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Roundtable

"IN PRACTICE" SERIES

To mark the start of a new "In Practice" series in the *Journal of American Studies*, this issue includes a special roundtable based on papers presented at the inaugural Teaching American Studies Conference, which was held at the University of Warwick in July 2019. The "In Practice" strand seeks to highlight and promote discussions of pedagogy in American studies. It will include review essays that focus on the practical implications of agenda-setting and state-of-the-field texts, addressing how they might be used in teaching, challenge conventional practices, and stimulate pedagogical innovation and inclusiveness.

Associate Editors, Journal of American Studies

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TEACHING AMERICAN STUDIES ROUNDTABLE: INTRODUCTION

In July 2019, the first conference dedicated exclusively to American studies pedagogy in UK higher education was held at the University of Warwick.[1] Building on the increasing numbers of teaching-focussed panels at the annual British Association for American Studies (BAAS) conference, this immersive residential event provided a space for those interested in teaching American studies at university level to have in-depth discussions about pedagogical approaches in our field. In the current climate of the UK's Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), teaching is becoming increasingly central to both our day-to-day work and our promotions and employment opportunities,

[1] The conference was organized by Lydia Plath (University of Warwick), Rebecca Stone (University of Warwick) and Ben Offiler (Sheffield Hallam University). The conference organizers thank the British Association for American Studies, the US Embassy in London, and the History Department at the University of Warwick for their generous support for this event.

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and therefore the conference encouraged participants to share good practice, discuss pedagogical innovations, and consider how American studies can best deliver a positive student experience whilst retaining disciplinary identity.

On the day, over thirty delegates came together to reflect upon our practice and experiences as teachers of American studies. Panel discussions explored crucial issues such as how to engage students in understandings of racial justice, confront "difficulty" in the classroom, and take on the intellectual and moral responsibilities of teaching an increasingly diverse student body in an era of tumultuous politics and the looming threat of climate change. Scholars shared their experiences of experimenting with innovative teaching methods, with papers discussing the challenges and opportunities of alternative assessment, using social media, and engaging students through immersive field trips. One of the panels challenged delegates to consider the impact of casualization and precarity on the teaching practice of early-career academics and teaching fellows. The panel's participants emphasized that "teaching excellence" is fundamentally at odds with the lived experience of high numbers of teaching staff on insecure contracts, and reflected on the impact that such structural challenges within UK higher education have on the student experience in the classroom.[2]

The essays in this roundtable reflect the range and strength of the contributions and the discussions at the inaugural Teaching American Studies conference. First, Kim Lockwood explores the notion of "expertise" and the ways in which student expectations of academics' knowledge have the potential to intimidate those new to teaching, especially in the field of UK American studies. By replacing "expertise" with "vulnerability" as our core pedagogic value, Lockwood argues, we can disrupt the power dynamics within the classroom and more successfully empathize with our students, subsequently enabling them to engage with the structures of power that are fundamental to understanding our subject. Katherine Parker-Hay builds on this discussion of power relations in the classroom as she reflects on a scene from Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts* and its implications for feminist, queer, and oppositional pedagogies. No matter how strongly we feel as activists who seek to decentre ourselves in the classroom, Parker-Hay points out, our students may have other ideas. How do we tolerate a resistant body of students who have the potential to defy our expectations and bring their own political agendas to their learning? Student-centred learning can be as frustrating as

[2] See University and College Union, 'Counting the Costs of Casualisation in Higher Education" (June 2019), at www.ucu.org.uk/media/10336/Counting-the-costs-of-casualisation-in-higher-education-Jun-19/pdf/ucu_casualisation_in_HE_survey_report_Jun19.pdf, accessed 27 Feb. 2020.

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it is rewarding. Indeed, Edward Clough reflects on the challenges we face when teaching students whose enthusiasm for the subject under discussion – in this case, Beyoncé – seems to prevent them from engaging with the critical analysis that is expected in university classrooms: a feeling that will no doubt resonate with many American studies scholars. Clough argues that instead of being a source of frustration, enthusiasm can be reframed as intellectual curiosity and repurposed as a tool for unpacking the methodology of deconstruction and deepening student understanding of the purpose of intellectual critique.

