, Maine

May 16, 2022

Abstract

This research considers white supremacist formations at an elite, place-based educational institution in the Bahamas. Place-based education is an educational philosophy that connects "learning" to the setting in which students are engaging in that learning. Through the structuring philosophy of place-based education, I examine how white supremacist formations are/were engaged with, experienced, remembered, and reinforced by 11 former and current educators, administrators and students who have attended/worked at the school. I contend with my interlocutors' memories and experiences through four interwoven threads: tourism and imperialism in the Bahamas as manifested through the school's "place-based" educational philosophy, militarist ordering of every-day experience, institutional renderings of diversity, and curricular frames of place. A structuring concept of this research is "assemblage;" building on a variety of scholars' work, I consider assemblage as a way to locate how white supremacist formations at the school become, remain, and are reinforced and obscured. Assemblage allows for a critique of the project of place-based education as it illuminates how experiences are never just and only experiences, but rather complex locations shaped through systemic forces such as imperialism.

Acknowledgments

Gratitude,

Britt, for guiding and listening to me.

Chandra, for these years of collaboration. A gift.

My family, for surrounding my life with your love.

Mae, for remembering and laughing together.

The Creatives this thesis falls into conversation with.

Anthrohistory.

The Eitan Shalom Green Fund, for supporting my fieldwork research.

Table of Contents

Introduction: Becoming

i. Noise

Light flows into the cave through a hole in the rock above our heads. Even as we step inwards, towards the back wall, there are echoes: soft glow in the fringes of periphery, sections of limestone outcrop illuminated. An altar "that was not always" an altar, formed almost four centuries ago by British colonizers who founded the first British settlement in the Bahamas (Morgenstern 2019: 62).

This cave is a burial site. The British colonizers have been found to rest here, alongside the remains of Lucayan people.

Outside is mostly green and gray and blue. There are trees and shrubs and sky. A forest obscures an ocean. Leaves and branches fall through the gap in the ceiling, where the light flows. Below us, paths swirl where other feet once mapped. We trod over them, assembling new patterns.[1]

And there is a sign nearby the cave. It tells a history of how the British landed and took "refuge" here.[2] The sign signals that this is a tourist place, a place for visiting just as it was once a place for preaching. The sign tells us, *you are here,* without using those words.

You are here, on this island, beside an ocean that was not always an ocean.

You are here, in this cave, a burial site.

You are here.

~

Sit Where you are. Breathe and close your eyes.

What do you hear? Who do you hear? How do you remember?

[1] "An ocean" as opposed to "the ocean" references David William Cohen's (2004) discussion about "specificity" in relation to "interpretive frameworks." In *The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya 1990* (Ohio University Press, 2004), 21, 23.
[2] Citation removed to protect the identity of the school.

~

I sit a computer screen away from Mae, both of us calling in from different parts of the United States.[3] My desk is covered in papers and sticky notes and a small set of watercolor paints. Our conversation is mostly laughter, listening, gasps at and of remembrance. We speak about the moments we spent sitting side by side in a hammock swinging from a wooden beam overhead, talking about love. We speak about walking into the ocean. We remember.

Mae, who identifies as Asian American, and I, who identify as white, haven't seen each other in-person since meeting at Locus, a semester school located on the southern-most spit of the island of Tholos in the Bahamas almost five years ago, but we talk over video once in a while.[4] When we talk (and we say this) it always feels as though we have been in conversation every day since. Our friendship, our collaboration, goes on.

In this moment we are discussing memories of Tholos— starting and stopping again for pauses, for staring off and thinking—and Mae returns us to the cave. A place traveled to while at Locus. About 180 kilometers long and in some sections less than two kilometers wide, Tholos is one of 700 islands in the Bahamas. The cave sits in the northern-most part of the island, on the opposite end from the school:

M: I loved being in that cave, too.

E: Yeah, the cave, yeah.

M: Uh huh. I think about that. I think about that when I'm like, do we actually ever be in a, are we ever present in a place where we hear nothing…and that was the one place where we heard nothing. Like, not even any white noise. And that, I think about.

[3] All of my interlocutors' names in this thesis have been changed and are pseudonyms.
[4] Both the name of the school and the name of the island are pseudonyms.

In this moment I pause. I pause because, as I say, I immediately think of history. Of what it means to be in a place and not hear because of the narratives that have been written over; the people whose lives have been lost because of displacement, slavery, settler colonialism. I think of what it means to know that this "nothing" Mae evokes, Mae *hears,* is filled also with *other* stories.

With dreams. With love. With laughter.

***

ii. Assemblage

The school that Mae and I speak of is an elite semester and summer school for high school students located in the Bahamas. "Locus," the pseudonym I use to refer to the school throughout this thesis, is the name for both this high school program and the larger organization that the program fits within. The larger organization encompasses four interconnected parts: the semester/summer school, a research institute, a middle school, and a learning center for children ages 3-10. For the purposes of this thesis, unless indicated otherwise, when I use the term "Locus," I am referring most specifically to the semester and summer term programs as they were the central focus of my fieldwork.

The majority of students who attend Locus are white and wealthy, with many coming from elite private or boarding schools on the East Coast of the United States. The school encourages Bahamian students to apply and there is scholarship program set up for Bahamians—generally a few Bahamian students attend per term. The school maintains partnerships with other academies and schools that draw a small number of students in from areas of the world outside of the U.S. and the Bahamas. I attended the school, with Mae, during the summer of 2017.

The tuition for the school's semester program (approximately 14 weeks) at Tholos is just under $35,000, while tuition for the summer term (6 weeks during the summer months) is $16,000.

Although the school is committed to meeting 100 percent of demonstrated student/family need, the cost is clearly a hinderance to, as one of my interlocutors described, many students even considering attending Locus, and is one of the factors that creates class and race-based divisions at the school.

Most faculty who teach during the summer and semester programs at Locus are relatively young, likely in their 20s and early 30s. While other areas of staffing at the school employ more "Bahamians," an identity category which throughout my fieldwork often seemed to stand in for "Black" or "Afro-Caribbean," teachers of the semester and summer term are majority white and American; there are around 10 total semester teachers/faculty. When asked whether the school is attempting to employ more Bahamian people in all levels of the organization (including as teachers) Alex, a current administrator at the school, stated that "in an ideal world we would have 2-3 Bahamian teachers." He mentioned how, because Locus is an elite private school, there were "advantages," from the administration's point of view, to teaching applicants who had experience in (American) private school sectors.

Although the school does not publicize how much teachers are paid, Alex did state that teachers are not highly compensated; Fae, a former teacher who worked at the school for two summers, stated that their pay was about $1,000 for the entire summer in addition to room and board accommodations. Teacher retention—due to pay and other challenges associated with living in such a remote place— is fairly low, with most teachers staying for only around 1-2 years.

~

It is helpful, here, to return to the cave with which I began this chapter. It was not clear to me when speaking with Mae, whether Mae meant "hearing nothing" in this way. I did not ask her to elaborate because I wanted to leave "breathing space" (Sharpe 2019: 109) for all that was

unknown.[5] I did not want to ask her to (make) clear the unknowable (McKittrick 2021). And I didn't know if there was an answer. I did not know if *there* was a question.

But I did start to wonder what it means to hear, and to listen, in the endless variation of ways that we do that. I started to question how I might engage with the school, and with my interlocutor's experiences of the school, alongside and through the many forms of hearing and listening. *Assemblage* became a way to explore these ideas.

Assemblage is a widely theorized term by scholars both within and outside of the discipline of anthropology. I first encountered assemblage (in that name) through Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing's (2015) book, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Tsing describes assemblage as an "open-ended gathering" a way of considering how transnational systemic forces are experienced and located through moments and processes that are often considered to be disconnected from them (2015: 23). Two other scholars, Ong and Collier (2005) refer to assemblage "as…global forms articulated in specific situations," as well as a way of refusing the abstraction of "global" processes (4). They center their analysis within a "specific range of phenomena" that call attention to these processes whilst spatially and temporally contextualizing them.

For this work, I take up and further Tsing and Ong and Collier's conception of "assemblage" in a few ways. The first is considering assemblage as a way to locate how Tholos as a place is both "made" by the school and resists that making. I think of this "making" as a kind of "assembling," a process whereby systemic forces form the school and influence how the school becomes experienced. I also use assemblage as a way to move through time and memory, aligning my interlocutors' memories of their experiences with both the school as it was when they were there

[5] Was, and continues to be.

and as it is was at moment of my fieldwork. I consider, building on Keith Basso's (1996) analysis of place-making, how memories both make and are made by and through places (4-7). In a return to Mae's comment, I consider how people hear and listen through presents never completely separated out from pasts and the stories told about the places of those pasts (Trouillot 1995).

The core of this thesis —or perhaps not, perhaps there is no core, perhaps there are only the fringes, the outskirts, the skirting-around-but-not-quite-getting-there— is an assemblage of white supremacist formations at the school as they are/were engaged with, experienced, remembered, and reinforced through the structuring philosophy of place-based education.[6] I contend with their, and my own, experiences at the school, feeling love and joy alongside violence. I contend with "there." Like the treaded tracks in the cave, the experiences assemble (Stewart 2007).

This thesis considers these memories and experiences through four interwoven threads. The first focuses on how Locus as a "place-based" educational institution is formed and forms itself through transnational forces of imperialism and tourism. The second engages with the systemic ordering of time and motion in the every-day structure of the school, considering how the school functions to uphold militarist disciplinary measures and infrastructures of white supremacy. The third questions institutional renderings of "diversity," following the ways in which diversity becomes constructed as a "liberalist" project and reinforces hierarchy and division (Pierre 2019: 95). The fourth questions how Locus creates specific curricular frames of place and what it means to be *in a place*. I engage with experience and place-making through these routes not to separate

[6] The lack of core of this thesis is in reference to anthrohistory, specifically David William Cohen's (2011) discussion of anthrohistory as resting within and becoming "not quite," whilst simultaneously "catching the light of several vectors." David William Cohen, "The Pursuits of Anthrohistory: Formation against Formation," In *Anthrohistory: Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Discipline,* eds. Murphy et al., (The University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2011), 33.

them out from one another, but to illuminate interconnected centers, all of which feed into and inform the constantly-in-motion whole and constantly-in-motion stories told about that whole.

***

iii. "How Do We Live Well in a Place?"

This thesis is not about a school. This thesis is not about Locus, although the place does serve as an opening to thinking, to considering how places are assembled and re-assembled in ways that reinforce whiteness and institutional affluence (Halvorson and Reno 2022: 10). Through my research, Locus has become a thread of the assemblage and a culturally and temporally specific example of how educational institutions, most specifically those focused on experiential education, *concretize places* through their assertions of doing the opposite. The focus of this thesis is not on how Locus *is,* but rather, how it is (re)experienced; it is about how place becomes assembled through processes of remembering (Basso 1996: 4-7). And I ask: why is it that people remember places differently? What can the collaborative sifting through of these memories and experiences show not only about memory and race, but also love and spaces of love? I think of these questions as openings within openings, assemblages within assemblages (Tsing 2015: 4). They are in many ways still open.

The use of the terms "place" and "making place" throughout this thesis is intentional. Places or "place-worlds" as Basso (1996) describes them, are "made" through experience, memory, and imagination (4-7). Places become "made" as people form and re-form them by eliciting stories, and sometimes histories, of what happened or could happen *there* (Basso 1996: 4-7). And the histories of a place, "that which is said to have happened" (Trouillot 1995: 2) are likewise constructed through the making of places, as the narratives told about the pasts of a place become structured through the most widely and dominantly "accepted" narrative strand (Basso 1996: 6).

Joëlle Bahloul (1996) is another theorist whose work informs my analysis of place. The author examines how a "multi-family house" in Setif, Algeria, which has since "vanished," is constructed and reconstructed through the memories of former Jewish residents, memories which themselves contain possibilities for countering the violences that have cleaved the house from the present (Bahloul 1996: 1-3). I take up both Basso and Bahloul's analyses of place as they draw out how memories make and disrupt places, and how places are made through and disrupt memory. Their analyses allow for a locating of place that is deeply contextually and temporally significant, but that also contains possibilities for shift and disruption (Bahloul 1996: 1-3).

Through this thesis I consider place as both a location (where we are) and as a process (how we know where we are; how places become known as they are, or, made and re-made) (Seawright 2014: 557; Basso 1996: 4-7). This consideration of place becomes a sort of refusal when aligned with the "place-based" foundations of Locus's curriculum. Place-based education is a form of education that connects "learning" to the space/setting in which students are engaging in that learning, a model derived from indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing (Seawright 2014: 561). The differences between place-based education and the more widely known experiential education are minute; according to one report, experiential education is one methodology through which the core philosophies of place-based education can be enacted (Getting Smart 2017). Experiential education, through this model, encompasses programs and projects that directly engage students with the stakes or "relevance" of their learning in relation to the world around them (Getting Smart 2017: 8).

