Article

The Wake at the Root: Understanding Racial Identity Refinement through Genetic Ancestry Testing and Theater Performance

Devin A. Heyward

College of Arts and Sciences, Saint Peter's University, Jersey City, NJ 07306, USA; dheyward@saintpeters.edu

Abstract: The racial identity literature has operationalized identity formation as progressive stage models, usually triggered by the experience of a negative race-based event. With the advent of new genealogical technology, it is imperative to include experiences that participants elect to experience (i.e., self-initiated or agentic encounter events). By using this perspective, identity processes become fluid and more expansive. In the context of this study, genetic ancestry tests are operationalized as a self-initiated encounter event. Participants ($n = 8$) were enrolled in an arts-in-education program that uses theater to explore Black Americans' identities and family histories. This study used theater performance and modified life narrative interviews to understand how participation informed understandings of the self and others. Subsequent interviews highlighted how participants internalized the genetic test results and their participation within the group. Results indicated that, while participants were deeply invested in learning more about their ancestral roots, there were concerns related to the test results and their meaning for individuals. This study highlights that for the Black diaspora, identity is informed by ancestry and family history, as well as by interactions with created community members. Overall, this study opens the possibility for deeper exploration of racial identity formation within critical social psychology.

1. Introduction

Reconciliation projects intend to repair harm between two parties, typically authoritarian regimes and their victims, by openly discussing the role of the oppressor in said harm and creating pathways for harm reduction and reparation (i.e., Truth and Reconciliation Projects in post-Apartheid South Africa; [1,2]. More recently, reconciliation projects have increasingly utilized genetic ancestry technology to answer questions of familial connection (both diasporic and communal; Las Abuelas Plaza de Mayo in Argentina); uncover historical data that has been lost over time (The African Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan, NY, USA); and mediate complex and contentious historical traumas (reparations lawsuits in the United States; [2–5] (Conversations regarding reconciliation often center the necessity of reparations as a means of restitution for the trauma of chattel slavery, a fight which began in earnest over a century ago and continues into the present [2,3]). These early reconciliation projects used nascent genetic technology, which was primarily limited to state crime labs and academic labs. In the 2010s, direct-to-consumer genetic ancestry tests (DTC-GATs), which developed from this early science, entered the public market and gained popularity, making potential answers to questions of familial lineage more accessible to the public. For Black Americans, DTC-GAT offers the chance to answer questions related to identity, ancestry, and reconciliation with historical traumas (The Wake [2,3,6,7]).

Genetic technology is not without its complications. Indigenous scholars have argued that genetic ancestry tests resurrect and scientize White supremacist notions of community, group membership, and "peoplehood" [8–11]. The tests stand counter to traditional understandings of community, which maintains that tribal membership reflects a nexus of

relationships and bonds that exist and extend beyond genetic lineages [9]. By centering on biological connections, Indigenous communities are further dispossessed in their attempts to center communal needs [8,9].

Black and Indigenous scholars have also noted that the growth of genetic ancestry technology continues to aid in the expansion of genetic surveillance by law enforcement agencies [2,8,12–17]; more specifically, the United States Department of Defense funds technology that uses genetic samples to determine a potential suspect's phenotype (i.e., skin tone, hair, and eye color). This projected phenotype is then used to create a computer-generated image of the suspect based on these genetic samples [12,18,19]. These practices extend the scope of predictive (or pre-emptive) policing, further entrenching bio-surveillance as neutral and unbiased [20]. This technology will likely continue to be used against vulnerable Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, increasing their susceptibility to stereotyping and tightening the incorrect assumptions between genetic causes for criminality and race [2,12,16,21,22].

Despite these ethical concerns, genetic ancestry testing and genealogical research are ever-expanding, multi-billion-dollar industries that connect individuals to their ancestral histories. As access to this technology has expanded, more questions about its influence on people's understandings of their histories and identities have been raised, creating a moderately contentious issue within some identity scholar circles [23]. Most questions center around the meaning-making, which test-takers create from their results, and how it informs experience, generally and specifically. Over the course of this paper, I will discuss the work on an arts-in-education program, The Continuum Project (Continuum), which uses genetic ancestry technology as a means of exploring historical trauma and as a means of connecting Black Americans to their ancestral roots. Additionally, I will discuss Black/African diasporic theater performance and techniques and their connections to the formation of complex Black identities.

2. The Present Study—The Continuum Project

Founded in 2009, The Continuum Project (Continuum) is an arts-in-education program that uses African/Black diasporic performance techniques and genetic technology to connect participants to their ancestral roots, as a step towards liberation. Continuum's curriculum is a community-driven process that reflects each group's (cycle's) interests, including racial identity development, conflicts with identity, romantic relationships, and family dynamics. Continuum utilizes a Black feminist ethic of care by attending to past injustices, creating common ground for audiences and cycle members, and creating new possibilities and futures through the performance [24]. Throughout Continuum's work, facilitators and performers pull from common stories and ideals as a means of connecting communities across broad ranges of experience and knowledge. This project seeks to answer several research questions: How do participants process historical traumas through theater performance? What role does membership in Continuum have on participants sense of self? How does the genetic ancestry test and participation in Continuum inform identity?

The Continuum Project's Methodology

Over the course of three to nine weeks, participants co-develop pieces with facilitators through ice-breakers, open-ended questions, and discussion. This process, which is commonly referred to as devising or devised theater gives actors/participants the opportunity to share their personal experiences [25]. Because the script is not pre-written, every participant has a stake in what stories are shared and how those stories are shared. In the case of the Continuum Project, participants are asked to share experiences, such as the first time they recognized racial difference/racism and how they processed through the aftermath of the experience. While sharing the experience, facilitators ask probing questions, trying to tease apart the narrative that will ultimately end up in the final production. Throughout devising, Continuum facilitators make it a point to not put every story shared in the final stage production. This decision to maintain confidence amongst cycle members by protect-

ing more personal stories and sharing stories that do not center on Black pain™ and Black trauma™ is paramount to a Black feminist ethic and praxis [24]. Even now, as a researcher writing on these lived experiences, I am making the purposeful decision to attend to and protect the narratives of the Continuum [26–28].

Devising builds from Paolo Freire and Franz Boal's writings on liberatory education and theater [29]. Freire's theory of critical pedagogy views society as inherently unequal. Cultural formations, in general, and educational systems, specifically, allow for these inequities to continue. In traditional Theater of the Oppressed spaces, actors and spectators (or spect-actors) are involved in both the telling and recreation of the story. This process of deconstruction and reconstruction allows for engaged and active story building. Additionally, the development of the story "allows for abstract ideas to be made concrete through examples, commanding the audience's attention, beginning with the familiar and going to the unfamiliar, and allowing people to discover answers for themselves" [30,31]. Continuum's work is born, in part, from both Theater of the Oppressed and devised theater, as facilitators were previously trained in these techniques. However, the founders and facilitators made it a point to center on Black performance aesthetics and techniques in the framing and design of the program.

3. Black Performance Theory

Throughout American history, Black theater has explored Black communities and cultures complexities, creating spaces of expression, solidarity, and opportunities for social/national critique [32,33]. These performances (dance, theater, music) created a specific Black performance aesthetic that became unique to the artform. According to DeFrantz and Gonzalez, although definitions of race, gender, and sexuality are ever expanding, two important truths still exist—"that Black sensibilities emerge whether there are Black bodies present or not; and that while Black performance may certainly become manifest without Black people, we might best recognize it as a circumstance enabled by Black sensibilities, Black expressive practices, and Black people" [32] (p. 1). Black performance theory serves as a framework for synthesizing intellectual thought around Black performance histories and practices. It also reflects the recognition of both a shared core history and historical/ethnic differences based on place and time, mirroring cultural hybridity (identity is not an accomplished fact, thus reflecting place, time, and history) [34,35]. Black performance spaces (i.e., theater, dance, queer ballroom scenes) extend these opportunities of self and identity exploration that is deeply attuned to history. In this next section, I will focus on specific techniques that were critical to the creation of the final theater piece.