The politics of the American studies classroom is perhaps no more acutely felt than when facing the dual challenges of climate change and racial (in)justice. Tom Cutterham's essay challenges us to confront the coming climate catastrophe head-on; to use the history of the American West as a political tool (he favours a crowbar) to inform our responses in the present. Rather than seeing the history of climate change as one of place or process, Cutterham emphasizes the importance of people: of the possibility of human agency for survival and change. In our final essay, Lynn Itagaki shares her wide-ranging experience of teaching comparative racialization at a variety of universities in the United States. Her essay reminds us that we can (and should) be flexible in how we frame our syllabi to "activate the interest" of students from different backgrounds depending on our institutional contexts: a message for UK academics as well as those based in the US. Student demographics can have a real impact on module choices, classroom interactions, and student expectations, especially in the areas of racial justice and reparations.

As our working life as American studies academics increasingly focusses on teaching and the student learning experience, and as students continue to choose our modules (if not our degree programmes) in high numbers because of their interest in American history and politics or their enthusiasm for American literature, film, and culture, we owe it both to ourselves and to our students to take our pedagogical practice seriously. As these essays attest, teaching American studies is rife with emotion, from frustration and vulnerability to activism and enthusiasm. I encourage readers to take the time to reflect on their practice, share ideas with colleagues, and explore potential avenues for innovation, and to join the growing Teaching American Studies community.

University of Warwick LYDIA J. PLATH

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IS THIS AMERICA? I'M THE TEACHER, AND I DON'T KNOW: PEDAGOGY, VULNERABILITY, AND EMPATHY

Vulnerability and expertise seldom go hand in hand, except, perhaps, in the neoliberal university. In this paper, I want to think through the vulnerabilities we are exposed to – and expose ourselves to – as teachers of American studies. In doing so, I not only want to reflect on some of the difficulties posed by teaching American studies specifically in the context of UK higher education, but also to argue for vulnerability as a powerful pedagogic affect and mode of intellectual and interpersonal connection.

To start, however, I need to make myself somewhat vulnerable by offering a brief sketch of myself at the start of my teaching career. I came to American studies for the first time as a postgraduate researcher: with a background in English literature and creative writing, my experience of American literature came primarily in the context of literary, rather than cultural, theory. As a scholar based in the UK, my access to America and American experiences is heavily mediated. In short, while I have skills as a writer and researcher that I could bring to the pedagogical encounter for the benefit of my students, at the start of my teaching career I had very little of what academia most often situates as its primary source of value: expertise derived from "a long-standing immersion into a topic and area, built upon a comprehensive and critical knowledge base."[1]

This emphasis on expertise is inscribed throughout higher education. Institutions strive to produce world-leading research (REF) and pride themselves on mobilizing that expertise in the delivery of research-led teaching (TEF). Following this lead, students place enormous value in the expert, conceiving of academics' role as teachers as centred on the transmission of that knowledge-based expertise. Despite concerns that these teacher-led models of learning can leave students disempowered and disengaged, students nonetheless still prize the expert.[2] I have lost count of how many times a student has asked who the department's "expert" on a particular text is, or spoken with students anxious about working with a dissertation supervisor who (in their eyes) is not an "expert" on their chosen topic.

Within this context, embarking on an academic career by teaching in an unfamiliar subject area presented an impossible task: I was seemingly required to gain expertise within an unfamiliar subject area and then to transmit that

[1] Kate Woodthorpe, *Survive and Thrive in Academia: The New Academic's Pocket Mentor* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 38.

[2] See, for example, David Kember, "Promoting Student-Centred Forms of Learning across an Entire University," *Higher Education*, 58 (2009), 1–13.