As opposed to the project of place-based education, a project which contains possibilities of flattening place into a geography (McKittrick 2021: 106), I take up place as a deeply multifaceted way to think about stories and how we come to know ourselves in relationship to that which is

unknown and that which will never be (McKittrick 2021: 16-17). Using "place" opens for a deep and nuanced engagement with histories, presents, and futures of where we are in relationship to who and how we are. In alignment with Gardner Seawright's (2014) analysis of place-based education and the "structural epistemic interactions between settler colonialism, white supremacy, and place," I consider place both as a way to locate the violences that can be associated with institutional projects of place-making, and as a way to resist and question that making (Seawright 557). Specifically, I wonder what re-conceptualizing of the "making" as an "assembling" might do to the institutional "projects" of place.

~

As mentioned, Locus is an elite semester school located in the Bahamas. I say "located" to expose the deep contradictions of what it means for the school to be both "there" and "not there." Locus is "there" to the extent that it is a continuation, an exacerbation, of elite schooling in the United States, as well as an expansion of ventures of these forms of elite schooling outside of the boundaries of the U.S. and outside the boundaries of traditional schooling itself. [7] For instance, many of my interlocutors did not describe "the school" as "a school." Other terms included tourist venture, neocolonialist venture, social ritual, summer camp, and community living.

What is intriguing is that in my fieldwork the school was also framed by one of my interlocutors as being located in neither place, as being not *of* the U.S., or *of* the Bahamas, but as locating and being located in its own imaginary, its own *type* of education. On the surface, this *other* education seems to only refer to the educational philosophy and principles of the school. As various participants in my research stated, the school is alternative in most senses of the word. The research center at Locus focuses on conservation of local ecosystems and habitats on and around the island.

[7] If these forms of elite schooling remain "American" is a question I contend with through this thesis.

The educational philosophy of Locus as a holistic organization structures itself around the primary organizing principle: "how do we live well in a place?"[8] As one participant in my research, Jake, a current high-level administrator at the school stated about what it means to "live well in a place:"

> **J:** So how do we do that in a place that's limited in infrastructure and limited in resource and that's right on the edge of the sea as we face bigger and bigger storms and rising sea levels and all sorts of political chaos, how do you kind of create a community that tries to live well in this place…

Part of this thesis is recognizing the importance and impact of the work that the school is engaging in *whilst also* considering these efforts of sustainability and environmental education as only a few threads of my own and my interlocutors' experiences (Tsing 2015). How can we view the school's mission in all of its complexities, as it is experienced and remembered differently for students, staff, and faculty who attend and work at the school? Within this framework and through a postcolonial analysis (Chakravarti 2020), I question the school's connections to and yet in some ways constructed separation from both the United States and the Bahamas as I posit that the school falls in line with what Savannah Shange calls a "progressive dystopia:" "a utopia that functions only for a particular segment of society" (Shange 2019: 24). Through this rendering, the institution becomes its own place, separate from both nations, but not separated out from them.

The question, then, that I think needs to be asked about "how do we live well in a place," is *who is "we"?* This is a question that necessitates a deep and critical analysis of race and most specifically whiteness at the school. Through this thesis, I consider whiteness as a force that moves "beyond racialized bodies" to encompass both the "bodily capacities" and "normative ideals" or "expectations of behavior" that structure what those capacities are expected, assumed or even

[8] Citation removed in order to protect the identity of the school.

forced to become (Wolf-Meyer 2015: 447-448). I focus on whiteness as it becomes located through what Gardner Seawright describes as the "ideal social actor," an actor "established upon a particular conception of place that is integral in perpetuating domination" (2014: 555). Additionally, through this thesis I use the term "white supremacy" as opposed to "white privilege" as it more directly "locates white racial domination by underscoring the material production and violence of racial structures and the hegemony of whiteness in settler societies" (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 716).

It is true that the school continues to ask itself many of the questions that I ask throughout this work. The school has been trying to, for example, bring in more Bahamian teachers, engage with community in more equitable and relational ways, diversify its student body, reach out to schools beyond elite boarding schools to encourage students from a variety of backgrounds to apply. There have been attempts to integrate more Bahamian cultural practices into the school curriculum, encourage students to consider their own positionalities in relationship to the work being done, implicate the school itself in discussions of tourism and colonization, build more partnerships with Bahamian schooling systems. *And.* Many of the people I spoke with through this research described experiences with racism, religious discrimination, gender discrimination, elite whiteness, exclusion, division, hierarchy, deeply ingrained institutional affluence, lack of mental health support, exhaustion.

This thesis contributes to the ongoing project of locating each within the other, of viewing reform efforts alongside the daily struggles, joy, and love that many of my interlocutors felt. I also ask what it means to *ask* about imperialism and white supremacy within systems of knowledge set up to maintain these very configurations (McKittrick 2021: 37). This is not to say that I do not believe school systems can shift towards anti-racist pedagogies. Rather, it is clear despite these

shifts that there are deep structures that complicate these efforts. Not only in this particular school but in educational institutions in many places. There are structures that introduce barriers to what exactly the envisaged future *is* that these schools are *shifting towards.*

***

iv. Positionings

The thesis "moves beyond". It needs to. One school is never just about one school; a single place is always within a deep configuration of other places, experiences, systems, and moments (Kincaid 1988). For means of explanation, I mean "moving beyond" in a number of variations. One way the thesis moves beyond is that it is deeply influenced by my own personal experiences at Locus and by my experiences growing up in a family with deep connections and relationships to the outdoors and to experiential education. I was raised in connection to the world through lessons that in some ways mirror indigenous knowledge systems and ways of knowing (Kimmerer 2013).

In the last few years, I have started to ask my parents more and more about their own stories and histories in attempt to try to understand more about *why*—why I feel the way I do, love the way I do, and know the way I do. Their lives, in so many different ways, have always been deeply about forming relationships with people and other living beings where they are/were, with place: they both taught for over a decade at Outward Bound, an experiential education wilderness school; my dad completed the infamous "Alaskan Mountain Wilderness Classic" race (150 miles through path-less Alaskan woods); they both canoed with their two children for weeks on end into the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. My dad still taps the maple trees in our backyard for syrup and every couple of years harvests wild rice in the nearby lakes. His garden is home.

But there are many deep complexities here, and there will always be. We were a white, middle class family taking space on Anishinaabe land and engaging in many Indigenous practices in the middle of the Northwoods. We had access to outdoors spaces, felt comfortable in those spaces, our lives were enhanced and never in danger in those spaces. My parents both came to the town where I was born; we are not a family that has multigenerational roots in the area and so places and ideas beyond our small town were visible, and exciting, and even acceptable to consider as futures.

And, alongside these connections, having attended an underfunded, small public school in rural northern Minnesota where my graduating class was 98 percent white, Locus was really the first place where I was taught histories of colonialism and slavery and encouraged to engage with my identity in relationship to these histories. Interestingly, it was also one of the first places where I felt like I didn't completely belong, although my whiteness allotted me acceptance and security in most spaces within the school as a whole. These are complexities that I attempt to engage with deeply through this thesis. They are unfinished. My thinking about them is unfinished.

***

v. Journeys

This thesis is based on fieldwork I completed with former and current teachers, administrators, students and staff at Locus during the month of January and into the months of February, March and April. Due to constraints with COVID-19, I completed all my fieldwork remotely, which drastically shifted both how I was thinking about my fieldwork and what questions I was asking. It also shifted the relationships that were formed within the fieldwork space, as I began to realize and notice just how much the pandemic had affected my own ability to engage in social interaction, along with the exhaustion and tiredness that I sensed from many of my interlocutors. I came into this research after a long period of deep emotional turmoil that began when a family member was

diagnosed with cancer in 2019. For some reason, surprisingly or not, I felt the emotional exhaustion of these past two years extremely physically during my fieldwork. There were times, after interviews, when my entire body would begin to shake, a response that I attribute to the energy of engaging in deep and sustained conversation for long periods of time coupled with social anxiety which tends to rear its head when I'd like it the least. So… I tried my best to be as ethical and as present and as responsive to my interlocutors as possible…but.

I could also tell that many of the people I was talking with were tired. I'm not sure anyone ever explicitly stated this, but it was evident both in the fact that I was not able to speak with as many people as I originally set out to, and in the responses people gave. So, I was conscious of how much I asked, what questions I asked, and how much time I took up. Of the total of 12 interviews I completed (with a total of 11 participants), almost all averaged between 45 minutes and an hour and a half. Of these, I spoke with three former students, three current administrators, and five former/current educators. Many of my interlocuters I had known previously, but this was the first time I had re-connected with most of them since my own attending of the school in 2017. All of the students and most of the educators I spoke with had attended/taught at Locus during the summer term, which was mainly an effect of my personal connections to the school.

One limitation of this thesis is that through my fieldwork I was not able to speak with any Bahamian students/staff/educators/administrators who currently or in the past have worked at/attended Locus. This was mainly due to the fact that because I conducted my fieldwork remotely, most of my interviews came out of personal connections and I did not have any connections to people who identify as Bahamian and who had worked at Locus. I made an effort to reach out to and ask participants if they knew of any Bahamian people who might be interested in speaking with me but did not receive any connections that led to interviews. I also reached out

to a Bahamian-run nonprofit on the island, but again did not receive a response. Time and energy were also a constraint in this, as following my remote fieldwork in January I was not able to form as many connections with people whom I was not already in contact with.

Writing this thesis without an inclusion of Bahamian voices is something that in many ways mirrors the school that this thesis is "almost but not quite" about (Bhimull 2017: 9). It is one overtly visible way through which my positionality and situatedness as a white former student of the school impacted this work. I do not attempt to go around or justify this exclusion. Rather, I want to attempt to hold it as another thread of the assemblage. There are gaps and silences in this narrative (Trouillot 1995).

~

This thesis begins with an analysis of Locus's philosophy of place-based or experiential education, diving briefly into histories of imperialism in the Bahamas in relation to this philosophical grounding of the school. I consider the school's relationship to tourism in the Bahamas, situating how my interlocutors framed the school as operating within stratifications of world, nation, community, and locality, zooming in whilst zooming out (McGranahan and Collins 2018).

My second chapter hones in on the ordering of experience at Locus, how a variety of day-to-day policies and infrastructures of the school create/d forms of division and exclusion. I take the assemblage of the first chapter, the global through the local, and ask how the school's policies and infrastructures connect to and fall out of ordering frames (Ong and Collier 2005: 4).

My third chapter turns towards "logics of diversity" in an effort to both acknowledge and critique the ways in which Locus is attempting to become a place that more people are able to enter into and find spaces of "belonging" (Shankar 2019: 113). I examine the logics behind the school's

conception of "diversity," looking at three forms through which whiteness became a structural force at the school that assembled the experiences of my interlocutors. This chapter considers the "assemblage" most pointedly in terms of white supremacy and *change*; it examines what it means to reform a place built into and through, as one of my interlocutors stated, *the most upper-class WASPY East Coast educationally privileged whiteness.*

In my final chapter I look towards curriculum and a concept that I name as *curricular formations.* I use this concept as a way to locate how place at Locus became made and bounded, grounded, through curriculum. I examine one example of how imperial histories were enacted through curriculum and created specific experiences of (being with) place.

Chapter 1: Entrances

1.1 Ruin/ed

The tree rises in a section of forest below the ruins of an abandoned resort. Scattered porcelain pieces tell of what was once a swimming pool; emptied structures of concrete and metal still stand. Barely, precariously, unsteadily.

We sit in groups among the ruins, noticing small and sudden movements: a leaf quietly shuddering, two birds in quipped conversation, clouds that retain whisps of *something*…although what, exactly, is uncertain (Stewart 2007).

We wonder if these porcelain pieces signal a time and place shattered or speak something more deeply about a time and a place that is this place and this time: ruins not ruined (Sheller 2003).

~

The light is leaving. Because I'm in Minnesota and Fae is calling from the West Coast, what's night here is only fading on their screen.[9] The light fades and as it does they stand, walk to the back of the room, turn on the light.

I ask Fae, a former student and teacher at Locus, about place. How place entered into and became through their teaching; how they experienced place at the school:

> **F:** …The first thing that comes to mind is that abandoned…I think it was like, the golf course that's right off campus, one of the first places that you bike to that exists where the last mahogany tree is. That place is always so on my mind when I think about Locus. Like here is one of the last remaining survivors of environmental colonization, this mahogany

[9] At the beginning of each fieldwork interview, I asked participants if they would like to share their pronouns, and, if so, what pronouns they would like me to use to refer to them in this text. Fae asked that I used she/they interspersed. For sake of clarity and to minimize any confusion, I use "they" pronouns here to refer to Fae. I want to be clear that this was a conscious decision and reference why I made this change.

tree, and here is this forest taking back over this failed hotel that's right on the edge of this institutional organization, all of those contradictions coming into place…

"Contradictions coming into place." What is the difference between "coming into" place and making (a) place? How do the incongruencies of the institution alongside the forest, the ruined resort next to the tree, make place *as they* come into it (Basso 1996: 4-7)? How is power flowing through and forming this place, as it becomes recontextualized and re-assembled through the many forces and powers moving through it (Rabinow 1984: 6)?