4. Black Theater Performance Techniques in Continuum

Each devising session opened with a cypher, which traditionally are spaces where rappers gather in a circle to recite and/or free style their verses, showcase their skills, and exchange thoughts and ideas [36]. This practice is deeply rooted in West African spiritual practices and celebrations, more specifically *jubas*, in which spiritual practitioners form a circle and sing, dance, move, and shout creating a space for healing, divination, spiritual transformation and divine messages [37,38]. The cypher and the juba enable the co-creation of a reality that cannot be fully penetrated by members who are not part of the actual movement. Others can bear witness to the transformation and be affected by it. However, the deepest impacts and connections are only felt between those directly involved in the process, creating a sacred, hallowed space that cannot be infiltrated. For cycle members, the cypher became synonymous with a feeling and sense of connection that was intangible to others not part of the group.

During each session, the facilitators (Nsangou, Tracy, facilitator, and LaVonda, board member and facilitator) worked with participants to edit, stage, and perform their scenes as the ideas came to members. This builds from West African oral traditions and performance aesthetics known as *itutu* (coolness), which holds, in part, that fluidity in performance, like with water, allows for the exploration and creation of unique aesthetics that are not easily

mimicked (i.e., the cool factor; [39]. This is apparent throughout Continuum's work, as most of the performances are only performed once and each scene is built from each cycle's own stories. This also mirrors commentary by Amiri Baraka that Black performance is a continually evolving, ritualistic practice that borders on the spiritual [40].

Fluidity also manifests in the overall arc of the show, as there is no central story. The performance is not a traditional play with a beginning, middle, and end. Instead, each story is a vignette with their own narrative arcs and conclusions. This is not to say that the stories are disjointed; there are small vignettes which connect the narratives together. Instead, the performance is not restricted by a single narrative arc, allowing participants to embody multiple roles in their own re-telling of specific stories. This also allows the performance to transgress time, using the past and present to tell individual and collective stories.

Embodying Historical Traumas—Bridging the Past and Present through the Body

As noted earlier, Black performance aesthetics can draw audience members into the story by offering social and cultural critique. Although not explicitly part of the framing of Continuum, lessons can be gleaned from Katherine Dunham's dance performances [41,42]. Dunham's work, most notably *Southland* (1951), highlights shared collective experiences through African-derived Black dance aesthetics. In summary, *Southland* documents the systematic killing of Black people in the South. As Dunham notes in the prologue of the performance:

> [T]here is a deep stain, a mark of blood and shame which spreads from under the magnolia trees of the Southland area and mingles with the perfume of the flowers. And though I have not smelled the smell of burning flesh and have never seen a black body swaying from the Southern tree, I have felt these things in spirit. [F]inally, through the creative artist comes the need of the person to show this thing to the world, hoping that by so exposing the ill, the conscience of the many will protest and save further destruction and humiliation. This is not all of America, it is not all of the South, but it is a living present part. ([41], pp. 341–342)

It is critical to note that direct lived experience did not (or does not) prevent Dunham from empathizing or embodying the lived experiences of the larger diaspora and collective. Centering diasporic experience creates a critical, performative site of action for manifesting and embodying power relations (i.e., social ghosts; [41,43–45]). By using various framing devices, including historical narratives, myths, personal stories, and stories of domination and resistance, the past and present are bridged through the *body*. This embodiment allows for the social ghosts (i.e., the stories and historical narratives that continue to haunt lived experience) to be made visible through dance and performance. Doing so turns invisibilized and unfamiliar histories into something tangible, which creates connections between past and present structural injustices and allows for the chance for true reconciliation and healing [42,44,46–49].

Embodying invisibilized histories does not merely remain within the purview of staged performances. Rather, individuals engaging with artifacts of their historical traumas are also performing in the interplay between the present and the past [47–49]. Richards [49] documented the travel experiences of Black Americans visiting the Elmina and Cape Coast slave castles in Ghana. These sites served as the holding space for enslaved Africans prior to their forced disembarkation across the Atlantic into slavery. Richards argued that Elmina Castle and Cape Coast Castle, as historical museums, are theatrical sets where tourists, Black Americans more specifically, embody and shift between the role of spectator and actor. Each of these castles are preserved through particular lenses and from particular perspectives, thereby effecting the experiences of visitors. As spectators, tourists are detached observers, simply taking in the sites of the castle. However, as Black American tourists move through the physical space of the castle and hear the narratives of the atrocities committed there from their tour guide, they transition to the role of actor and become more closely aligned with those held in the castles' walls centuries prior [49]. Entering these spaces with the added narratives allows for Black Americans to recreate the lived experience of their ancestors

internally and externally. In the violent absence of the material (i.e., physical artifacts connecting the enslaved to their tribal communities), the body becomes the tool to mediate the past and the present. Additionally, as actors, Black American tourists contend with the stories left untold (because they are unknown or purposely excluded) and the physical realities that lay before them (i.e., the sights and smells in the castles). The transference of said experience borders on the spiritual as Black American visitors speak of a physical, emotional, and visual experience that extends beyond the imagination [49]. It is felt too deeply to merely be an imagining. Although historical tourism does not exist within our traditional framing of performance studies, the embodiment of said experiences shows the potential of shifting invisibilized histories into ones that are more concrete and tangible.

5. Racial Becoming

Racial becoming is an identity process that holds that identity transformation, progression, and refinement are lifelong processes that allow space for multiple experiences to inform and create an altered identity through agentic (or self-initiated) encounter events [50]. As a concept, racial becoming allows for a more dynamic analysis of identity framing and conceptualization. Additionally, it affords power *back* to individuals by attending to the experiences that individuals actively engage in and resonate with as being particularly meaningful (i.e., reading a book on Black empowerment; enrolling in an Africana studies course; participating in an arts-in-education program; taking a genetic ancestry test).