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expertise to students, often within the space of a week. No matter how thorough my lesson planning, no matter how fastidiously I researched and read around the weekly texts and contexts, I was never able to assimilate sufficient knowledge to feel like I could deliver the institutional promise of expertise. There was always, inevitably, a moment when a student would ask a question and I would have to reveal my lack of expertise and say, "I don't know." This response usually took my students by surprise: they looked taken aback, disappointed, and often confused. Given such student reactions, it was easy to read my response as an admission of failure: as Edward J. Brantmeier reflects, "The burden of knowing the right answers, as expected by our students, bears tremendous weight."[3] Here, however, I want to reclaim both this admission and its ensuing vulnerability by rereading these moments not as a sign of failure or limitation, but as holding profound pedagogical value.

Making myself vulnerable by exposing the boundaries of my knowledge unsettled, if only briefly, the traditional hierarchies of the pedagogical encounter. In an environment of expertise, saying "I don't know …" to a student disrupts the teacher-led model of pedagogy by shifting the emphasis away from knowledge transmission and onto production. When it is followed with "… but let's find out," learning becomes something to be developed and created together, by student and teacher alike.[4] Doing so dislocates value from the outcome of learning and redistributes value throughout the experience. The admission of unknowing creates an absence of expertise that students and teacher alike can work constructively together to fill. Rather than skimming over the gaps in our knowledge, we can face the vulnerability head-on and conceptualize the informational lack: what don't we know? Why might we need to know it? How might we find out? We can encourage students to mobilize their skills of criticality and analysis to find creative ways to access the "missing" knowledge: what does the text or source suggest about this? What ideas or perspectives can we use to speculate here? We can also use the affective experience of vulnerability itself as a pedagogical tool: how do we feel about not being able to access the knowledge that we think we need? How does this feeling shape our experience of the work itself?

This shared experience of creating meaning and understanding in turn fosters a new affective dynamic between student and teacher, as Erinn Gilson theorizes: "vulnerability is defined by openness … to be vulnerable is to be open to being affected and affecting in ways that one

[3] Edward J. Brantmeier, "Pedagogy of Vulnerability: Definitions, Assumptions and Applications," in Jing Lin, Rebecca L. Oxford and Edward J. Brantmeier, eds., *Re-envisioning Higher Education: Embodied Pathways to Wisdom and Social Transformation* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2013), 95–106, 96.

[4] Ibid.

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cannot control … vulnerability is the basis for learning and for empathy, connection, and community."[5] I want to tweak Gilson's theorization slightly: vulnerability is the basis for empathy, which, in these moments of vulnerability within the pedagogical encounter, becomes the site of learning itself. Crucially, this empathetic learning is reciprocal. As a teacher, the realization and admission that you don't know something affords a student-oriented perspective on the process of learning. As we progress and develop as research-active academics, it is easy to become complacent about the ease of grasping and applying new ideas and concepts, especially when working in environments that encourage us to frame ourselves as experts. Being unexpectedly exposed to your own lack of knowledge creates a moment of estrangement. In this moment of vulnerability, we are usefully aligned with our students, who are conceptualized simultaneously as expectant learners – vessels that need to be filled with knowledge – and as informed, engaged learners, who have already accumulated foundational information through background reading, lectures and their other modules. We expect students both to be in the process of learning and to have already learned. In that moment when we have to say "I don't know," we are held with our students in that tension of learning as both a prior and ongoing process. Admitting a lack of knowledge and making ourselves vulnerable, then, allows us to empathize with our students who are continuously asked by the procedures of pedagogy to make themselves vulnerable – to ask when they don't understand, to consider the limitations of their ideas and approach, to challenge themselves and each other – and to bear the frustrations of that vulnerability, often without acknowledgement.

Further, the vulnerabilities that stem from this admission ("I don't know") are particularly valuable within the context of teaching American studies within a UK context, where, for many disciplinary experts and our students alike, our fundamental estrangement from American experience means that there will inevitably be a limit to our knowledge and understanding, no matter how thorough and attentive our practices. We have both the advantage and the disadvantage of being external to the cultures we're teaching and researching. This, in turn, is helpful in orienting students' approach to learning within the context of American studies: to approach or discuss "America" as a homogeneous experience – as a topic that can be thoroughly known – is to reduce, oversimplify, or obscure its complexities. By acknowledging the limits of knowledge through a performance of vulnerability, we embrace the multiplicity of experiences and nuances which comprise "America" itself. As

[5] Erinn C. Gilson, *The Ethics of Vulnerability: A Feminist Analysis of Social Life and Practice* (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 2.