When Fae spoke this story to me, I felt place. I felt the place I had once been in, and I felt how I have come to understand this place differently, tangentially, *through that which has become incongruent,* with distance. How do I recognize the past, or "pastness," in the abandoned, in ruins (Trouillot 1995: 15)? How do I recognize them *as ruins* and sit with them, feel them, ask questions of them, place them as still standing?[10] And for some ruins, for ruins that retain and create violences, for ruins that are hidden or hide themselves in their assumed inevitability, how might educational institutions like this one *ruin* them? Abandon them? Move towards spaces of love rather than coexistence, love rather than accommodation?

And how to do this whilst next to a tree that has been made to stand alone.

In this chapter*,* I take these ruins, these convergences of past and present (Trouillot 1995), and ask, through them, what it means for the "base" of "place-based education" to take on different meanings when aligned with transnational political projects processes and powers that enter into and form the school *into a place.* I focus most specifically on how Locus is a tourist space shaped by imperialism and how my interlocutors experienced this shaping (Ho 2004: 211).

~

[10] Still standing. Standing still. Standing, still.

Locus was founded in 1999 as a place-based and experiential educational school. The founder, a white man from the United States who then taught at an elite boarding school in the Northeast, was interested in creating a space where students could be immersed in education through *doing.* After receiving a fellowship from this boarding school to obtain his master's degree and inspired by teaching an experiential education class at the boarding school, the founder set out to build Locus on the south eastern section of Tholos, an island to which the founder had previous family connections, connections which go back to the mid-1980s. The idea was to build a school where students could connect to and learn about the island through engaging with its ecologies and histories. The school was built on land donated by a resort located on that section of island; I will delve more into the connections between the school and this resort in the following chapters.

Although I did not talk with the founder of Locus during my fieldwork, I spoke with a few people who had been closely involved in the school's founding. One high-level administrator, Jake, framed the school as being about a *whole educational model*. Since its founding, Locus has grown immensely. As mentioned in the introduction, the school is now the umbrella organization under which a number of educational nonprofits operate, including the research institute, the semester and summer programs, an elementary learning center, and a middle school in the nearby community which offers what the school describes as an "experiential approach to the Bahamian curriculum."[11] Locus engages in community outreach with a number of Bahamian organizations including providing apprentice and leadership programs for young people in the Bahamas. The research institute brings researchers, students, and interns to the island to engage in work on sustainability, environmental and oceanic research. Students have the opportunity to work closely with these high-level researchers through course work.

[11] This program is set up as a partnership with the Bahamas Ministry of Education.

As mentioned, the semester and summer programs at Locus are both shaped by the question: "how do we live well in a place?" The summer term explores this framing question through three pathways of learning: food systems, marine ecology, and tourism. The semester program is set up more "traditionally" in that there are specific courses focused on mathematics, art, and literature rather than three different pathways towards understanding a "theme."

On Locus's campus, blue-roofed buildings are structured in a circle. Vegetation is sparse, but a few palm trees and bushes pepper the ground and mangroves populate parts of shore that are not covered in sand or rocks. A small dock exists on one side of the small spit; a longer beach and the research center buildings reside on the other. Flowing out from the central campus are alternating small sections of land and pockets of ocean; students utilize these parts of the island for morning exercise (Kincaid 1988).

In the center of campus is an open space where a flagpole presents the Bahamian flag.

***

1.2 Flags and Fieldwork

July 2017/March 2022: I arrive on the tarmac; I carry my suitcase and my silence to the small airport building.[12] I hop in a van or a bus that takes me away, towards the school. It is hot. Very hot. I don't know anyone, although other students seem to. In memory, the next part is less clear. I think I remember driving through a town, and a part of the road that is near barren, just before the entrance into the campus. A sticky memory.

January 2022: Dan sits half up, half lying down in his apartment. He looks exhausted, but I don't tell him this. At one point his roommate brings him dinner and asks who he is

[12] Through this section, I bring together July 2017 and March 2022 to reference both my experience of attending the school in 2017, and the process of remembering my experience (and, perhaps, re-experiencing it) through my fieldwork.

speaking to. He lights up a bit when he tells them, which relieves some of the weight off my chest—of taking up more time in a moment when time seems never to cease its movement.

Dan is a former student and teacher at Locus. I am asking about his experience at the school, teaching, interacting with students, feeling place. His descriptions of the school enhance my memories of the place and I see it more clearly. He speaks about the entrance of the school in another way. He speaks about the resort:

> **D:** In order to enter Locus…you have to pass through the same security that is paid for by the resort. So, you're essentially entering a resort. It is a place apart. Between [town] and Locus there is basically a 5-mile-long driveway where there is not habitation, really.

Not habitation. A place apart.

To begin this section, I would like to draw attention to the ways in which histories and presents of U.S. imperialism in the Bahamas are, were, and perhaps will be felt at Locus as a school *based* in the Bahamas but that contains deep connections to the United States, connections which parallel, draw on, and perhaps become their own tourist industries.

> **D:** I think if you asked a Bahamian what it's like stepping into Locus's campus, they would say it's like stepping into an American school. And often…I would have this strange feeling sometimes on campus feeling like we could be in Fort Lauderdale right now we could be in the Florida Keys. The only thing that primes you to remember that we're not is the flag on the flagpole and then you see Bahamians. But not all the time. So, it is a profoundly American place. And we sing the anthem…

Dan builds a scene where Bahamians are "seen," drawing into conversation pasts and presents of imperialist tourist industries through which Bahamian people were/are, in the eyes of the tourist,

conflated with scenery (Sheller 2003: 54). Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century the tourist industry in the Caribbean "reinforced the social superiority of whites" (Strachan 2002: 10) and contributed to the ongoing racialization and othering of Caribbean peoples who were labeled as "wild" and "uncivilized" (Strachan 2002: 21). Locating the ways in which these histories enter into and are perpetuated through Locus is integral to the project of analyzing how the school's place-based groundings function to uphold structural forms of white supremacy at the school.

~

One of the contentions of this thesis is that histories of imperialism shape experiences of place. It is critical, therefore, to delve into the histories that inform and become visible through Locus. To narrate an incomplete history of the Bahamas, the Taíno and, following, the Lucayan peoples, lived in the archipelago. Beginning with a group of British "adventurers" (colonizers) who landed on Tholos in 1648, the Lucayan peoples of the Bahama islands were virtually extinguished through genocidal practices (Battle-Baptiste 2017: 63). Recently, there have been some Taíno language revitalization efforts practiced by Taíno activist groups in Puerto Rico, with "several persons in Puerto Rico…actively identifying with and mobilizing around this ethnic category" (Feliciano-Santos 2017: 4).

Tholos also holds a deep relationship to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. American Loyalists "relocated" to the Bahamas following the American Revolution in an attempt to form a cotton plantation which eventually failed as a result of land conditions (Battle-Baptiste 2017: 63). One of the known plantations where enslaved peoples lived, worked, and survived on Tholos is located on the spit of land directly across from the school. The island itself is now primarily populated by the descendants of formerly enslaved people alongside high numbers of undocumented Haitian migrants (Battle-Baptiste 2017), with greater numbers of Haitian people migrating since the 1950s

as tourism caused the Bahamian economy to flourish and political turmoil in Haiti caused many Haitians to relocate (Fielding et al. 2008: 38).

Tourism in the Bahamas now continues to flourish, as it "account[s] for 60% of the gross domestic product" of the nation (Battle-Baptiste 2017: 61). As Ian Gregory Strachan states, of tourism in the Caribbean and its connections to other forms of imperialist domination, "tourism makes paradise a product and uses the hotel (the new plantation?) to provide this product for visitors" (Strachan 2002: 3). Locus was described by many of my interlocutors as holding deep and sustained connections to corporate tourist industries; it was also identified as being one of the primary employers on the island.

~

In our conversation, Dan was very critical of Locus. Having taught during the summer term for multiple years up until a few years ago, he spoke at length about the ways he views the school as perpetuating the tourist industries that it purportedly seeks to criticize (to a certain extent) through classes such as the "Tourism and Development" course in the summer and the "Histories" course during the semester. As part of both courses, students interview Bahamian people about Bahamian history, culture, and tourism on the island. Kara, one interlocutor I spoke with about the "Histories" course, said that students learn briefly about anthropology and ethnography before going out into the community to conduct these "interviews."

Dan termed the interviews "disrespectful" and mentioned how they were often extremely surface-level, not conducive to sustained engagement with Bahamian people. Kara, a white woman who is a current teacher at Locus, mentioned the complexities of this aspect of the curriculum, describing how she "thinks about it a lot" and has engaged in many conversations with Bahamian people about their feelings regarding the project, receiving mixed reactions. She described how

the purpose of these interviews was for students to learn about Bahamian culture and history from Bahamian people, rather than from her, a white woman.

I found this contention intriguing to consider alongside Locus's purported interest in attempting to hire more Bahamian teachers (**Alex**: …*in an ideal world we would have 2-3 Bahamian teachers*). I also found it telling that anthropology is invoked in the course, given that the discipline was founded and in many ways continues to be reliant on the construction of the "other" and the "representation of 'primitive' or less-developed non-Western societies by Western colonialism" (Said 1989: 207). To me, the fact that students are conducting interviews illuminated the kind of relationship the school has to the community, a relationship in many ways predicated on this construction of "other" that the school is, in terms of teachers and according to Alex, *not really* attempting to change or shift at all.

To return to Dan's comment about the flagpole, each morning at Locus students and teachers stand around the Bahamian flag and sing the Bahamian national anthem. When I attended Locus, one aspect of pre-arrival "homework" that students were expected to complete was memorizing the anthem. Singing it was often framed as a way of coming together, of welcoming the day and welcoming each other into it. However, as many of my interlocutors discussed, the singing of the national anthem is also an extremely performative form of engaging with the Bahamas as a place, and of making Tholos, *through Locus* into a place. As Izzi, a former student, stated:

> **I:** …we have no right and no affiliation with the Bahamas like that. And I get what they're trying to do of like immerse us in a place or something like that, but again just the way that Locus has been structured and who runs it takes any efforts that they make, because again I don't think its super like, I think it's pretty half-hearted, the type of effort

that they make to…distinguish themselves as not oppressive vs like educating students about like the Bahamian culture.

Another meaning of "place-based," in contrast to the purported project of place-based education, emerges. Through the example of the flag, the interviews, and the "seeing of Bahamians", place-based education comes to mean the basing of the school within and through systems of tourism and colonialism that have formed in continuity through pasts never completely past (Trouillot 1995). "Place-based" also becomes a form of concretizing place, of engaging with the Bahamas in ways that are power-filled but do not consider power. Even as both the "Histories" and the "Tourism and Development" courses attempt to engage students with Bahamian history, these efforts continue to assemble colonial orientations to place alongside the school's reliance on constructions of the school as a place located in the Bahamas while simultaneously being deeply *of* the United States. Although Izzi and Dan are no longer at Locus whilst Kara still teaches there, all three of these interlocutors' analyses of Locus in relation to tourism and imperialism illuminate this form of "place-based" in that, for all, these forms of engaging with place are still continuing, *unresolved.* All three reference challenges that the school continues to face, even as the forms though which these challenges are encountered have, perhaps, shifted.

***

1.3 Uncomfortable Comforts

When asked whether they would describe Locus as primarily a "U.S." or a "Bahamian" institution, most of my interlocutors described the school as retaining deep and structural connections to the United States—like Dan stated, of even *feeling* like it could be a school itself located within the United States. In terms of structural connections to the U.S. (beyond the school's founding), most students who attend Locus are coming from the U.S., the admissions office is set

up there, most recruiting efforts take place there, and most of the donors of the school are from there. In responding to these "American" dimensions of the school and how they are experienced by students, Jake stated:

> **J:** Sometimes people will ask or suggest or say that really, when you come to the semester or the summer term, shouldn't it be and feel Bahamian. And the question or the challenge there I think is, as I said before, I think what we do here certainly because there is a lot of people especially in the semester from America, feels American in some ways, but I think actually what we really ultimately want to create and I don't think we're there, is probably an equal amount of displacement. And what I mean is it's not that it should be super comfortable for these people and uncomfortable for those, it's that it should be the equal amount of uncomfortable for everyone.