As a framework, racial becoming builds from and extends the work of other critical race theorists, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and historians who have written extensively about the formation of the self and identity [34,35,51–63] (Figure 1). More specifically, racial becoming incorporates concepts such as appropriation, cultural hybridity, dialogical selves, the multi-dimensional model of racial identity (MMRI), Nigrescence and Nigrescence Recycling, social ghosts and sociocultural development. Each component of racial becoming will be discussed briefly below.
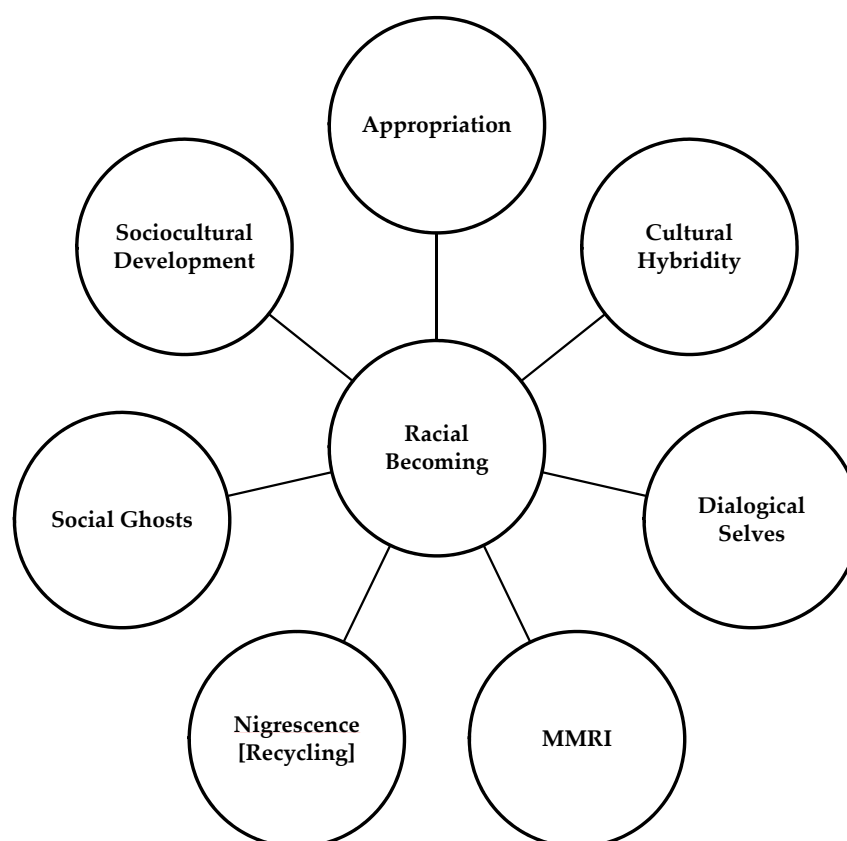

Figure 1. Theories that contribute to racial becoming.

5.1. Appropriation

Appropriation [55] refers to the adoption of idea(l)s and language in ways that become meaningful to the individual. Individual's gain "ownership" over a word once an individual gives said word its own meaning and inflection. Until that moment, the word only exists under others' perceptions and ideologies.

5.2. Cultural Hybridity

Cultural hybridity [34,35] holds that identity is a production that is always in process. Cultural identity is constituted under two distinct perspectives. Under the first position, cultural identity exists as one shared collective identity that is hidden behind (and under) other identities imposed by a dominant and oppressive culture. This "true identity" reflects common historical experiences and cultural rites that provide individuals with stable frames of cultural reference. The second conception of cultural identity frames identity as inclusive of similarities, as well as critical differences, which comprise who we truly are (or what we have become).

5.3. Dialogical Selves

Dialogical selves [56,57] refers to a landscape of multiple narrative voices that compete for expression in an individual's lived experience, as well as in the individual's storytelling about his or her life. There is no single story, but rather a multiplicity of stories that represent an ongoing dialogue between the individual and the culture. Therefore, individuals appropriate meaning from the culture through critical relationships, events, narratives, environments, objects, and the physical body. The dialogue between these multiple selves becomes reflexive and adopts distinct voices that are undergirded by different sets of stories, thematic characters, physical locations, etc. Additionally, each of the selves operates in conjunction with and separately from others. These voices speak to a dynamic, integrated self that is not only continually in motion, but is also always active in maintaining and creating new selves.

5.4. Multi-Dimensional Model of Racial Identity (MMRI)

The MMRI [58] holds that identities are stable components within an individual but can be affected by different contexts. Individuals possess multiple identities that each have varying levels of importance and significance to them. The MMRI also does not make value judgments regarding what constitutes a healthy or unhealthy racial identity. Racial identity is analyzed across four dimensions—racial centrality; racial salience; racial ideology; and racial regard. Racial centrality measures whether race is a core component of someone's self-concept over time. Salience, however, can be context-specific and refers more specifically to the extent a person's race is relevant at a specific moment in time. Racial ideology describes four ideology types (nationalist, oppressed minority, assimilationist, and humanist) that focus on an individual's beliefs and attitudes concerning how Black Americans should live in American society. The last dimension, racial regard, describes an individual's affective judgment of their race.

5.5. Nigrescence and Nigrescence Recycling

Nigrescence [59–62] is a racial identity theory which suggests that in the development of Black identity, a Black person shifts from self-hate to self-love through four identity stages—Pre-encounter (an orientation toward White culture and away from Black culture; feelings of embarrassment of own culture; seeking acceptance from dominant culture); Encounter (event or events that make negative perception of racial group clear); Immersion–Emersion (shattering of self-concept motivates individual to actively seek out information about culture and history; stronger sense of self and identity become present but no commitment is made to a particular Black identity); and Internalization (conflicts between old self and new self are resolved; higher tolerance of other cultural group; firm sense of identity, which also allows individuals to work for other oppressed communities).

Each of the stages of the model includes eight identity types that characterize components of that stage.

First published in 1989, Parham expands upon Nigrescence by including a developmental framework that argues that Black individuals who are already grounded in their Black identity can and will go through each of the Nigrescence stages [62]. This recycling is triggered by life-span encounter events, which are defined as, positive and negative racial and cultural experiences that may challenge an individual's base identity. The need to resolve identity issues may correspond closely with key turning points in human development, specifically at late adolescence/early adulthood; middle adulthood; and late adulthood. Additionally, Parham's theory views Black/African identity as independent of oppressive social structures and is instead rooted in the values of Black/African culture [62]. Because Black people's core is essentially African in nature, love of the "African self" motivates individuals to further develop the core self.

Cross and Fhagen-Smith [61] modified components of Nigrescence and reframed the theory as Nigrescence Recycling, which included elements of Parham's work. Recycling is triggered by a life-span encounter event. The life-span encounter raises significant questions regarding the existing identity and how to expand and further this identity. This new experience is then incorporated into a modified or enhanced identity. Throughout an individual's life span, many such events may occur, which, if internalized, can lead to a heightened state of Blackness. The authors describe three possible pathways for an individual to progress through the Nigrescence sequence—Nigrescence Pattern A, Nigrescence Pattern B, or Nigrescence Pattern C. For the purposes of this paper, we will focus on Nigrescence Pattern C, which argues that recycling does not necessarily occur only once during a person's lifetime. Instead, these recycling events can occur multiple times throughout a person's adulthood, making them wiser about the complexities and intricacies of the Black experience.

5.6. Social Ghosts

Social ghosts [42,44,45] refers to the internalization of oppression, as well as pervasive social injustices woven throughout social institutions and within the body. Despite efforts to conceal social ghosts through covert and overt means, they can easily be conjured and made visible through performance and can be embodied to identify social injustices that continue to live on in the present.

5.7. Sociocultural Development

Sociocultural development [63] states that tools and signs mediate human action. These cultural tools (i.e., language and other sign systems) serve as resources in action and are integral to other higher-level mental processes. Additionally, known as mediated action, this process requires two central elements—An agent, the person who is doing the "acting" and cultural tools (or mediational means), the tools used by the agent to complete a particular action. The incorporation of each of these tools and resources are more commonly referred to as internalization.

Traditional racial identity research quantifies human experience through scales, effectively silencing the more dynamic aspects of self and identity development. Additionally, the identity literature does not always offer qualitative discussions of identity from participants or agentic strategies for self-development. By including larger cultural and historical moments, community, and interpersonal relationships, the creation and establishment of identities occurs through specific practices, behaviors, and emotions. Each of these literatures feed into the central act of becoming a fully realized, racialized being. I conceptualize racial becoming as a form of *internalized wake work*, wherein individuals search for a deeper truth concerning the self that bridges the past and the present in service of new futures.

Continuum's work rests on the historical legacies of Black diasporic performance aesthetics and extends said legacy into new frontiers using genetic ancestry tests as a means of connection and exploration. Throughout this work, Continuum's facilitators attend to

the needs of the diasporic community by uncovering historical traumas and creating space to address and hold said experiences in meaningful and practical ways.