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Shoshana Felman argues, true learning embraces complexity: "I want my students to be able to receive information that is *dissonant*, and not just *congruent*, with everything that they have learned beforehand."[6]

Addressing and exploring vulnerabilities within an environment predicated upon a specific set of power relations can also be a useful method of reflecting on broader sociocultural experiences of privilege and inequality.[7] Whether we're approaching American studies through text or context, power dynamics and diffuse conceptions of identity will come into play: there will be those whose voices are excluded from, or positioned as ancillary to, America's various cultural narratives. Attending to our own moments of vulnerability and exposure within the academic environment, including those created by a perceived failure of expertise, allows us to foster a deeper understanding of these exclusions and the vulnerabilities that they confer on people and to open up the effects that such cultural marginalization has. Sharing vulnerabilities and fostering empathies, then, empower us to approach broader, systematic notions of disempowerment found within American cultures.

University of Nottingham KIM LOCKWOOD

EMOTIONS, IDENTITY KNOWLEDGES AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY IN INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXTS

In this essay, I want to consider the expectations and competing obligations of teaching *identity knowledges* in the contemporary academy. I am working on the assumption that identity knowledges self-define as having a critical obligation to social justice; they also, perhaps for this reason, have established intellectual links with critical pedagogy and student-centred classrooms. Richard Boyd speaks for many of us, I expect, in recalling how his early teaching career had been organized by the assumption that "walking into the classroom" would be "following in the footsteps of Paulo Freire."[1] Boyd remembers being "convinced that I could and would be the ally of my students in

[6] Shoshana Felman, "Education and Crisis, or the Vicissitudes of Teaching," in Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, eds., *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History* (New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 1992), 1–56, 53, emphasis in original.

[7] See Brantmeier, Andre Keet, Denise Zinn and Kimberley Porteus, "Mutual Vulnerability: A Key Principle in a Humanising Pedagogy in Post-conflict Societies," *Perspectives in Education*, 27, 2 (June 2009), 109–19.

[1] Richard Boyd, "Reading Student Resistance: The Case of the Missing Other," *JAC*, 19, 4 (1999), 589–605, 590, original emphasis.

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our mutual struggle for liberation from the structures of oppression," with teacher and student "*united* in resistance, struggling against authoritarianism in all its manifestations and mutually committed to the search for genuine empowerment." I can relate to this, on a good day. However, recently I have been wondering how closely these aspirations approximate to the emotional texture of our daily experience in institutional contexts; how they match up with the conversations we have when we cross paths in the brief overlap between classes and have time only to enquire of the exiting tutor how their own hour went, which is really a way of gathering the energies we will need to see us through the next.

Thinking about this, I have found myself returning to a particular scene from Maggie Nelson's *The Argonauts*. This book is about many things, most notably queer love and pregnancy, but what I have found perhaps most useful is its articulation of the sometimes weird ways in which identity knowledges track through institutions and are experienced by subjects at some remove from the activist traditions out of which they derive; as a *Guardian* reviewer writes, the book is a tribute to teachers from the perspective of a "student and young writer [who] was 'forged in the fire' of feminist and queer theory."[2] For me, one snippet of institutional drama stands out in particular. It concerns Nelson's memories of a college class taught by a professor of feminist theory, "Christina Crosby." "Christina" runs her classroom to a post-structuralist – dare I say – agenda, probing the possibilities and limits of resistance in a Foucauldian universe. In other words, she is committed to her queer feminism as both a universalizing discourse and a minoritarian one that she dramatizes in her personal presence – Nelson remembers her as "radiant and elegant and butch, not stone and not soft," a woman who had "spent a lifetime complicating and deconstructing identity and teaching others to do the same."[3]