When Jake spoke to me about being "uncomfortable," I thought he was referencing challenge, or conceptualizing the school as a place where students are encouraged to step outside their comfort zone. However, Jake's statement also links "uncomfortability" to tourism and race. What does it mean to *feel* Bahamian, as opposed to *feel* American? There are hints, perhaps ruins, in this statement that draw on the concept of "authenticity," as authenticity has often been used by tourist industries to justify the racialization and, more specifically, the exoticization of native or local people through these industries (Imada 2012: 75, 83). Tourists want an "authentic" experience, but perhaps only insofar as it allows the tourist to experience a place as pleasurably different but not quite different *enough* that the tourist will *become uncomfortable* (Sheller 2003: 13). Tourism as an industry, therefore, relies on an imagined "authenticity" that fits within Western ideas about what a place is and who the people who live there are, constructions often rife with racism and racial stereotyping (Urry and Larsen 2011: 10-11; McKittrick 2021). "Uncomfortable" as Alex

speaks of it further signals the school as a tourist mechanism, a place contributing to essentialist constructions of what it means to *feel Bahamian* as opposed to *feel American.*

Through these mechanisms of comfort and discomfort within tourist experiences, systems of colonization are evoked and assemble Locus into a place that not only reinforces these pasts and their continuations, but that in many ways is reliant on them. "Uncomfortable" becomes another way through which the school purports to construct itself as a shifting institution, a *trying* place, but as it continues to rely on, because it has been built into, pasts and presents of imperialist ventures in the Bahamas. "Uncomfortable," "flags" and "fieldwork" all become ways in which the school, through ruins of pasts never past (Trouillot 1995), becomes implicated in and reinforces the very structures of division and violence that the project of place-based education purportedly seeks to deconstruct and forgo (Seawright 2014: 557). The question that I think arises is: what separations—of locality from learning—does place-based or experiential learning at Locus actually deconstruct? And how might the goals of place-based education shift when place is considered as process rather than stagnant and unmoving? Locus does in some ways (through the Histories course, for example) engage with the Bahamas as it moves beyond the present moment. But what does it mean to align this "course" with still-standing policies, such as the flagpole, which index history through its constructed absence?

Chapter 2: Order

2.1 Therapy and Grit

Alex: I've seen more and more kids, and this might be just universal too with students in today's age, students coming with pretty significant mental health baggage. It's increased, it's increased, definitely, and we don't really have the facility [or] capability of, we're not a therapeutic program.

~

I asked Alex why he thinks most students want to attend Locus. He responded with a discussion about media, stating that after leaving Locus many students make videos and post about their experiences on social media which give off a false sense of what the school is (or wants to be). He refuted the notion that many students hold onto, that Locus is a "rite of passage," saying that the school "has to be really clear" with how they market themselves so that students know the school is not "a therapeutic program."

A: …and I guess some of the marketing, if you're struggling in some real personal way with whatever, it's not going to get better at Locus it's going to get exacerbated at Locus because you're independent and you're in a different environment and it's going to be tough. Having said that I've seen kids come in and melt down and then obviously thrive and do really well.

Most likely, Alex's rendering of Locus as "not a therapeutic program" is a refuting of Locus as an experiential education program set up specifically for "struggling youth," a reference to other experiential educational spaces that *are* focused on rehabilitation and recovery such as the "Intercept" program at Outward Bound (Outward Bound 2022). However, even if Locus is not in its own terms a "therapeutic program," should it not still be a space where students, teachers, and

staff dealing with health challenges can access, and then be supported through sustainable infrastructure built into the school once they arrive there? Why are the students who are "struggling" the students who seem to be excluded? And how does this exclusion, this imagined construction of "struggling" versus "doing well" perhaps perpetuate white supremacist formations, specifically as connected to ableism, at the school through eliciting narratives that students who do attend Locus are not in need of any support? The underlying message that comes across in Alex's statement, when aligned with many other of my interlocutors' experiences, is that Locus not only does not view itself as a *therapeutic program,* but also does not consider itself to be a place where students, teachers, and staff who are struggling with any number of health issues, mental or physical, should be attending at all.

Following the previous chapter, Alex's statement also holds a number of "nonreferential meanings" (Hill 1998: 483). To the extent that the "rite of passage" rhetoric shown through the videos that Alex speaks about refers to images of Locus as a tourist place, I view Alex, here, as inadvertently conflating therapy with tourism, playing into how tourist narratives, beginning in the late nineteenth century, began to associate the Caribbean with leisure, service, and relaxation (Strachan, 2002: 98). Alex seems to be simultaneously acknowledging that Locus *does* in some ways play violently into tourism to maintain its prominence in the white wealthy spheres where most of its money arrives from, whilst also admitting that Locus is actually not a space for everyone.

Most centrally, this chapter is about the ways in which discipline and order were woven into Locus's school culture and acted to reinforce exclusion and division. I examine how these ideologies create/d specific experiences of "place" for my interlocutors and how the disciplinary and rigid structuring of the school made the school into a place that both illuminates and maintains

ableism and white supremacist foundations. I explore these concepts through examining three interconnected examples of structures and philosophies of the school, all of which feed into and inform one another as disciplining measures.

~

One of the philosophical groundings of Locus that came up during my fieldwork was the founder's past as a former U.S. Navy SEAL. When I attended Locus, and still currently, almost every day began with what is known as "morning exercise," daily workouts which for the summer session culminate in 10km of running and swimming, and for the semester either a half marathon or a four-mile swim. Athletics at Locus is a cornerstone of the program's goals, a way in which "pushing yourself out of your comfort zone" is catalyzed.

The Navy SEAL (Navy Sea Air and Land Teams) program was created in 1962 by John F. Kennedy as a special warfare and missions unit within the navy. Navy SEAL training is incredibly challenging, with a dropout rate of about 75 percent (Wamsley, 2017). There are a number of Navy and other U.S. Military bases or training sites located on islands in the Bahamas, including AUTEC, the Atlantic Undersea Test and Evaluation Center, on the Andros islands (AUTEC, 2022). Intriguingly, there is also a former Navy base on the island of Tholos, located next to what is now known as "naval base beach." When I attended Locus, the former naval base was one of the sites traveled to during one of our classes, the purpose being as a site to learn about U.S. presence in the Bahamas.[13]

It is intriguing to consider this history and presence of U.S. military infrastructure alongside Locus's founding principles. When Locus was originally built, part of the ideology was that

[13] The interlocutor who mentioned the base also described its prominence in this aspect of Locus's curriculum, as a "place left in ruins" and as a place where these ruins come into contact with some forms of Bahamian culture. The interlocutor mentioned that as part of this base there is a predominantly- Christian chapel where Santería paintings have been found. Santería is an African diasporic religion practiced throughout the Caribbean.

students would come for the semester and help to build and "start up" the program. This meant that students actually helped to construct many of the original buildings on the Locus campus. Dan narrated the beginning ideologies of Locus:

> **D:** All these boarding school kids who have never made their bed and are lazy brats, they're going to come down here and we're going to teach them how to be tough and how to take care of themselves and how to live in community. And those are all beautiful things. But the problem is I think when it was engineered it wasn't considering that some kids are going to come to the school and they already know how to clean toilets because they've been cleaning toilets since they were little kids and they've always had to make their bed…

Alex also observed how the school now differs from these founding principles:

> **A:** Some of the grittiness of the experience has been lost. Not to say that it's not hard and kids don't struggle and it's not challenging in so many different ways but some of the real essential rubber meets the road type of grittiness, like you can't fake that. You can't fake having to build your own bed. We now have more staff who help us with facilities because we can't build buildings with our students necessarily. But some of those externalities well they become externalities but in the early days they were what informed the whole experience…

Interestingly, when I was looking into Navy SEAL operations and ideology, one of the terms that came up was "grit," or the necessity of "having grit" through SEAL training in order to succeed. Proclamations of "grittiness," in terms of Locus, then, are deeply in relation to the militarist foundations still remnant through aspects of the school such as morning exercise, practices which are ableist and exclusionary because they assume an able-bodied "social actor" (Seawright 2014: 557). A social actor who is able to engage in and eventually succeed at, perhaps

even become in some way "transformed" through, this practice (Seawright 2014: 557). "Grittiness" also becomes painted by Alex as specifically in opposition to *therapy.* Locus is not, and cannot be, a "therapeutic program" because it is, or was, or should be, according to Alex, a (more) "gritty" one.

The unsaid thread is that "grit" is also only *for* certain students. In Alex's statement, "grit" becomes a construction linking able-bodied-ness to white supremacist formations at the school, as "grit" becomes painted as a form of mental and bodily endurance which becomes something to be "learned" (Khan 2010). Drawing from the work of Shamus Khan (2010), grit serves as a form of capital for white, affluent students, a way towards "challenging oneself" through an ableist exclusionary politics that assumes a white, affluent experience where grit is taken up and felt and then brushed off. Grit also becomes a class-based experience, one that maintains the ordering of the school through its orienting of students towards specific ways of being that fit within and maintain militarist ordering infrastructures which assume and reinforce whiteness (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 716). "Grit," in these ways, becomes itself a sort of assemblage, as it draws into focus imperial histories and presents of U.S. presence in the Bahamas alongside the militarist foundations of the school. Even if the challenges students are engaging in contain possibilities to be positive and transformative, I think it is imperative to ground these possibilities in critical questions of transformation *for whom,* and *for what purpose.* Grit, through assemblage, comes to frame eliteness in terms of hard work (Khan,= 2010).

This consideration of "grit" also begs a return to the conversation about being "uncomfortable" in the previous chapter, as both grit and uncomfortable become feeling-states that link students' experiences to white supremacist foundations of Locus. When discussing being "uncomfortable,"

Jake mentioned that there have been some conversations (unclear among whom) at the school regarding uncomfortability and how it is experienced by students. Jake states:

> **Jake**: It is about recognizing, hearing, understanding the different hidden challenges that are there for some and not for others… that we can take those into account when we're allocating challenge…that there are some folx whose starting point is much more complicated than others, so how do we balance those things, how do we create a greater sense of equity and belonging so understanding, genuine listening, those are the things, so that factored into the whole calculation are those things that are otherwise not known.

The question becomes: how can schools like Locus create spaces of being "uncomfortable" as Jake speaks of it, as a path towards the kind of growth that is a central focus of experiential education, for students who are *already uncomfortable*? It is a privilege, in other words, to only be able to experience being outside one's comfort zone briefly, instantaneously, and only as a modicum towards personal growth. Uncomfortability in experiential education is based in white, upper class, cis, heterosexual ideologies of experience, as people who fit within these groups are afforded assumed and naturalized comfort in spaces that allow for "discomfort" to become an educational experience rather than a lived, constant reality (Seawright 2014: 557).

In my conversation with Mae, when asked what her first perceptions of the school were, she mentioned: "some of the things that I remember…was like I just had a hard time understanding why I felt uncomfortable. I don't think I knew what was happening at that point because I've never been in such a white majority 1% high upper-class environment." Mae's experience, in this context, shows how uncomfortability, for her, as an Asian American woman, was an immediate feeling that did not fit within the school's constructions of uncomfortability as capital and educational experience. In this way, white and class-based ideologies of comfort and discomfort

in experiential education become also based in assumptions that discomfort in these spaces are "starting points" that can become equalized, so that, presumably, all students can *then* be challenged in the same ways. However, as I will continue to delve into through the experiences of many of my interlocutors through this thesis, the identities that people hold that allot them uncomfortability in primarily white spaces are not "starting points" that can be equalized. They are, rather, deeply-felt aspects of experience that impact how people move holistically through educational spaces.

I do not mean to only consider, however, uncomfortability as opposed or in relation to comfortability. Identities are constantly in flux, and how people move through and experience places is deeply contextual. Indeed, experiences of comfort and discomfort oftentimes move alongside each other. Rather I want to analyze how uncomfortability becomes *institutionalized,* taken up into the school and comes to "index particular racial meanings" that reinforce whiteness (Pierre 2019: 87). We can see whiteness emerge, through both "grit" and being "uncomfortable," as assumed sets of valued "capacities" that students are assumed to be able to fit within or obtain (Wolf-Meyer 2015: 447). In similar ways to grit, discourses of "uncomfortability" become *infrastructures* that make Locus into a place for some and not for others. Both ways of experiencing the educational environment of Locus normalize whiteness through assuming and valuing particular ways of experiencing a place and engaging in what is portrayed as an equalizing, "transformative," educational experience (Seawright 2014: 555).

To complete this chapter, I look towards one final example of the ways in which the school *ordered* the kinds of experiences that were accepted and normalized at the school—among teachers and not only students. I do this through examining the funding structure of Locus and returning to one of Fae's experiences at the school.

***

2.2 Grandfathers

As Fae and I speak, they tell me a story.

Fae taught at Locus for two summers around six years ago. Before coming back for their second summer they were told of a new social media policy for teachers at the school. Fae described the policy as: "if a conservative grandfather wouldn't want to see it on Instagram, it shouldn't be on Instagram. And don't do anything that wouldn't make you a role model to Locus students."