6. Methods

The cycle took place over three weeks in the autumn of 2016. Each of the participants had a previous relationship with one of the facilitators. By pulling from already existing networks, the present cycle deepened their connection amongst themselves. This recruitment strategy was atypical, as other cycle participants were pulled from existing arts programming at host schools. All cycle members were self-identified Black adults ranging in age from 18 to 43 years old. The group included: Ese, a paraprofessional in an NYC public school and a masseuse; Tyanna (Ty), a daycare attendant; Dwayne, a playwright and actor–teacher; Quincy, a student and actor; Nicholas, a playwright and actor–teacher; Alexis, a professional dancer and youth coordinator; Camille, an actress and waitress; and Willie, a teacher and actor.

Transcripts from the final performance were analyzed for common themes related to the research questions presented previously. The final performance was professionally recorded by a colleague of the facilitators. The performance and reveal lasted a little over two hours, with one hour dedicated to the performance, a brief 15-min intermission, and one hour for the reveal. The title—*Black Legacy Matters*—referenced the importance of creating a legacy that can be passed to future generations. The ancestry results and the experience within the group served as "ancestral heirlooms" that could be passed generationally. Additionally, the stories performed on stage tackled generational legacies that have informed each of the participants' lives. These legacies matter in relation to their own experiences of the world. Analysis of the co-created theater piece is a unique approach to tapping into lived experiences through non-traditional methods, which creates literatures that speak and attend to the past, the present, and the future. The data presented here are a snapshot of the larger experiences of those involved in TCP.

Most participants (*n* = 5) completed a life-narrative interview, using McAdams' life-span interview protocol [64]. The protocol is rooted in the belief that people construct and internalize specific stories to make meaning out of their lives. These stories lend themselves to multiple interpretations, reflecting competing and complimentary selves that anchor the individual's sense of self (i.e., dialogical selves; [56,57]). A follow-up group interview took place three weeks after the performance with cycle participants and facilitators. Questions were designed to target specific and collective experiences for each participant and garner feedback on the programming itself.

All methods were analyzed using thematic analysis technique [65]. Thematic analysis offers flexibility and multiple analytic options in relation to the data. Additionally, it can show similarities and differences across the data set and allows room for social and psychological interpretations [65]. Over the course of the results section, I specifically analyze the theater performances and use group interviews and life narrative interviews to help further contextualize the narratives shared on stage.

7. Results

Five primary themes were identified over the course of analysis—social ghosts; reparations of respect; embodying the cypher; hesitations; and racial becoming. Due to the scope of this project, select participants' life narratives and performances are used to highlight the context of the theme.

7.1. Social Ghosts and (Ancestral) Trauma: Colorism and Fetishization through Rape and Sexual Assault

Dwayne and Camille's scene was a co-created piece that built from the couple's sense that they were connected in a past life and Dwayne' fear of being unable to protect his future wife and family from White supremacy. The scene takes place in the Ante-Bellum South and the months preceding former President Trump's presidency. By playing with time

between the past and present, the players can access and confront the source of their fears and traumas. During both scenes, Dwayne feels a sense of helplessness, anger, and shame around his perceived inability to protect his partner, Camille, from unwanted advances from Ese (the slave master in the Ante-Bellum South and the man in the restaurant in the present). In the present, Ese flirts with Camille despite her protestations and discomfort and only stops once confronted by an angry Dwayne. In the past, Ese as slave master uses his position and power to violate Camille on her wedding day without fear of retribution or violence. Despite Dwayne's attempts to protect his wife, he is rendered powerless.

Although the stories are removed by almost two centuries, at its core, the couples are trying to create joy amid Black death and surveillance. The attraction from both Ese, the slave master and Ese, in the present, are connected to her proximity to whiteness, a manifestation of commodity fetishism [66]. Commodity fetishism argues that goods and products are abstracted from their own existence and value by being removed from the exploitative process of production. Under this construct, lighter-skinned, mixed-race enslaved women (i.e., "fancy maids") ("Fancy maids" is a double entendre for potentially White-passing, enslaved Black women whose masters could desire them (i.e., "I fancy you") and the "luxuriousness" (i.e., "The dish is fancy") associated with this specific "commodity".) became products within the fetish market for slave masters and traders to indulge and create their own predilections [66]. This marketed exploitation still haunts American society, with colorist beliefs that position biracial and lighter-complexioned Black women as being sexually more desirable.

As for Ese, the slave master, he is a direct participant and creator within this fetish market. Ese, in the present, buys into the remnants of the market by privileging and exoticizing Camille, a Black–White biracial woman, because of her features, and recites word for word the language of the oppressor ("I can protect you. You're too pretty to be left alone. You do not know what people are capable of."). Ironically, as both men attempt to ease her discomfort, they also become the greatest source of potential harm. It is assumed that her existence (at least, in the narrative of the scene) is produced by the very same system, which re-possesses her body at its conclusion. The construct of commodity fetishism survives across generations because of the meaningful self-deception regarding the potential meaning of her existence. For the generations that follow, it manifests as a form of internalized racism, where lighter features are immediately privileged within American society; it is a deeply gendered process where women's bodies are affected most directly (The Wake; [6]).

During the scene, Camille is approached by Ese, the slave master, and is commanded to follow him offstage. Camille shudders and hesitates to follow him, but before doing so, she turns to Dwayne to reassure and console his anger. The actual rape is alluded to and acknowledges Black women's (ancestral) trauma without re-traumatizing those in the audience or in the scene. These histories are well-documented [67–69]. However, the double-bind of misogynoir (anti-Black sexism directed at Black women) often pushes these larger narratives to the margins, or if it is discussed, the complicity of White slavers and traders are often reduced to passive compliance rather than active creation and engagement [67–70] (A recent article on the genetic makeup of African descendants noted that White men "contributed" more genetic material into this population in comparison to White women. The framing of this "contribution" erases larger documented historical trends wherein White men systematically raped enslaved African women. The use of the term "contribution" also aids in the purposeful forgetting of more traumatic components of Black diasporic experience). Additionally, social injustices that are embedded throughout social institutions, structures, and bodies, are conjured on stage and off (i.e., social ghosts; [42]). Naming/performing these injustices on stage makes these invisibilized histories tangible [41–43,46,71].

Camille is not seen as fully human. Ese as slave master and Ese in the present do not react to or acknowledge any of her emotions; they only respond to Dwayne. This ability to *see* Dwayne highlights their ability to recognize his anger, and potentially, his humanity.

He is a "full-fledged" person (to an extent) and as such, "both men" (i.e., Ese) can see him. In other words, masculinity recognizes and respects its reflection. This recognition is not extended to Camille, and her verbal and non-verbal protestations are overlooked. Her body and existence become tools for pleasure (for Ese) and self-actualization (for Dwayne) through Dwayne's own emotional journey. In the present-scene, Ese only stops harassing Camille when Dwayne returns from the bathroom to "claim what is his". This represents an ingrained belief that a woman's autonomy is owned by another. As Fannie Lou Hamer noted, "a Black woman's body was never hers alone" [72]. Despite the use of her voice and attempts at enacting her agency, Camille is still rendered as an inanimate object.