However, this teacher's principled refusal to disclose her identity provokes an unanticipated reaction in her students. Notwithstanding its abstract potential for radicalism, this teacher's penchant for post-structuralism does not by virtue of content overturn the structurally enforced power relations of the classroom. Nelson recalls how, rather than inspiring through example, "Christina" drove her students wild with desire to solve the mystery of her identity. They "wanted her to come out in a more public and coherent fashion" and they were frustrated when she wouldn't.[4] Indeed, from the student perspective, her position apparently feels frustrating and withholding

[2] Paul Laity, "Maggie Nelson Interview: 'People Write to Me to Let Me Know That, in Case I Missed It, There Are Only Two Genders'," *The Guardian*, 30 Oct. 2019, at www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/02/books-interview-maggie-nelson-genders.

[3] Maggie Nelson, *The Argonauts* (Minneapolis: Greywolf Press, 2015), 58.

[4] Ibid., 59.

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by virtue of the institutionally sanctioned position from which she articulates it. As Gerald Graff has pointed out, the institution and professionalization are "not neutral principles of organization, but agents that transform the cultural and literary-critical 'isms' fed into them, often to the point of subverting their original purpose, or so deflecting them that they become unrecognizable to outsiders."[5] The truth of this capacity for distortion is brought to the fore, Nelson later learns, when one of "Christina's" groups stages a coup:

> They were frustrated by the poststructuralist ethos of her teaching. They were tired of dismantling identities, tired of hearing that the most resistance one can muster in a Foucauldian universe was to work the trap one was inevitably in. So they staged a walkout and held a class in a private setting, to which they invited Christina as a guest. When people arrived, Christina told me, a student handed everyone an index card and asked them to write "how they identified" on it, then pin it to their lapel. Christina was mortified … she'd spent a lifetime complicating and deconstructing identity and teaching others to do the same, and now, as if in a tier of hell, she was being handed an index card and a Sharpie and being told to squeeze a Homeric epithet onto it. Defeated, she wrote "Lover of Babe." (Babe was her dog, a mischievous white lab.)[6]

For me, this anecdote is so squeam-inducing because of how perfectly it exemplifies Graff's warning that when it comes to institutions "what goes in is not necessarily what comes out."[7] On one level, "Christina's" reaction pertains to a quite relatable and basic mortification: her teaching has evidently failed. However, I am not convinced that the author wants us to interpret this occurrence only through this lens; when Nelson heard this story, recognizing herself, she "cringed all over – for the students mostly." It is not that the students fail to take proper note of the curriculum and that "Christina" would have been successful had she only explained it better or repeated it more forcefully; passionately resisting the teacher's will, the students seek its opposite and in doing so unknowingly reinstall a cultural-feminist consciousness-raising session which queer theory had sought to learn from and define itself against as an alternative. Ironically, here radical knowledge is not just distorted by the process of feeding it through the institution, but reversed.

This scene takes to the extreme the kinds of reversal that often happen on too subtle a level to be fully perceptible. I find it useful for this reason. Like many oppositional instructors, "Christina" comes to class with an agenda in the form of a commitment to critical practice as a means of justice, born out of wisdom accrued through lived experience of oppression and a desire to inculcate habits that would not repeat these systems. However, as Boyd writes, "as much as we might try to destabilize traditional lines of authority," the purity of our classroom ambitions will not prevent the fact that classrooms of today bear more than a passing structural resemblance to the hierarchies of

[5] Gerald Graff, *Professing Literature: An Institutional History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 5. [6] Nelson, 59. [7] Graff, 5.