> **Fae:** And so, the first one's kind of mute for me. I'm like what conservative grandfather wants to see a gay Jew with no gender teaching their children about race. I was like I just, my literal existence conservative grandfathers are not going to like… And the second one was 'be a good role model'. And those are really loose terms.

Fae was told to delete all images from their social media, some of which were semi-nude, along with images talking about rape and queerness. One of the administrators at Locus had a conversation with them after they arrived back at the school and told them they were not a role model because of what they had posted on social media. Fae describes how "we ended up having a three-hour long conversation where at the end she threatened to fire me, even though she had no power to fire me, if I didn't block every single student I'd ever had at [Locus]…"

Fae ended up staying at the school and teaching. They stated, about their conversation with the administrator:

> **Fae:** I am so close to what the ideal [Locus] student is. I am still white, or white accessing depending on what happens with race and Jews in the next 10-15 years, who is to say. I am wealthy, able bodied, I pass as cis, I pass as straight, I'm even conventionally attractive, like I fit into all the things that you try to hire in [Locus] teachers, but just because I'm

> queer and Jewish and have been sexually assaulted and am nonbinary, I'm, like you're never going to be able to, if you cannot support me, you're never going to be able to support having teachers of color, you're never going to be able to support having poor teachers, you're never going to be able to support having visibly trans teachers, you're never going to be able to support having physically disabled teachers…

~

Fae's experience had "no frame" (Stewart 2007: 46). The school could not place them. They could not have *been* placed, because, in a return to my previous discussion, the school was never set up to *understand* anyone who does not fit completely within the identity categories of white, upper class, heterosexual, and cisgender.

Why did the school frame its social media policy in terms of conservative grandfathers? To me, as a researcher and as someone who attended the Locus, this statement very clearly illuminates the structural ethos that the school is *based* in: who the school is set up for through who sets up the school. Or, in other words, how the donor base of the school influences how the school becomes experienced and who is able to access those experiences. For example, in this moment the school *quite literally,* catered to "conservative," in the sense that some of the largest donors to Locus fall under this blanket category. "Conservative grandfather," though, makes politics personal. It assumes not only that teachers should be assuring that their mentorship will be based in a specific type of politics, but that the person who will be surveilling that mentorship is assumedly white. And, finally, "grandfather" signals a patriarchal tie, a tie which draws connections to the militarist foundations of the school. "Grandfather" signals that those most invested in maintaining the school in these very specific ways are connected deeply, perhaps through a lineage of attendance, to that investment.

What it means to "be a good role model" also shifts and takes on new meanings. Being "a good role model" comes to stand in for being white, male, upper class, and heterosexual, and perhaps more obviously, for the community values and appropriate "behaviors" that are accepted by the school (Esposito and Perez 2014: 416). What it means to be a good role model comes to signal a specific type of student who attends Locus, a student who is white, Christian, upper class, heterosexual and who would not connect with or benefit from connecting with a teacher who identifies as Jewish, queer, nonbinary.

It is very clear through Fae's experience, how political processes—namely, whiteness, racism, elite evangelicalism, classism, antisemitism, homophobia and queer-phobia presented themselves through and *made the school*. These are not contradictions. In many ways they are a center of the school, a center illuminated through a small moment, in a small interaction that was not small at all.

~

Locus has a large donor base. Throughout my research, this illuminated a number of aspects of the school as functioning in very specific ways for very specific groups of people, as being *political,* and containing very specific *politics*. As mentioned previously, most students who attend Locus are white and wealthy and attend from elite schools on the East Coast of the United States. These relationships create conditions for stratifications of class and race to emerge in the faculty and student composition. Many families, once attending, turn towards donations.

To help understand the cultural values that structure and order the school, I will focus here on one family in particular and what their continued support of the school can show about how Locus functions to uphold tourist, capitalist, and white supremacist formations, such as in Fae's

experience. My analysis of this family's connections allows also for a return to a discussion about white evangelicalism as tied to tourist industries in the Caribbean.

I found out about the connections between this donor family and Locus during my first fieldwork interview. Although all of Locus's yearly reports are publicly available and this family's name does appear visibly on the school's website, for the purposes of this research I will call the family the Janssen Family. Beyond the family's quite large (upwards of $100,000 yearly since at least 2015) donations to the school, the family also owned a resort that donated land to the school when it was founded.

The Janssen Family has deep ties to white U.S. evangelicalism, having donated to evangelical Christian schools across the U.S. as well as to a variety of conservative organizations and campaigns.[14] The family owns multimillion dollar corporations including one which sells household cleaning products across the world and gleans partial profit, and the real estate company that developed the resort on the island. The family has sent multiple children to Locus, and at least one building on the campus is named after them. They therefore provide a lens through which to view links between the school and the maintenance of certain forms of whiteness, and specifically white evangelicalism, and the ways in which this maintenance impacts the day-to-day experiences of various actors within the school.

As Sophie Bjork-James (2020) states in her ethnography, "White Sexual Politics: The Patriarchal Family in White Nationalism and the Religious Right," whiteness and evangelicalism have always been deeply interlinked, with "White Christian America" often being framed as "defined largely through" ideologies of heterosexuality and anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and policy (58). Drawing from Patricia Hill Collins, Bjork-James describes "white sexual politics" to be the ways

[14] The footnote for this section is left out to protect the identity of the Janssen Family.

in which "racial politics are deeply entwined with sex and gender, particularly in the defense of white racial privilege" (Bjork-James 2020: 58-59).

Through my fieldwork, I saw this enaction of certain forms of "racial politics" as operating through the personal experiences of many of my interlocutors. One interlocutor, a former student Izzi, described how she never completely felt as though she "fit" into the school environment. She related this in particular to who was revered at the school as "student leaders"—at the end of each summer and semester term at Locus there is a student chosen to represent the class and maintain class community. Izzi described how the person who was chosen to maintain these relationships usually came from "a very similar demographic," likely referring to race, class, gender, and geography. When asked about social division and hierarchy at the school, Dan also described race, geography, and "institutional knowledge" as dividing which students grouped themselves and were able to find spaces of belonging. The "institutional knowledge" that Dan speaks of in particular can be related to the sort of ideologies of race and family politics that Bjork-James discusses: many students who attend Locus are so-called "legacy" students, meaning they are not the first in their family to attend or they come to know about the school through their school network. These cycles of attendance and donation come to stand in for the racial politics that they in a sense create— "institutional knowledge" becomes a result of familial and schooling background, but these backgrounds are already largely stratified along lines of race and class.

~

Through this chapter I have meant to show how structural qualities of Locus produce experiences which are variously ordered and disciplined towards maintaining a culture of institutional affluence and upholding normative whiteness. How these exclusions are *felt,* how people experience/d them, is what I have been attempting to maintain as central to this narrative

and the assemblage it explores. My intention is not to solidify these experiences as the only forms through which the school becomes assembled, but rather, to focus on the ideologies and histories it is founded within and continues through. I have meant to explore how institutional culture operates, ordering how places become experienced and remembered.

Chapter 3: Diversity

3.1 Social Rituals

> **Fae:** I think Locus wants so desperately to work and to be successful. I just think that there is a fatal flaw in an institution that even though it's making changes toward equity, what happens when you have a 20-year legacy of intense, not just whiteness, but the most privileged kind of whiteness. The most upper class WASPY East Coast educationally privileged whiteness, Christian, that kind of shit. What kind of comes to mind is like, people who are trying hard who are just never going to get it.

***

A variety of Educational Studies theorists, including Khan (2011) and Howard (2008, 2014) have researched elite schooling in the United States. These scholars have engaged with the questions that Fae alludes to above, questions regarding what it means for elite schools to attempt reform and changes when they are based in and structure their environments in ways that reproduce privilege and white supremacy. In his book, *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul's School*, Shamus Rahman Khan conducts fieldwork at his alma mater, an elite boarding school located on the East Coast of the United States. He situates the school within privilege and eliteness, and within the "shifts" of what eliteness has meant for white, affluent communities throughout the last century. Narrating a brief history of eliteness in the United States, Khan describes how, in the early nineteenth century, many white wealthy East Coast elite turned away from focusing their wealth and status through inheritance of title, instead becoming infatuated with inheritance of wealth as something that could be "earned" (Khan 2011: 23). This "earning" aspect of wealth—wealth as a broad term which began to include "culture, morality, and social ties"—is especially important in the history of elite schooling in that white men began to attend elite schools

in order to gain specific types of skills, opportunities for "growth," and "*worldly"* experiences that could be siphoned into capital (Khan 2011: 29, 31, 33). Affluence was no longer tied to abstract categories but to attributes that could be attained. This process introduced *a gap* in the awareness of privilege—if students could "earn" their wealth, the thinking went, was eliteness actually structurally and institutionally, generationally, produced? As Khan states, this myth, and these changes in views of eliteness, have informed the founding of elite schools and affluent families' views that these schools serve as forms of capital accumulation.

This chapter centers its focus on the "logics of diversity" of Locus (Shankar 2019: 113). I am interested in how these logics reproduce forms of whiteness and privilege even as they purport to make Locus into a welcoming, "futuristic" place that is inclusive and accepting (Shankar 2019: 118). I examine three forms in which whiteness, eliteness, and these diversity logics came into practice through my fieldwork. These forms, following the previous chapter, illuminate how school policies impacted and are/were experienced by my interlocutors. However, instead of looking through the lens of disciplinary measures, I now turn to diversity and eliteness to understand how Locus is developing "change" at the school and whose "logics" of change are informing it (Shankar 2019: 113). I examine how foundational yet overlooked school policies perhaps undermine these projects.

~

Throughout my fieldwork, Locus was described in terms of the forms of white affluence and capital accumulation that Khan speaks about. As Dan stated,

> "[Attending Locus] has become in some ways a kind of social ritual for wealthy, white folks in the boarding school universe and circuit. It's not totally dissimilar from saying something like 'oh yeah I also go to Nantucket for the summer…'"

Locus was also described by my interlocutors as a "study abroad program in high school," a "summer camp," and a "summer experience of community living." This rendering of Locus as a "study abroad program" is intriguing to consider as it forms connections between the school and the "imperial potential" contained within abroad programs, locating Locus itself in terms of imperialism (Chakravarti et al. 2020: 121). As Chakravarti et al. (2020) states, U.S.-based study abroad programs produce the experience for students to "become aware of the global interconnectedness of social problems and oppression; the experience of serving others can decrease students' own personal and cultural biases, and thereby increase cultural competence" (Chakravarti et al. 2020: 123). This idea of "awareness" and cultural visitation that Chakravarti et al. describe also relates to Khan's discussion of capital accumulation and Dan's formulation of this accumulation as a specific kind of "social ritual" for the elite. The forms of imperialism that can accompany study abroad experiences become obscured through these programs' portrayal of "visitation" as a form of "increase[ing] cultural competence," a competence that in the case of Locus becomes also social ritual (Chakravarti et al. 2020: 123).

As mentioned in the Introduction, tuition for the semester at Locus is upwards of $30,000. Recognizing this economic exclusivity and the ways in which Locus is positioned as a primarily white institution within a country that is majority Black or Afro-Caribbean, the administration of Locus has been attempting to initiate a variety of changes at the school in an attempt to make Locus more accessible and welcoming to students from a diversity of backgrounds. This includes for Bahamian students, staff, and faculty, who, as Jessie, a current administrator of Locus who identifies as white, stated, are coming into a campus "that doesn't quite feel like their own country."

As mentioned, Locus is need-blind, does meet 100 percent of students demonstrated financial need and is working to make connections with students from diverse backgrounds through a variety of educational partnerships and scholarship programs. "Affinity spaces" have most recently been set up for students to connect with staff and faculty who share similar identities, backgrounds, and interests. The school has also hired consultants to conduct surveys on "belonging" at the school in order to assess what changes need to be made. In asking questions about diversity throughout my fieldwork, it became apparent that these changes the school is attempting to make are coming in response to the growing dominant national awareness of and schooling responses to anti-Black violence in the United States and elsewhere in the world. Jessie mentioned the murder of George Floyd as being a moment when the school began to consider how to shift and form changes, but that in these changes encountered challenges because of the school's positioning in relation to the U.S. and the Bahamas. Jessie's statement alludes to foundations of the school that are based in white supremacy, foundations which introduce barriers to "change" as it is not these foundations that are themselves being analyzed as in need of shift:

> **J:** We struggled with the concept that we have a really strong representation in the States and yet we are a Bahamian school and that wasn't having the same kind of impact in the Bahamas as it was within the States. So, we struggled…how do we put together a statement that shows we stand in support and how do we conduct the work to do what's right without just saying those words, which we are really focused on that, when the idea of equity is just very different in the Bahamas and it does not focus on race as much. And so we struggled a lot...