7.2. Reparations of Respect

"Respect" comes from the Latin word "respectus", which means to look back, regard. The process of looking again is to hold what is before you in a new light and to interpret what you see from a different vantage point. This desire to be respected, to be seen again, reverberates throughout and across this project. However, this interpretation of respect is captured most fully in Tyanna's (Ty's) scene. Ty is a light-skinned Black woman with hazel eyes and noted that throughout her life, men had fetishized her because of these features. Her value was reduced only to her appearance and her romantic partners refused to see her as anything more than a prize to be won. In Ty's scene, she asks three different suitors (Willie, Dwayne, and Ese) to see her in her fullness by asking a simple question—"do you see me?" Rather than answering her question directly, the men avoid the question and focus on their accomplishments. When pushed further, the men stop actively trying to pursue her and instead shift the blame onto her body by claiming that she is difficult. Ty fights back and the tension builds to a fever pitch. The cacophony is cut by African drums and a "Guinean prince" (Quincy), who sees Ty in her totality. He sweeps her off her feet and takes her back to his home country where she lives happily ever after. The suitors, confused by what has transpired, collectively leave, in search of "Becky with the good hair" (i.e., a White woman).

Within the context of the scene, the men are reliant on European standards of beauty to determine Ty's worth, while also negating her true form. Their projections onto her body reflect their own insecurities and oppressions created by White supremacy. When Ty makes demands on the men to see (respect) her, Ty is disregarded. The work required to see her in her fullness was work that they were unwilling to do. Throughout Ty's interview, she makes it clear that ancestral experiences are still carried on her and her children's bodies through their lighter features, which simultaneously haunt and carry privilege. Ty was the only participant to take the myDNA mix test, a percentage-based DNA test, as well as the maternal DNA test, which traces genetic ancestry along the maternal DNA line. She did so not to prove her proximity to whiteness, but as a means of proving the *depth* of her blackness. After receiving her results (84% African (Mende of Sierra Leone) and 16% European), Ty grappled with their implications, specifically how she believed her European ancestry was born from rape based on her children's lighter features and grey-blue eyes. Ty connects the histories of the slave trade directly to her and her children's lived experiences. This trauma not only sits under the surface, where it can readily be conjured but is also carried visibly on the body. Although her lighter skin affords her more privilege, people must forget how her, and her children's, existence, comes to fruition through the potential violation of Black women's autonomy. Her family's social value is abstracted from the legacies of exploitation to confer status [51].

Although Ty is often made invisible by others, she insists on seeing her children, especially her daughter, in all their complexities, and providing them with the tools for self-love and self-respect. Ty recognizes that her son and daughter will have similar experiences in terms of messages they may receive about their skin tone and lighter features. However, because Western society overtly exoticizes and fetishizes Black women and girls, Ty believes she must have these conversations with her young daughter early, as Black girls are seen as responsible for their own actions and the actions of others from

childhood [67,68,72–74]. Given these realities, Ty's work of acknowledging her children's agency and power represents a reparation of respect and a refusal to allow her silence to dictate her and her family's life (to look again; [75]).

Ty allows her children to express their joy, their anger, and their disappointment. Because she felt silenced throughout her upbringing, Ty gives her children voice and respects who they are and their potential. Ty processes through their emotions by having them write out their feelings on index cards and recite positive mantras every morning. This work is not always easy because of conflicts that arise when connecting with people and systems that do not always understand her or her children. According to Ty, this lack of understanding has led to issues at her daughter's school:

> *They don't want her in the school. Sometimes she can't express herself so they just look at her as a kid that's acting out . . . I asked what happened beforehand, before the "meltdown" they called it. 'Nothing. Nothing. Nothing.' That's what they say. However, you're talking to me. Something happened. You're not gonna tell me 'nothing.' My daughter got that way for a reason.*

Ty calls into question how the educational system treats her daughter. Because educational systems have been designed in ways that stifle and oppress expression, her daughter's meltdowns are read as problematic. Interestingly, Ty puts the onus back on the educational system for producing her daughter's "meltdowns". Teachers and administrators, the anonymous they, tell her that nothing happened beforehand but she knows that her "tantrums" are not happening in isolation or without provocation. Additionally, for Ty, the term "meltdown" becomes a tool of the system that tries to further invisibilize her daughter, and she chooses not to recognize their definitions as they minimize her daughter's experiences. Because she is unwilling to be silent in the face of structural oppressions, Ty chose visibility, an act of self-revelation [75]. As Lorde notes, "we can sit in our corners mute forever while our sisters and our selves are wasted, while our children are distorted and destroyed, while our earth is poisoned; we can sit in our safe corners mute as bottles, and we will still be no less afraid" [75] (p. 42). By forcing institutions to respect ("look again") her and her children, Ty transforms her fear into action. Continued silence will not protect them because new fears are continually constructed within this country. Being seen, which is an act of vulnerability, will be Ty and her children's greatest strength [75]. Stifling their emotions invisibilizes them and neglects their identities. *Seeing* her children and acknowledging their agency and power restores their humanity in the face of structures that refuse to acknowledge their fullness. Rather than continuing to pass on her own trauma and the trauma of previous generations, Ty choses to instill strength in her children by mitigating feelings of worthlessness that too often permeate across generations.

7.3. Embodying the Cypher

Many participants noted in follow-up interviews how important the cyphers were for their own transformation and development. Participants embodied and internalized the experience and applied it to and across other parts of life. Ese focused on this process throughout his performance. Ese's scene focuses on his experiences of searching for a community and his history. He is shunned by his partner's Dominican family when he tells them that he's searching for his African ancestry. He's turned away by his pastor and the congregation when he can only tell them that he is from Harlem and maybe Tuskegee two generations before. Ese calls his mama hoping to find some respite but is only met with more ridicule and isolation. After all of this rejection, Ese declares that when he gets his results, he is gonna smack the African into people. While on stage, he winds around in a circle a hand ready for a slap. Each player is "hit" and falls to the floor. West African drums start to play in the background, and they rise dancing to the beat using traditional West African dance aesthetics. Ese shouts with excitement and says "yep. That is right. Get it. That is right. I am an African!" He winds his hand back and asks the audience "Y'all want a fresh one?" and smacks the air.

Being a member of this community produced a feeling of completion, consciousness, and safety within Ese. Being part of the work with his fellow cycle members and the facilitators felt freeing because he did not feel like he "needed to be less Black or more Black—It was an open invitation to do whatever the [expletive] I wanted to do . . . It really allowed me to see myself and to feel this comfort in front of a group of people that I had not felt in years". Too often, he had been forced to silence himself or mitigate aspects of his personality to make others comfortable. The "price" of this freedom was Ese's continued identity exploration, which he felt was owed to members of the cycle (i.e., community obligations and affiliative self-fashioning; [2]). The connectedness established between the group shifted the purpose away from learning something for his and his family's benefit to one centering on the larger collective. While Ese felt committed to the deeper work associated with discovering his results, he contended with some trepidations.

7.4. Hesitations

The hesitations Ese experienced centered primarily around his results and his ability to incorporate them fully within his and his children's lives. He was not alone in this feeling of uncertainty; other members of the cycle also expressed some level of uncertainty regarding the meaning of the genetic tests. Ese's genetic tests stated that he was descended from the Boobi People of Equatorial Guinea (maternal lineage) and Spain/Portugal (paternal lineage). Ese felt at ease after his results and walked with a greater sense of pride. Ese noted that "it was not that I felt lost before . . . but I did not feel found". He knew and had a general sense of who he was and his surroundings, but having these concrete results shifted his perspective. His European ancestry did not faze him because he did not want to only confirm his African-ness but the totality of his being, wherever it originated. A significant number of Black men who take a paternal ancestry test will find out they have European ancestry [55]. The social ghosts and The Wake reappear within the genetic code.