Jessie's discussion about "reform" at Locus draws in questions about both the complexities of "diversity" at the school as it is understood by some of the school's administrators, and the ways

in which these conceptions are informed by the school's positioning in relation to the United States and the Bahamas. Although the school is, legally, a Bahamian institution, Jessie's rendering of the school as "a Bahamian school" also perhaps becomes an attempt to separate the school from the forms of white supremacy maintained through, as Dan describes below, the school's foundations as "a Northeast boarding school that has been transplanted into the tropics":

> **D:** If [Locus] could hire a Bahamian teaching staff…well I don't know it's hard to say because would the real movers and shakers of [Locus,] the donors, the people who send their kids there multiple generations at a time or, you know, siblings, would they be excited in the same way to send their kids there if suddenly next semester all the teachers were Black Bahamians. It's an uncomfy question and I tend to believe that there is some at least unconscious investment in it maintaining its essence as a Northeast boarding school that has been transplanted into the tropics.

As Dan referred to, many of the reforms Locus is working towards, including these hiring efforts, continue to uphold white supremacy at the school. Dan's statement also references the deeply racist perceptions that he views the school's donors and (largely white) clientele as holding towards Black Bahamian people, racism that becomes upheld through Alex's statement that "in an ideal world we would have 2-3 Bahamian teachers."

I am interested in thinking about Locus's reform efforts alongside the conceptions of "diversity" that are informing them. What structures of the school are viewed of as in need of reform? And for the changes the school is attempting to make, like the hiring of more Bahamian teachers and as Dan referenced, how do white supremacist formations emerge and perhaps become reinforced through them?

~

One way that Mae and I discussed whiteness as operating at Locus was through the lack of channels of communication that were available for students to contact their families. When Mae and I attended the school, all electronic devices except computers were taken away. The purpose was so students could focus their attention on the place and experience in front of them, could come as themselves rather than as who they were on social media.

M: *"What you show me now, is what I know of you."*

Students were allotted, as we remembered it, one phone call a week with family for 15-20 minutes.

> **M:** I don't know if that's a Navy thing…or a boarding school thing but that was interesting that you don't let people connect with their family. I think that's actually a pretty significant aspect of…like I would imagine some families of color that would be insane for you to not allow people to contact their family and to even let them know. Like I think that's a very individualistic white modern society American values that are portrayed there too.

Mae's analysis of this aspect of the school structure of Locus illuminates how whiteness became a "guiding force" at the school, a force that moved through and structured experience (Seawright 2014: 570). I am thinking about whiteness, here, alongside authors Bonds and Inwood who describe the necessity in moving beyond formations of "white privilege" to a consideration of white supremacy as it "more precisely describes and locates white racial domination by underscoring the material production and violence of racial structures and the hegemony of whiteness in settler societies" (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 716). White supremacy directly considers the structural: "institutions, practices, and processes," and how these structural constructions "produce" and reproduce whiteness (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 716).

White supremacy at Locus is maintained through policies at the school, like the one mentioned by Mae, which construct whiteness as a dominant force structuring experience and making place.

The school creates forms of engaging with place that maintain and enact whiteness, both through who is able both to access these experiences (primarily white, affluent students), and whose own personal histories and identities will "fit within" or be accommodated by the logics of the school once there. White supremacy, through this instance, moves beyond bodies and can be viewed as an engrained, *cultural* aspect of the school visible through foundational policies.

These assertions are not novel. Gardner Seawright, for example, has examined the connections between place-based education and white supremacy, locating this relationship through a term he describes as "settler traditions of place": the "normative habits and practices that have been passed down for generations, encouraging particular relations to place, and ultimately impacting the contemporary potential for place- based education" (2014: 557). Locus, as I have shown and as Fae described, was built into a foundation of elite whiteness. The policy that Mae references is a seemingly simple one, but it is also foundational to the operation of the school and to how the school is constructing and benefiting from how students experience place.

***

3.2 "Diverse Social World"

Logan and I sit across from each other, through the computer screen. It is a week after the Russian invasion of Ukraine began, and they mention how difficult their week has been. I show my support in the ways that I can. We move on to discussing Locus and this shift feels…

A queer, former-student who identifies as nonbinary, Logan talks about how difficult many aspects of their experience at Locus were. At the school, there were two separate dorms, split up along binary lines of gender:

> **Logan:** I fucking hated living in the…I don't know I lived in the men's house area and, I don't know, I thought I was cis at the time, but it was very uncomfortable…I wasn't out as

> queer at [Locus] until like the last week or so and there was just like, it was not great sometimes… I think…there were just like weird stuff, like when we had to do that camping aspect and there was the road trip thing, I was put in a tent with somebody who said that he wouldn't sleep face to face with other men in the tent, like, he made everybody sleep head-toe. As a result, I got kicked in the face multiple times in the night…

Logan goes on to describe other instances of gender-based violence they experienced, and I am silent for a moment. There seems to be no perfect response to someone who has shared their experience, and I think that's okay—because it has to be. We remember together. We sit with each other.

I ask Logan if there were systems in place where they found support, or if how school was set up prevented those support systems from occurring. Logan said they felt supported by "queer leadership" at the school, but that the school as an institution, located where it was and how it was, created intrinsic barriers to forming a "socio-economically inclusive" space where wholistic and sustainable openings to belonging could be formed.

I agree with them. As someone who came to Locus from a middle class, public school, Midwest background, I immediately felt I did not completely "belong" at the school. From the very first day, social groups began to form, largely along lines of race, class, and geographic location. The people I became friends with right away were primarily students of color. These groups were formed not because our experiences all and completely aligned with one another—they didn't—but because our experiences, in very structurally and experientially-varying ways, did not fit *completely* within what became quickly visible as *the majority.* [15] As a white, able-bodied woman, my identities allotted me acceptance and security within most groups at the school as a whole, *and,*

[15] Whether or not "the majority" in the context of this work, stands as an abstraction remains an ongoing question for me.

my class and geographical backgrounds and background with issues of mental health complicated my experience.

Locus might be attempting to become more of a "diverse social world," in that, like many other elite schools across the U.S., it is beginning to bring in students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences. But I, like many other scholars before me including Shankar (2019), Ahmed (2012) and Urciuoli (2016), seek to problematize that "diversity" is ever the framework through which loving-and justice-oriented spaces can ever occur (Ahmed 2012: 42). That is, given the extent to which diversity focuses only on *who* "arrives" rather than on a complete abolition and reworking of the systems in place which structure how people move variously through the world and experience it and each other. "Diversity" signals a background, a sort of "green screen," if you will, of white (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 717), affluent, capitalistic, Western norms and knowledge systems (McKittrick 2021). Through this background, students who attend the school who do not fit within the majority category are made to be "points of deviation" (Bonds and Inwood 2016: 717), as their experiences are always viewed as being in contrast to this naturalized norm, and as the infinite plethora of experiences and identities that intersect, rub, friction (Tsing 2005), to make up a person and create a social world are siphoned into a single word (Ahmed 2016: 33). As Shalini Shankar describes, "diversity work champions difference as a strength in capitalist and institutional logics. It is future-looking, unwilling to get mired in a complicated past and highly attuned to where the United States is going" (2019: 114). It is *imperative* to have people at the school who identify as you do, who share experience, as Logan stated through their discussion of queer leadership. *And* there still remains (ruins) the fact of institutional constraint, the background against which marginalized people have to fight to be heard.

Locus, as Jessie stated, *is* beginning to consider the complexities of how people who come to the school experience Locus as a place and find spaces of support, or not. As Jessie discussed, the school is attempting to think about belonging as deeply contextual and culturally-specific, as containing different meanings in the Bahamas as opposed to in the United States. She talked about the ways in which the school is attempting to bring employees from all different sectors of the school together "all in one," forming a place where people across the organization can interact in positive ways. My critique of diversity logics through this chapter is not meant to completely undermine these efforts, but to serve as an analysis of how these efforts assemble or take shape alongside the school's foundational policies. Foundations which, as Dan stated with regards to the possibilities for employing Black Bahamian teachers, are predicated not only in white, upper class *ideals,* but in white, upper class *establishments.*

***

3.3 Solo

I now want to return to Mae's experience. One of the ways students engage with place during both the summer and semesters at Locus is through what is called "solo." When I attended the school this was an approximately 24-hour experience where students spread out on a beach outside of campus with only a few provisions to sustain them: a small bag of food, a pouch of water (that could be re-filled), a tarp, and a journal.[16] The time was designed to initiate personal reflection. Students were not allowed to speak to one another even as they could see each other looking both ways down the beach. We were encouraged to write and reflect in our journals, but even talking out loud to ourselves was discouraged.

[16] The "journal" in this configuration will be explored more in depth in the next chapter.

One identity that Mae mentioned as important to her was Christianity. In her specific experience of "solo," Mae describes how she wanted to bring her bible with her, to reflect with:

> …and I told them this is, for me it's important of values of how I reflect. I don't just reflect with myself; I'm reflecting with God. Like that's just not…to me I was like if you want me to self-reflect and learn more about myself then it's probably going to be most authentically expressed through my relationship with God, so I would love to bring my bible and have that. And they were like, you can't take it. And I remember they took me to the side. And I don't know why, like I get their point and I get their reason for that and it would be unfair for me to be able to do it when they said they couldn't to other people. But still, when I was having that conversation I almost, like had to fight for myself, like part of my identity, and I had to prove it to them. And I don't know if they would have let me [take the bible with] if I was a man. Because I was tearing up and I was like I really want to and I need, I would really appreciate it, and they're like okay, okay.

Mae's description of her experience illuminates a number of aspects of diversity that have been running through this chapter. In similar ways to Mae's description of social media and the phone calls, the experience of "solo" at Locus is predicated on the (white) ideal that the most effective and transformative way to engage with place is *by oneself.* It assumes that everyone who engages in this "solo" practice are entering into it from the same backgrounds, holding the same conceptions of what it means to *be alone,* and *reflect alone.* This assumption foregrounds how the school viewed itself as a secular space, an ironic and perhaps also quite violent assertion given my discussion in the previous chapter regarding the ways that white, Christian, conservative values and donors influence the school. In this instance, it was being alone that came to stand in for and

perpetuate white supremacist formations at the school; it was being alone that assembled Locus into a place allowing only for specific forms of feeling, of listening, and of hearing.

Mae's experience also shows how she had to "fight for herself" against the assertions of the people in power around her. As Mae stated, "when I think about that moment, I think it was more that I felt so unsafe. Like my heart was so attacked more than it was 'I need my bible'." It was the power imbalances, and the *need to defend,* that structured Mae's experience in this moment. Her identity, her ways of being in and experiencing the world, did not fit within the previously formed conceptions that the school held about what it meant to engage with place "correctly." Mae was at first refused her bible because it would have been, to the school, "incorrect," an incorrect form of reflection. Mae's form of reflection disrupted, unsteadied, the school's essentialist construction of alone-ness. Her experience became structured through the school's logics of whose "diversity" was acceptable diversity. In a continuation of the previous chapter, Mae's experience alludes to how Locus created *very specific, strict, corrective,* ways of feeling place, sitting with place, and reflecting with place.

~

As mentioned, through my fieldwork it was clear to me that many people in the school *are* making an effort to form the school into a place where all students are able to find spaces of belonging. As Jessie described, the school has begun to hire consultants to conduct surveys and trainings on belonging at the school, and belonging is being conceptualized fairly holistically, attempting to take into consideration all of the different ways in which belonging is felt and found and varies. My project is not to question or condemn these efforts. Rather, my intention has been to look towards foundational structures of the school, structures and policies not necessarily considered as in need of reform because they are what makes the school into the place that it is.

Chapter 4: Curriculum

4.1 Experience

When we arrive we are handed the journal. It is relatively small, the size of a paperback novel. The cover is black, matte; the pages blank, to be written into. We are told to call it a "Place Book."

We carry the journal with us everywhere. We are told to write in it, reflect in it, inscribe ourselves into the place. We draw pictures: images of the angel fish beneath the ocean, sketches of mangroves, depictions of debris on the beach, sun on the horizon. We meditate with our words, forming connections, drawing relationships in the small moments of prescribed stillness that are allotted to us.

And the teachers speak of the significance of the Place Book in their lives, how they often return to their writing to remember their experience, re-experience it again and again.

~

As someone who loves journals and journaling, I loved the Place Book. I wrote in it every day. I drew in it. I thought with it. I can imagine this is true for many other students who attend Locus. The Place Book is a way to think about the place when you are there, but it is just as much a way to remember it once you are gone. It is a meditation, but it is also a recollection.