Ese's surrounding community—his partner, his siblings, and his mother—however, were not as deeply affected by the results. His partner did not understand his continued commitment to Continuum. While she supported his decision to explore his roots and his identity, the deeper implications of the future were difficult for her to grasp. Ese mentioned, however, that his participation within TCP had brought them closer in ways that he had not expected. Aspects of her "not getting it" show up in the performance as well. During the first third of the performance, Ese talked openly about the connection shared by his partner's family members and the pride that they carry for their Dominican heritage. However, upon announcing his interest in exploring his own ancestry deeply, the community shunned Ese. Uncovering his own ancestral roots would potentially call into question their own positionalities.

Ese admired, and to an extent, envied, his partner's tight-knit Dominican family. The love shared between her family members inspired Ese to pursue his own ancestry. In part, he hoped to emulate this bond and deepen it within his own family. The cultural pride exuded from her extended family called into question Ese's own cultural pride and pushed him to pursue his ancestry and Continuum. Because their pride was rooted firmly in some place outside of the United States, they were not locked into American structures. Although he sought similar connectedness through his own ancestry, Ese's in-laws could not process the test's significance. However, despite this potential ostracization, Ese saw this Dominican cultural pride as an asset. Because their Dominican identity is rooted firmly in a physical homeland, they can return home or disengage from aspects of the American political structure. Their sense of home is not tied to the United States or an amorphous and romanticized vision of Africa; it is concrete and tangible. Although Ese is American, the United States framework will forever treat him as other, as non-citizen, as subject and not actor [76]. Black Americans are perpetually traversing this wake despite our full, albeit forced, participation within the framework. Connecting to Dominican culture was an *asset* in case something goes "left" in the United States.

Ese noted that he would surround his kids with as much knowledge about Equatorial Guinea as possible. However, for his youngest, Dominican culture would protect her more concretely, in comparison to Equatorial Guinea. While the results of the test are concrete, the identity, the culture, and the histories attached to Equatorial Guinea are amorphous, making it difficult to stabilize deeper socialization within it. Without a close informant, entrance into the community would be difficult. Because his daughter would be socialized around her Dominican family, her connection to the larger diaspora would be solidified. Although his siblings are close, familial tensions often erode the connection between them, especially as they relate to questions of futurity, safety, and community. Familial support and a larger diasporic community rooted in a specific place would cement and secure his young family's future. While the Diaspora connects our communities across time and space, deeper connections are still necessary for potential community membership and repatriation.

7.5. Racial Becoming

As noted earlier, racial becoming is an identity process that holds that identity transformation, progression, and refinement are lifelong processes that allow for a more dynamic and complicated analysis of identity framing and conceptualization. Additionally, it affords power back to individuals by attending to the experiences that individuals actively engage in and resonate with as being particularly meaningful (i.e., participation in the Continuum Project).

Alexis's and Quincy's scene delves into aspects of racial becoming in the latter half of the performance. After recounting their experiences from earlier in the day, both players turned to each other unsure of how they could combat these assaults (i.e., "you're pretty for a dark-skin"; not being seen (literally) even with the help of a stage light, etc.). The co-founder of African Ancestry, "Gina Paige" (played by Ty), appeared with genetic tests in hand, offering them a chance to truly know themselves. They each imagined finding out that they were royalty. Alexis and Quincy pushed each other to imagine wilder and more elaborate manifestations of their potential royalty (crowns, robes, staffs). They were visibly excited and carried themselves with more pride. Alexis turned the words others threw at her into affirmations of self and ridiculed others for not knowing their ancestry. Both saw the test as an offering for the self and identity. During Quincy's world building he states outright "kujichagulia", while taking a warrior's pose. This "battle cry" highlighted the importance of self-determination in the on-going battle to silence and oppress Black communities.

Individually and collectively, participants discussed feeling significantly more confident and aware of themselves after receiving their results. Alexis, whose results came up as the Mafa Masa and Kotoko Peoples of Cameroon (maternal lineage) and the Tikar People of Cameroon, reported feeling more "swaggery" (Alexis's description) after receiving her results. Others picked up on the change and noticed her energy shift. When asked what was different by her friends, Alexis responded that she was "Just learning some things about myself. I am kinda liking it. Kinda feeling it. I guess that is what you're feeling—the love for myself". This shift indicated the impact of the results on Alexis's own sense of self-worth because it was tangible and concrete to others around her, but more importantly, it was concrete within herself.

As noted earlier, much of Alexis's performance centered on the conflicts that arose in her personal life because of her darker skin. She internalized many of these messages which created feelings of self-doubt and insecurity and believed there was something wrong with her because her parents, who were both dark-skinned, loved themselves fully. Alexis noted that her mother did not realize the extent of her negative experiences until watching the performance and reflected on her role in these doubts, questioning if she did not do enough to make Alexis feel as though she was enough for people. Alexis commented that it took her aback and that she had a long conversation with her mother about it:

I learned like of course, it wasn't her. My mom brought me to people all the time, other dark-skinned women that were doing amazing things. You know just to show me that it's not a skin thing. It's not—you're not burdened because you're dark skinned. Even she felt a little bad for a minute. You know I had to clear that up for her. We're still learning.

The performance itself allowed Alexis to expose her emotions regarding her darker skin and the experiences which are connected to it. It also created an opportunity to deepen the relationship between mother and daughter by unpacking personal traumas and diving into discussions that might not otherwise have happened. By reflecting on her past and the environment in which she grew up, Alexis was able to further explore the dynamics of her own relationship with her mother. This reflection and incorporation reflect the becoming process.

8. Discussion and Conclusions

Saidiya Hartman's book, *Lose your mother: A journey along the Atlantic Slave Route* [76], mediates on the tension between wanting to claim a homeland that was forcibly stolen centuries prior and the knowledge that these desires are nebulous, yet rooted deeply within Black American identity. In Ghana, the *kosanba* is a spirit child who dies repeatedly, shuffling between the world of the living and that of the dead "because of the stories not passed on, the ancestors not remembered, the things lost, and the debts not yet paid. The kosanba braves the wreckage of history and bears the burdens that others refuse" [76] (pp. 86). Because of the nature of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade, Black Americans are positioned as kosanba ("come, go back children"), unable to remember or intuitively know their home country, their ancestors, or their traditions fully, trapping the community between two worlds—spirit and Earth; the United States and the motherland. This existence is made more treacherous as the kosanba are caught between the mother (Africa), who wishes to protect them and keep them in the mortal world, and a master (White supremacy/the United States) that requires a denial of the motherland. To stay is to concede our dispossession, as well as the transient nature of the existence of the enslaved. Black Americans cannot claim ownership over their motherland nor the United States, as their identities as descendants of the enslaved positions them as second-class citizens. Because of this, Black Americans often treat the motherland as a site of salvation and liberation. Throughout the project, participants echoed many of these sentiments, including the desire for home/safety that is rooted outside of the United States. Many also believed that learning about their ancestral roots would start the process of healing generational traumas.

By recognizing and honoring the initial rupture of chattel slavery and the subsequent decades of displacement and trauma, it is possible to engage in processes of healing at both the individual and collective levels. Honoring this past builds sustainable futures based on Black joy (*sankofa*; "in order to look forward, one must look back"). This also connects to the aims of genetic reconciliation projects by connecting participants to their ancestral homes (through DNA) and processing through the emotional and psychological impacts of enslavement, racism, and White supremacist structures. By learning said histories, participants potentially close the loop between the initial traumas of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade and those in the present, figuratively, returning to the Door of No Return [6,76,77].

Throughout their time with the Continuum Project, individuals expressed deep desires for stronger communities, relationships, and connections that were rooted deeply in the authentic self, which was tied to the present and to the ancestral past. By discovering ancestral roots, individuals had a stronger foundation on which to stand. Once rooted in this work, it would be possible to build a future not limited by the American context. Although hope undergirded many of their narratives, the reality of repatriation, identity, history, and context always made themselves known. Ancestral traumas were resurrected through the performances and the tests. Ty, Dwayne, and Camille grappled most directly with the experiences of these traumas in their genetic code and in the spiritual experience.

By discussing these fears and traumas on stage, participants confronted the traumas that subtly haunt the collective.

Although touched on briefly here, questions and doubts related to acceptance from their ancestral communities and the right to claim said identities were consistently raised. Dwayne and Ese grappled with the applicability of these test results in their countries of origin. Although descended from their respective peoples, what rights (rites) can they reasonably access? Will they be accepted in these newfound communities, or will they perpetually be outsiders even within the motherland? Throughout their processing, there was a deep desire to belong to a nation or people that would fully accept them. The community that was built amongst the members of The Continuum Project fulfilled some of these desires. More importantly, the nuances between individuals' experiences indicates that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to genetic ancestry testing or identity processes. Instead, what manifested was a spectrum of experience that was impacted by prior life experience. Although all participants went through the same process at The Continuum Project, the individual-level differences manifested differential outcomes.

Throughout this work, we bear witness to processes of becoming. Individuals are taking the experiences gained through TCP and incorporating it within their sense of selves. This is a constant movement. Rather than taking this new experience and information for granted, it was instead carefully processed through and interpreted for individual and specific meaning. Because of this constant movement, traditional stage models of identity could not accurately capture what was occurring for members of TCP. By broadening identity processes to center of movement and change that is continual, we are better able to understand identity movement and building, which acknowledges the development of the higher self and the potential healing of generational trauma.

References

1. Gobodo-Madikizela, P. *A Human Being Died That Night: A South African Woman Confronts the Legacy of Apartheid*, 1st ed.; Mariner Books: Boston, MA, USA, 2003.
2. Nelson, A. *The Social Life of DNA: Race, Reparations, and Reconciliation after the Genome*, 1st ed.; Beacon Press: Boston, MA, USA, 2016.
3. Hannah-Jones, N. Preface. In *The 1619 Project*, 1st ed.; Hannah-Jones, N., Roper, C., Silverman, I., Silverstein, J., Eds.; One World: New York, NY, USA, 2021; pp. xvii–xxxiii.
4. Lazar, S. *Between M-Otherness and Identity: The Narratives of "Four Mothers" and "Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo"*; Truman Institute of Peace: Jersualem, Israel, 2006.
5. Farmer-Paellmann, V. FleetBoston. 2002. Available online: https://casetext.com/case/farmer-paellmann-v-fleetboston-financial-corp (accessed on 22 February 2022).
6. Sharpe, C. *In the Wake: On Blackness and Being*; Duke University Press: Durham, NC, USA, 2016.
7. Mullings, L. Reclaiming culture: The dialetics of identity. In *Dispatches from the Ebony Tower: Intellectuals Confront the African-American Experience*, 1st ed.; Marable, M., Ed.; Columbia University Press: New York, NY, USA, 2000; pp. 210–215.
8. TallBear, K. Genomic articulations of indigeneity. *Soc. Stud. Sci.* **2013**, *43*, 509–533. [CrossRef]
9. Kauanui, J.K. Blood and reproduction of (the) race in the name of Ho'oulu Lāhui—A Hawaiian feminist critique. *Pac. Stud.* **2007**, *30*, 110–116.
10. Robertson, R.V. Prejudice and the Estelusti: A qualitative examination of contemporary status. *J. Afr. Am. Stud.* **2008**, *12*, 266–282. [CrossRef]
11. Bamford, S. *Biology Unmoored: Melanesian Reflections on Life and Biotechnology*, 1st ed.; University of California Press: Berkeley, CA, USA; Los Angeles, CA, USA, 2007.
12. Benjamin, R. *Race after Technology*; Polity: Cambridge, MA, USA, 2019.

13. White Nationalists Are Flocking to Genetic Ancestry Tests—With Surprising Results. Available online: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/white-nationalists-are-flocking-to-genetic-ancestry-tests-with-surprising-results/ (accessed on 15 January 2020).

14. Abu El-Haj, N. *The Genealogical Science: The Search for Jewish Origins and the Politics of Epistemology*; The University of Chicago Press: Chicago, IL, USA, 2012.

15. Wailoo, K.; Nelson, A.; Lee, C. (Eds.) Introduction: Genetic claims and the unsettled past. In *Genetics and the Unsettled Past: The Collision of DNA, Race, and History*; Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, NJ, USA, 2012.

16. Ossorio, P.; Duster, T. Race and Genetics. *Am. Psychol.* **2005**, *60*, 115–128. [CrossRef]

17. Zubieri, T. *Thicker than Blood*; University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis, MN, USA, 2001.

18. Is This the Face of UNC Student Faith Hedgepeth's Killer? Available online: https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/community/chapel-hill-news/article104310946.html (accessed on 24 June 2021).

19. Pollock, A. *Mediating Race: Heart Disease and Durable Preoccupations with Difference*; Duke University Press: Durham, NC, USA, 2002.

20. China Uses DNA to Map Faces, with Help from the West. Available online: https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/03/business/china-dna-uighurs-xinjiang.html (accessed on 24 February 2022).

21. Rusert, B. *Fugitive Science: Empiricism and Freedom in Early African American Culture*; NYU Press: New York, NY, USA, 2017.

22. Sankar, P. Forensic DNA phenotyping: Reinforcing race in law enforcement. In *What's the Use of Race? Modern Governance and the Biology of Difference*, 1st ed.; Whitmarsh, I., Jones, D.S., Eds.; MIT Press: Cambridge, MA, USA, 2010; pp. 49–62.

23. Roth, W.D.; Ivemark, B. Genetic options: The impact of genetic ancestry testing on consumers' racial and ethnic identities. *Am. J. Sociol.* **2018**, *124*, 150–184. [CrossRef]

24. Guishard, M.A.; Heyward, D.A.; Brown, J.T.; Stoddard-Pennant, M. What we not finna do: Respectfully collaborating with skinfolk and kinfolk in Black Feminist Participatory Action Research. *Glob. J. Community Psychol. Pract.* **2021**, *12*, 1–36.

25. What Is Devised Theatre? Available online: https://thetheatretimes.com/what-is-devised-theatre/ (accessed on 15 June 2020).

26. Laura, C.T. Intimate inquiry: Love as data in qualitative research. *Cult. Stud. Crit. Methodol.* **2013**, *13*, 289–292. [CrossRef]

27. Making Feminist Points. Available online: https://feministkilljoys.com/2013/09/11/making-feminist-points/ (accessed on 1 February 2020).

28. Citation Practices Challenge. Available online: http://www.criticalethnicstudiesjournal.org/citation-practices (accessed on 1 February 2020).

29. Freire, P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*; Continuum: New York, NY, USA, 1970.

30. Hilton, D. Non-formal education for primary health care workers. In Proceedings of the 1981 International Health Conference: The Training and Support of Primary Health Care Workers, Washington, DC, USA, 15–17 June 1981.

31. Botman, M. "I impregnated a girl, what should I do? " A case study for using theater for development to promote critical thinking in Uganda. *Lethbridge Undergrad. Res. J.* **2009**, *3*, 1–6.

32. De Frantz, T.; Gonzalez, A. (Eds.) Introduction: From "Negro Experiment" to "Black Performace". In *Black Performance Theory*, 1st ed.; Duke University Press: Durham, NC, USA, 2014; pp. 1–15.

33. Krasner, D. *A Beautiful Pageant: African American Theatre, Drama, and Performance in the Harlem Renaissance, 1910–1927*; Palgrave Macmillan: New York, NY, USA, 2002.