During my fieldwork, all three of the former students I spoke with discussed how the Place Book, and other aspects of the Locus curriculum, created a very specific way of engaging with place, a detachment of place, a siphoning of place into a *thing:* the blank pages of paper that became a book. As Logan stated regarding this bounding of place:

> **Logan:** I feel like my impression of it [the school] probably would have changed a lot more as an institution, if there had been more time to take a break or if somebody had set aside

> time to actually process where you were. There was a lot of like processing where you were but in a like "write in your journal" kind of way. Not in a like "there are people who live here" kind of way.

Here, Logan describes a sort of "planned-ness", an ordering of activity or perhaps even *time,* that did not necessarily take away from their experience at Locus, but added to the feeling of the school as creating a very specific type of experience with a very specific relationship to place. These small moments of reflection and writing were bounded in the curriculum, in the ordering of experience of the school, that they made it difficult to reflect and connect with place in ways that contained silence. In ways that were completely motionless.

At its roots, this chapter is an exploration of this "planned-ness," of how reflection was built into curriculum in ways that created durable, white, experiences and constructions of place. I consider how place is/was encountered through curriculum at Locus and how place is/was made through the school's constructions of time and feeling.

This chapter is a continuation of the last three in that it is another lens through which to view the assembling of (experiences of) Locus as a place; this chapter views and encounters this question through the kaleidoscope of curriculum. My intention is not to separate this chapter and my conception of "curriculum" out from the last three but rather, in an effort of assemblage, to hold in view a constellation: a whirlpool of stars or an averting of the gaze which does not negate the "else" held in the darkness but simply shifts the illumination (Patterson 2011: 88, 91).

***

4.2 Formations

I remember being still, but I don't ever remember feeling silent. For me, there was always hearing. There was always *something.*

Often my own thoughts. Memories. A hand on a lower back that wasn't ever asked for. Stepping into the ocean and it being only rain. The cave.

Time moved quickly and we had to move with it. Wake up at 6:30AM to a dorm filled with alarms ringing off. Dress for swimming and walk to the center, stand in front of a flagpole and sing a national anthem. Sound exiting out of lips that in its exiting told another story. And then a break.

A moment for breaking

for hearing

for listening?

For

a moment forming.

~

"Querencia" is a Spanish word.

According to Jessie, the word and its signification, histories, the power it contains and moves through is "a big component" of the semester curriculum. Jessie related the term "querencia" to Barry Lopez's introduction of the word in *Rediscovery of North America,* a text which all students who attend the semester program are required to read prior to their arrival at the school. Lopez states: "In Spanish, *la querencia* refers to a place on the ground where one feels secure, a place from which one's strength of character is drawn" (1990: 37). "Querencia" is also utilized to refer to bullfighting: "the spot in a bullring where a wounded bull goes to gather himself, the place he returns to after his painful encounters with the picadors and the banderilleros" (Lopez 1990: 37). As Jessie put it, at Locus

> **J:** You have this moment where you kind of scatter out around campus, you find your moment, there's a lot of journaling and self-reflection which I don't think is common for many high school students to take that space for themselves especially free of technology. So, in my mind there's this big piece of living well within your mental place and some intentional work [that] happens towards mindfulness within that.

You find your moment.

My question is about what it means for the school as a predominantly white, English-speaking institution to utilize the term "querencia" as part of its curriculum given the Spanish claim of the Bahamas following Christopher Columbus's landing *and* as Spanish continues to be a non-dominant language within the United States (Battle-Baptiste 2017: 63). I asked Jessie about these histories, these intersections, and Jessie said that yes, the school has been engaging in intentional discussion with community members surrounding the use of the term, especially in relation to the use of other terms in its curriculum from the Lucayan language, the primary one being: *cacique.*

Each day at Locus a singular student is selected as the "cacique," a word which in the Lucayan language means approximately "chief"; at Locus, "chief" means approximately "student leader," as the student in this position is tasked with various leadership duties around campus. Jessie alluded to the fact that the school has received "mixed reactions" about the term from the surrounding community and is likely going to be shifting how it is utilizing the word in their curriculum.

I am interested in what the use of these terms "index," and what it means to locate them alongside each other. For the deep and complex histories of the Spanish and of the Lucayan peoples to be engaged with through these words as they come into contact with each other through Locus. And, perhaps beyond the complex cultural contexts through which the terms have emerged and

are engaged, what the "nonreferential meanings" are that they illuminate and construct through their use *in this context* (Hill 1998: 483).

As Jane H. Hill (1998) drawing from Williams (1989) describes in her article, "Language Race and White Public Space," part of the work of whiteness is building white discourse into a bounded, "homogenous" experience, one that is really created through the seeming-integration of "bits and pieces" of other languages into white space whilst obscuring the relationship of these "bits and pieces" to their cultural context and histories (484-485). Although Locus is drawing attention to the histories of the words used in their curricula through requiring students to read *The Rediscovery of North America* and through teaching about the word "cacique" in relation to Lucayan history, I problematize that this removes Locus from complicity and continuation of the project of integrating "linguistic heterogeneity" into white discourse, as this heterogeneity has become an "essential element of a desirable White public persona" (Hill 1998: 485).

In many ways the "desirability" of linguistic heterogeneity as making up the "white public persona" (Hill 1998: 485) can be related back to my previous discussion of educational experiences as capital for white affluent communities (Khan 2010). Engaging with place through these other languages is another way through which educational experiences become siphoned into capital whilst obscuring how this violent process maintains structures of white supremacy. Is integrating these words into the Locus curriculum a way of, as Jessie said, "honoring" these histories, or is it an "elevation of whiteness" (Hill 1998: 483)?

~

To consider these questions about space, silence, and whiteness at Locus, I now want to now turn to curriculum. "Curriculum" is often an obscure or overarching term encompassing everything from the "materials" teachers use in a classroom, to what "students are expected to learn," to the

actual "experience" of learning (Vander Ark 2017). Curricula are constructed and restricted through any number of actors, organizations, and policies. For the purposes of this thesis, I consider curriculum as the meanings, understandings, and even feelings, that institutions *lead students towards,* both in and out of formal instruction.

However, I primarily use the term "curriculum" as a critique of it. For this chapter, I want to introduce a framework and methodology that I name as "curricular formations." Curricular formations are manifestations of the ways narrators/actors across time and space make meaning through, (re)create alongside and resist the framing and (re)structuring of what is known and spoken of in an educational space (Trouillot 1995: 24; McKittrick 2021: 16). In other words, curricular formations expand the normative definition of a "curriculum" to focus on how the learning process takes shape through place, space, history, memory, and resistance (Seawright 2014: 570). It attends to how curriculum comes into being through the structural manifestations of white supremacy that Western systems of education have become bounded within, simultaneously seeking to deconstruct "curriculum" as an "organ[s] of nation-state power" (Snaza 2019: 133).

This employing of curriculum moves beyond Pinar's (2004) concept of "currere" as "a consideration of curriculum as a verb, a conversation," and continues Howard et al.'s (2016) "extension" of Pinar's "currere" to include "self-understanding" as manifested through "culture, society, politics, and time" (761). Curricular formations also aligns with Philip W. Jackson's (1990) term "hidden curriculum," to the extent that curricular formations is focused on the often-unspoken-but-still-heard aspects of a curriculum. However, instead of thinking with curriculum through one individual (the student) as manifested in bi-directional "conversation"—through a structured moment of learning, for example—curricular formations allows for an analysis of how place/space/history/memory become indexed through *one another*, as they move *in formation.*

Always and never becoming, always and never becoming themselves. Curricular formations, therefore, becomes a kind of assemblage that refuses to center the human, rather viewing place, curriculum, and whiteness as *forces* that are already reconstituted, already structuring and moving through educational spaces (Snaza 2019). Curriculum becomes visible not only through the moments that many of my interlocutors felt at Locus, but also, through their memories of those moments and through my conversations with them about those memories. Conversations that were also experiences of place, whiteness, and privilege.

These questions are fruitful to engage with at Locus, I think, because, as mentioned through the first chapter, experiential education itself is in many ways a project of decentering this very notion, of engaging in learning outside the classroom and beyond materials that are normatively considered to be used for the purposes of educating. It is not the project of expanding learning beyond the classroom space that I am critiquing and questioning, but rather, the outcomes of the *objectifying* that are so often associated with it (Seawright 2014).

Finally, curricular formations is in many ways drawing from Katherine McKittrick's work on "black sense of place" (McKittrick 2021, 106), as a configuration towards relocating "*where* we know from" through questioning and critiquing the geographical processes that dehumanize Black people, towards the project of "unthink[ing] the violence that often accompanies the production of space" (McKittrick 2021, 108). To the extent that "from" is a place, knowing "from" signals a necessity to look to the processes which structure experience, and not only to the experiences themselves. This is in some ways the project of curricular formations: a way, a pathway towards, considering momentary experiences as outside themselves, and also, perhaps, "outside…the violence" that has "produced" them (Bhimull 2017: 9). McKittrick's work is about Blackness, and so I do not attempt to *apply* their theory to my analysis of curriculum and place; however, their

theorizing does *inform* and *structure* how I conceive of curriculum and place in relationship to the systems and histories that structure them.

~

Though the framework and methodology of curricular formations there is no perfectly transformative solution to address the limitations of conceptualizing "place" through the Place Book, no completely "oppositional" way to engage with place, including, with people (hooks, 1992). But I do think curricular formations allows for an engagement with place *against* this "flattening;" an engagement with place that counters the violence that perhaps comes with the use of "querencia" and "cacique" in the Locus curriculum (Snaza 2019: 140; Imada 2012:17-18). Curricular formations expands how to view the use of these terms in that it allows for a reconceptualization of what it means to be in relationship to places in ways that are not void of power, nor filled completely with love, but felt in all their complexities.

Finally, in this suggestion I do not want to lose the deeply personal, political, and social aspects of experience that influence and mold feeling, impact how places are felt or feelings experienced. Following Raymond Williams, feelings can never completely be separated out from the "socialites" that inform, shape them, and are shaped by them (Williams 1977: 133). Socialites are always deeply dependent on place, context, identity, and history(ies). They are formed by the dominant ways of seeing places. But they also make these places.

~

Curricular formations illuminates a final thread that has been running through this thesis. Locus could not, and perhaps *cannot,* create moments of silence and stillness because educational institutions like this one are predicated in the *production* of specific experiences of engaging with and feeling place. Even in the moments of *querencia,* there were words on the page. There was

feeling, but, as Logan described, it was *fleeting.* Time moved so fast that it could not have allowed for silence; time became based in capitalistic ways of being and knowing that emphasize accumulation and capital over felt experience (McKittrick 2021).

As both Dan and Fae stated, *how could,* the school build felt-relationships with the surrounding community, with the place, when it arrives out of a history of elite whiteness that assumes a specific kind of relationship with place, a relationship that *needs* to be built into the curriculum because (it is assumed, perhaps) that the majority of people who attend the school—the white, wealthy, elite—will not be able to form relationships and do the work on their own? What does it say that all three of the students I spoke with felt that they were better able to consider their experience afterwards, in futures beyond Locus? This is, as Mae stated, surely a part of growing up, of gaining new knowledges. But it is also, I think, a relic of the school. A relic of a lack of time for, as Logan described, reflecting on the aspects of the school, the strands of the assemblage of which this thesis has been about.

Coda: *This Forest Taking Back Over*

i. "The question of what's left" (Tsing 2015: 20).

The question left is about what it means for Locus to be based in an educational philosophy focused on "living well in a place," when living "well" is not the same for everyone and when what Locus means by "living well" is in itself flowing out of the systemic assemblage, the assemblage of "place-based" as an educational philosophy that becomes itself through tourism and elite whiteness (Seawright 2014).

This assemblage is/was visible to many people and was discussed by many of my interlocutors, even though they all had different ways of going about describing it. For me, and as Fae stated, the question that emerges as the future arrives is about what it means for the school, for the leaders of this school, to be asking itself the questions that I ask about these incongruencies when it continues to hold so deeply onto, because it has been built into, elite whiteness. Meaning also, how can an institution reliant on structures of white supremacy, donors who send their children who send their children, how can this institution *change*? What would it mean or look like for this place to change?

The questions and considerations I have addressed in this thesis are prevalent in many educational institutions. I have had to feel them and understand them and live with them here at Colby. I don't know if there answers to give a place like this, places like these. But I do think examining the assemblage, examining how places come to be as they are and how people come to experience them through who they are, contains possibilities to become a form of disruption, a gesture towards *the forest taking back over.* Perhaps this disruption is in the process, in the movement, in the tree as still standing (crawley 2020: 197). Perhaps the disruption can be located tangentially in memory—in the spaces of reflection where places become motion-filled and new

meanings are filled into them. In the spaces I was able to create with many of my interlocutors, spaces that created openings for world building through building a *something else* that is not based in, or on, ruins. That is not based at all.