34. Hall, S. Cultural identity and diaspora. In *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*; Rutherford, J., Ed.; Lawrence and Wishart: London, UK, 1990.

35. Bhaba, H. *The Location of Culture*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 1991.

36. Emdin, C. Affiliation and alienation: Hip-hop, rap, and urban science education. *J. Curric. Stud.* **2010**, *42*, 1–25. [CrossRef]

37. Hurston, Z.N. *Tell My Horse: Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica*; Amistad Press: New York, NY, USA, 1938.

38. Hurtson, Z.N. *Every Tongue Got to Confess: Negro Folk-Tales from the Gulf States*; Amistad Press: New York, NY, USA, 2001.

39. Farris Thompson, R. An Aesthetic of the Cool. *Afr. Arts* **1973**, *7*, 40–43, 64–67, 89–91. [CrossRef]

40. Baraka, A. The Revolutionary Theater. *Liberator* **1965**, *III*, 1–3.

41. Southland (Dance Performance). Available online: https://www.loc.gov/collections/katherine-dunham/articles-and-essays/notes-on-dunhams-work/southland (accessed on 12 May 2021).

42. Roberts, R.A. Facing and transforming hauntings of race through the arts. *Equity Excell. Educ.* **2011**, *44*, 330–347. [CrossRef]

43. Collins, P.H. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2000.

44. Bell, L.A. Theoretical foundations for social justice education. In *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, 1st ed.; Adams, M., Bell, L.A., Griffin, P., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2007; pp. 1–14.

45. Bell, L.A.; Love, B.; Roberts, R.A. Racism and white privilege curriculum design. In *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, 1st ed.; Adams, M., Bell, L.A., Griffin, P., Eds.; Routledge: New York, NY, USA, 2007; pp. 123–144.

46. Tuhiwai Smith, L. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*; Zed Books: New York, NY, USA, 1999.

47. Johnson, E.P. Feeling the spirit in the dark: Expanding notions of the sacred in the African-American Gay Community. *Callaloo* **1998**, *21*, 399–416. [CrossRef]

48. Smith, C.A. Scenarios of racial contact: Police violence and the politics of performance and racial formation in Brazil. *e-Misferica* **2008**, *51*, 1–23.

49. Richards, S.L. What is to be remembered?: Tourism to Ghana's slave castle-dungeons. *Theatre J.* **2005**, *57*, 617–637.

50. Heyward, D.A. Racial Becoming: How Agentic (Self-Initiated) Encounter Events Inform Racial Identity Refinement. Ph.D. Thesis, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, New York, NY, USA, 2019.

51. Helms, J.E. *A Race Is a Nice Thing to Have: A Guide to Being a Whiter Person or Understanding the White Persons in Your Life*, 3rd ed.; Cognella Academic Publishing: San Diego, CA, USA, 2020.

52. Brown, J.N. *Dropping Anchor, Setting Sail: Geographies of Race in Black Liverpool*; Princeton University Press: Princeton, NJ, USA, 2009.

53. Clark, K.B.; Phipps Clark, M. Racial identification and preference in Negro children. In *Readings in Social Psychology*, 1st ed.; Newcomb, T.M., Hartley, E.L., Eds.; Holt: New York, NY, USA, 1958; pp. 169–178.

54. Oparanozie, A.; Sales, J.M.; DiClemente, R.J.; Braxton, N.D. Racial identity and risky sexual behaviors among heterosexual black men. *J. Black Psychol.* **2012**, *38*, 32–51. [CrossRef]

55. Bakhtin, M. *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*; Holquist, M., Emerson, C., Eds.; University of Texas Press: Austin, TX, USA, 1982.

56. Raggatt, P.T.F. Mapping the dialogical self: Towards a rationale and method of assessment. *Eur. J. Personal.* **2000**, *14*, 65–90. [CrossRef]

57. Tappan, M.B. Domination, subordination, and the dialogical self: Identity development and the politics of ideological becoming. *Cult. Psychol.* **2005**, *11*, 47–75. [CrossRef]

58. Sellers, R.M.; Copeland-Linder, N.; Martin, P.P.; L'Heureux Lewis, R. Racial identity matters: The relationship between racial discrimination and psychological functioning in African American adolescents. *J. Res. Adolesc.* **2006**, *16*, 187–216. [CrossRef]

59. Cross, W.E., Jr. *Shades of Black: Diversity in African-American Identity*; Temple University Press: Philadelphia, PA, USA, 1991.

60. Cross, W.E. The psychology of nigrescence: Revising the Cross model. In *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling*, 1st ed.; Ponterotto, J.G., Casas, J.M., Suzuki, L.A., Alexander, C.M., Eds.; Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA, USA, 1991; pp. 93–122.

61. Cross, W.E.; Fhagen-Smith, P. Patterns of African American identity development: A lifespan perspective. In *New Perspectives on Racial Identity: A Theoretical and Practical Anthology*, 1st ed.; Wijeyesinghe, C.L., Jackson, B.W., Eds.; New York University Press: New York, NY, USA, 2001; pp. 243–270.

62. Parham, T.A. Cycles of psychological Nigresence. *Couns. Psychol.* **1989**, *17*, 187–226. [CrossRef]

63. Vygotsky, L. *The Development of Higher Mental Functions*; Izdatel'stvo Akademii Pedagogicheskikh Nauk: Moscow, Russia, 1960.

64. McAdams, D. *The Life Story Interview*; Foley Center for the Study of Lives: Evanston, IL, USA, 1995.

65. Braun, V.; Clarke, V. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qual. Res. Psychol.* **2006**, *3*, 77–101. [CrossRef]

66. Baptist, E. "Cuffy", "Fancy Maids", and "One-Eyed Men": Rape, commodification, and the domestic slave trade in the United States. *Am. Hist. Rev.* **2001**, *106*, 1619–1650. [CrossRef]

67. Feimster, C.N. *Southern Horrors*; Harvard University Press: Boston, MA, USA, 2011.

68. McGuire, D.L. *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*; Alfred A. Knopf: New York, NY, USA, 2011.

69. Large DNA Study Traces Violent History of American Slavery. Available online: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/23/science/23andme-african-ancestry.html (accessed on 24 July 2020).

70. Bailey, M.; Bailey, T. On Misogynoir: Citation, erasure, and plagiarism. *Fem. Media Stud.* **2018**, *18*, 762–768. [CrossRef]

71. DuBois, W.E.B. *Special Collections and University Archives (Series 12)*; (1913–1941). [Pageants]. W.E.B. DuBois Papers, 1803–1999; University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries: Amherst, MA, USA, 1918.

72. Hamer, F.L. "A black woman's body . . . " Quote of Unknown Origin. Available online: https://www.austinweeklynews.com/2021/09/22/a-black-womans-body-was-never-hers-alone/ (accessed on 24 February 2022).

73. Gyasi, Y. *Homegoing*; Penguin: New York, NY, USA, 2017.

74. Simone, N. Four Women. In *Wild Is the Wind [CD]*; Philips Records: New York, NY, USA, 1966.

75. Lorde, A. (Ed.) The transformation of silence into language and action. In *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*; Crossing Press Feminist Series: New York, NY, USA, 1977; pp. 40–44.

76. Hartman, S. *Lose Your Mother: A Journey along the Atlantic Slave Route*; Farrar, Straus, and Giroux: New York, NY, USA, 2008.

77. Brand, D. *A Map to the Door of No Return: Notes to Belonging*; Penguin Random House Canada: Toronto, ON, Canada, 2002.