~

ii. Love

This thesis is for the people who so generously and eloquently shared with me their personal experiences at Locus. It is for the past and current staff, faculty, students, and communities who are torn between loving a place and feeling deeply its violence, or perhaps only noticing an inkling of something else. That there is more to the story than what has been written into the pages of a journal that becomes a book. My intention is that my critique and simultaneous love for many moments I spent in this place has served as an exploration of contradiction, of privilege, of complexities of feeling, of (dis)identification, and of belonging. I continue to wonder if it is possible for elite institutions to move beyond, outside of, their formational histories. I have begun to tend to err on the side of not possible.

But I also know, because I have felt it, that there are spaces of love, of feeling, of connection, that can be formed within elite institutions. I seek to uplift these spaces. I believe deeply in collectively created moments centering love and transformational creativity, and in the possibilities for these moments to—in some way—become movements. *Swinging side by side in a hammock suspended from two beams overhead. We talk about love: spiritual, transcendent, un-interpretive love.* [17] *We laugh.* I like to think of this love as a holding, a holding of one another and a dreaming of something else, even if in these moments we do not recognize our dreams for what they are, or what they become, or what we make them (Sharpe 2016). Even if we do not understand

[17] Katherine McKittrick on writing style and storytelling. Katherine McKittrick, *Dear Science and Other Stories* (Duke University Press, 2021).

love to be something beyond us, love to hold possibilities for transformation which effects, and affects, and passes through and changes us. I question what it would mean to consider love as a place or assemblage of places, as love becomes perhaps "otherwise" (crawley, 2020).

When Mae and I spoke, I asked if she felt we formed the connection we did because of the school, or if it was *us* that did that. If it was in spite, or if it was *because.* I think it is both and neither and Mae helped remind me of this. Places are always in motion, and the spaces formed within them—however momentary, momentous, or moving—are mostly indeterminate, and I think that's okay. I wanted to write this thesis on this school because it is, perhaps, one of the places in my life where I have felt, then or with overlaying knowledge now, the most contradiction, incongruencies, feelings of pain and joy and love and sorrow interspliced. Feelings are never singular. Emotions, like "stories…move us" (McKittrick 2021: 9; Lerman 2011, 2014).

An ongoing question for me is about when, how, and where an experience of a place becomes a place. This is one reason why I think "place-making" can be slightly misleading. As I have attempted to show through this work, places become because there are processes and *people* and other places engaging and connecting behind that, and in that, becoming. I am unsure that a place can ever be exactly and precisely "made," to the extent that "made" signals a kind of concretized completeness. But the concept of "assemblage," I think, works in another way, a way that does not assume "made" but looks towards the processes of how places become as they are and become again. I have wanted to stay within the becoming. A becoming that does not signal ends but rather, illuminates the raveling and unraveling of threads (crawley 2020: 176).

~

> **Logan:** There was a lot of joy, there was a lot of laughing with people that I was getting to know better. And I think it can be joyous and structurally messed up at the same time. I think it's important to not only look at it as like a business that's profiting off of these people who want to go have a beach vacation somewhere because its more than that. Just saying it's that is not fair to what they're trying to do.

In all three of my interviews with former students—with Mae, with Logan, and with Izzi—I asked about personal experiences with joy and love that they may have felt at the school.[18] I did this in an effort to consider the "more than that" that Logan mentioned. However, asking these questions also became a form through which whiteness emerged visibly through my fieldwork. The processes of violence that I have contended with through this thesis are not separated out from, indeed also become assembled through, love and joy. Even as I wanted to think and ask questions about love and joy as spaces of resistance within Locus, how love and joy are felt and experienced, including experienced as forms of resistance, is deeply culturally specific and racialized (Love 2019; marie brown 2019: 58).

"How do we live well in a place?" The question I am trying to get at is not whether spaces of love and joy are created because of, or in opposition to, institutions. This question becomes based in the assumption that each is in complete contradiction to the other. This question centers and reinforces whiteness as it portrays a love and a joy and a "living well" that somehow exist beyond the processes that assemble and become assembled through them.

[18] I did feel, however, that my asking of these questions contained possibilities for imposing terminology onto my interlocutors' experiences, terminology that did not resonate with their own experiences. I tried to present my questions about joy and love as offerings, but I still cannot claim completely that they would have used the terms "love" and "joy" had I not used them first.

A different question, though a question that is in no way less implicated in whiteness and privilege, is how to think about spaces of love and joy not as they are created and packaged, felt in relationship and then dissipate, but rather, how they are continually in motion and in process, never completely begun and never completely ended (Williams 1977). What would this allow for, and for whom? And what, or how, can assemblage not contain?

~

Sit where you are. Breathe and close your eyes.

What do you hear? Who do you hear?

How do you remember?

Bibliography

Ahmed, Sara 2012. On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

AUTEC 2022. "Welcome Aboard! – Naval Sea Systems Command." AUTEC. Accessed May 11, 2022 from the World Wide Web. https://www.navsea.navy.mil/Portals/103/Documents/NUWC_Newport/AUTEC/AUTECmilitaryinfo.pdf.

Bahloul, Joelle 1996. The Architecture of Memory: A Jewish-Muslim Household in Colonial Algeria, 1937-1962. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Basso, Keith 1996. Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache. Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press.

Battle-Baptiste, Whitney 2017. "Cruise Ships, Community and Collective Memory at Millars Plantation, [Tholos], Bahamas." Society for Historical Archaeology 51: 60-70.[19]

Benjamin, Walter 1968. "Thesis on the Philosophy of History." In Illuminations. Hannah Arendt, ed. New York, Schocken Books: 253-265.

Berlant, Lauren and Kathleen Stewart 2019. The Hundreds. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Bhimull, Chandra D 2017. Empire in the Air: Airline Travel and the African Diaspora. New York, New York University Press.

Bjork-James, Sophie 2020. "White Sexual Politics: The Patriarchal Family in White Nationalism and the Religious Right." Transforming Anthropology 28(1): 58-73.

[19] The name of the island has been removed from this footnote in order to protect the identity of the school.

Bonds, Anna and Joshua Inwood 2016. “Beyond White Privilege: Geographies of White Supremacy and Settler Colonialism.” Progress in Human Geography 40 (6): 716.

brown, adrienne marie “Love as Political Resistance.” In Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good. Chico and Edinburgh, AK Press: 59-63.

Chakravarti, Debjani et al. 2020. “‘Exploring your World, Exploring Other Cultures:’ How Neocoloniality and Neoliberalism inform U.S. Study Abroad Programs.” Equity and Excellence in Education 53 (1-2): 121-136.

Cohen, David William 2004. The Risks of Knowledge: Investigations into the Death of the Hon. Minister John Robert Ouko in Kenya 1990. Athens, Ohio University Press.

Cohen, David William 2011. “The Pursuits of Anthrohistory: Formation against Formation,” In Anthrohistory: Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Discipline. Murphy at al., eds. Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press: 11-33.

Collier, Stephen J. and Aihwa Ong 2004. “Global Assemblages, Anthropological Problems.” In Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics, and Ethics as Anthropological Problems. Malden, Blackwell Publishing.

crawley, ashon t. 2020. the lonely letters. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Esposito, Luigi and Fernando M. Perez 2014. “Neoliberalism and the Commodification of Mental Health.” Humanity and Society 38(4): 414-442.

Feliciano-Santos, Sherina. 2017. “How *Do You* speak Taino? Indigenous Activism and Language Practices in Puerto Rico.” Journal of Linguistic Anthropology 27 (1): 4-21.

Fielding, William J. et al 2008. “The stigma of Being Haitian in the Bahamas” The College of the Bahamas Research Journal (14): 38-50.

Getting Smart 2017. “What is Place Based Education and Why Does It Matter?” Getting Smart in Partnership with Edulnnovation and Teton Science Schools: 1-19.

Halvorson, Britt E. and Joshua O. Reno 2022. “The Midwest and White Virtue.” In Imagining the Heartland: White Supremacy and the American Midwest. University of California Press: 10-28.

Ho, Engseng 2004. Empire through Diasporic Eyes: A View from the Other Boat. Society for Comparative Study of Society and History: 210-246.

hooks, bell 1992. “The Oppositional Gaze.” In Black Looks: Race and Representation. Cambridge, South End Press: 115-131.

Howard, Adam 2008. Learning Privilege: Lessons of Power and Identity in Elite Schooling. New York, Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.

Howard, Adam et al. 2014. Negotiating Privilege and Identity in Educational Contexts. New York, Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.

Howard, Arianna et al. 2016. “The *Black Women’s Gathering Place*: Reconceptualizing a Curriculum of Place/Space.” Gender and Education 28 (6): 756-768.

Imada, Adria 2012. Hula Circuits Through the U.S Empire. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Jackson, Philip W. 1990. Life in Classrooms. New York, Teachers College Press.

Khan, Shamus 2011. Privilege: The making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul’s School. New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

Kimmerer, Robin Wall 2013. Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants. Minnesota, Milkweed Editions.

Kincaid, Jamaica 1988. A Small Place. New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Lerman, Liz 2011, 2014. “Structures and Underpinnings,” In Hiking the Horizontal: Field Notes from a Choreographer. Middletown, Wesleyan University Press: 145-184.

Lopez, Barry 1990. The Rediscovery of North America. The University Press of Kentucky.

Love, Bettina 2019. “Abolitionist Teaching, Freedom Dreaming, and Black Joy.” In We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom. Boston, Beacon Press: 88-123.

McGranahan, Carol and John F. Collins 2018. Ethnographies of U.S. Empire. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

McKittrick, Katherine 2021. Dear Science and Other Stories. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Morgenstern, Erin 2019. The Starless Sea. New York, Anchor Book.

Outward Bound 2022. “Intercept Expeditions for Struggling Teens and Young Adults,” Outward Bound.org. Accessed May 11, 2022 from the World Wide Web. https://www.outwardbound.org/expeditions/intercept-expeditions/.

Patterson, Monica Eileen (Ed. Murphy et al). 2011. “Childhood, Memory, and Gap: Reflections from an Anthrohistorian on Georges Perec’s *W or the Memory of Childhood.”* In Anthrohistory: Unsettling Knowledge, Questioning Discipline. Murphy at al., eds. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press: 81-96.

Pierre, Jemima 2019. “The Racial Vernaculars of Development: A View from West Africa.” American Anthropologist 122 (1): 95.

Rabinow, Paul 1984. "Introduction" In The Foucault Reader Volume I: An Introduction. New York, Vintage Books: 3-29.

Rosenau, Pauline Marie 1992. Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads and Intrusions. New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

Said, Edward W 1989. "Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors." Critical Inquiry 15 (2): 205-225.

Seawright, Gardner 2014. "Settler Traditions of Place: Making Explicit the Epistemological Legacy of White Supremacy and Settler Colonialism for Place-Based Education." Educational Studies 50: 554-572.

Shange, Savannah 2019. Progressive Dystopia: Abolition, Antiblackness and Schooling in San Francisco. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Shankar, Shalini 2019. "Nothing Sells Like Whiteness: Race, Ontology and American Advertising." American Anthropologist 122(1): 112-119.

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

Sheller, Mimi 2003. Consuming the Caribbean: From Arawaks to Zombies. New York, Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.

Snaza, Nathan 2019. "Curriculum Against the State: Sylvia Wynter, the human, and futures of curriculum studies." Curriculum Inquiry 49 (1): 129-148.

Stewart, Kathleen 2007. Ordinary Affects. Durham and London, Duke University Press.

Strachan, Ian Gregory 2002. Paradise and Plantation: Tourism and Culture in the Anglophone Caribbean (New World Studies). Charlottesville, University of Virginia Press.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph 1995. Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History. Boston, Beacon Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt 2005. Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection. New Jersey, Princeton University Press.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt 2015. The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins. Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press.

Urry, John and Jonas Larsen 2011. The Tourist Gaze 3.0. Sage Publications.

Wamsley, Laurel 2017. "The Navy Gets its First Female SEAL Candidate." NPR.org. Accessed May 11, 2022 from the World Wide Web. https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/07/20/538338758/the-navy-gets-its-first-female-seal-candidate.

Wilkinson, Bert 2021. "Bahamas to Repatriate Hundreds of Haitian refugees." Amsterdam News.com. Retrieved May 14, 2022 from the World Wide Web. https://amsterdamnews.com/news/2021/10/07/bahamas-repatriate-hundreds-haitian-refugees/.

Williams, Raymond 1977. "Structures of Feeling," In Marxism and Literature. New York, Oxford University Press: 128-135.

Wolf-Meyer, Matthew 2015. "Biomedicine, the Whiteness of Sleep, and the Wages of Spatiotemporal Normativity in the United States." American Ethnologist 42 (3): 447-448.

Vander Ark, Tom 2017. "What is Curriculum? From Managed Instruction to Personalized Learning." Education Week.org. Accessed May 11, 2022 from the World Wide Web. https://www.edweek.org/technology/opinion-what-is-curriculum-from-managed-instruction-to-personalized-learning/2017/01.