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their conservative forebears. Specifically, he warns that while the teacher has an agenda, as so many committed practitioners do, she will continue to generate resistance; instructors, by their position and authority to bestow grades, "continue to possess a power that inevitably must be resisted by some (perhaps even all?) students in one form or another."[8]

I am struck by the deep reservoir of patience that we can presume "Christina" has to draw upon to sit through this class. We know that she was "mortified" and "defeated" but that, despite it representing "a tier of hell," she takes up their invitation to stay as a guest. We only know her shame vicariously, though – through Nelson, one of her students. The inaccessibility of "Christina's" interior state emphasizes the extent to which she draws on teacherly patience to get through, bracketing any emotional world and appropriately centring the student perspective. Told secondhand, "Christina's" perspective does not exist in any form separately from her students. Obviously, force could have pulled the class back into line. However, as Lauren Berlant has noted, "the academic queer/feminist project holds a promise of a teacher who is infinitely patient, available and confident in her knowledge, an intellectual and sexual role model."[9] In other words, the feminist teacher is obligated to *be there for the students*. Moreover, as this scene indicates, for all that queer pedagogy cannot help but commit to the transmission of minoritarian counterthought in a world notoriously hostile to its existence, it is nevertheless in equal measures allergic to the reproductive logic that would want to guarantee the smooth transition of knowledge between point A and point B. In this case, the accumulation of contradictory obligations and expectations leaves the teacher caught in a double bind, unable to shut down the class but unable to wholeheartedly participate.

I have found this scene's complex network of affect helpful for thinking through the emotional labour of teaching identity knowledges. It captures in miniature how vulnerable to burnout politically engaged faculty can be in the face of having to live up to the expectation of a worthy feminist teacher who is infinitely patient and connected with her class in the joint aspiration for social change. In the context of these pressures and obligations, de-idealized classroom scenes like the above can provide a welcome counterdiscourse. I have found myself quite addicted to collecting scenes of this kind. Autotheory and intellectual memoirs provide a treasure trove of examples. If you spend an afternoon pulling out books from the appropriate shelf in the UCL

[8] Boyd, 591.

[9] Lauren Berlant, "Feminism and the Institutions of Intimacy," in E. Anne Kaplan and George Levine, eds., *The Politics of Research* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 143–61, 147.

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Institute of Education Library, you'll find that more often than not teaching handbooks open with a paragraph detailing an excruciating scene of just this kind: the author is pictured at a former point in her career, mid-realization that her expectations for classroom unity fall bruisingly short of the reality with which she finds herself so starkly confronted. However, introductions to these pedagogy handbooks tend to skip on from these low points to explain how the author went about acclimatizing to more realistic expectations, while dispensing with agendas set out in advance, to become the kind of individual who now has a wealth of pedagogic wisdom to impart. This can pass over the process of acclimatization a little too quickly for my liking, unable to actually account for the practicalities of adjusting expectations if we happen to be lucky enough to teach content which is central to our sense of purpose and aspirations for social change.

As Robyn Wiegman has pointed out, it is not that identity knowledges are entirely different from other domains, but they "invest so much in making explicit what other fields do not explicitly name by framing their modes and manners of analysis as world-building engagements aimed at social change."[10] In other words, they are animated by powerful political desires, often attracting subjects who are "willing to stake the world, including its very future, on interpretation; and who find both pleasure and despair in what words do."[11] As I have not yet myself mastered the art of coming to class with neither expectation nor agenda, my catalogue of disillusioned anecdotes acts as reassurance that mimicry is not necessarily something to aspire to if and when it represents merely the most conflict-free way for a student to get through an education. Knowing this has enabled me to develop a stronger muscle for tolerating that rise of frustration, which resurfaces with something of an inevitability, when I sense that my lesson plans are about to be derailed by the familiar face of student resistance, which, I have to remind myself, is probably not in the grander scheme of things a terrible thing.

University of Sussex KATHERINE PARKER-HAY

ENTHUSIASM AND DIFFICULTY: TEACHING POPULAR SUBJECTS IN AMERICAN STUDIES. THE CASE OF BEYONCÉ

What might be some of the difficulties of enthusiasm when teaching a subject like American studies? As with any subject, there is the difficulty of eliciting

[10] Robyn Wiegman, *Object Lessons* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 4.
[11] Ibid., 306.

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and communicating enthusiasm; of generating and sustaining engagement, especially with challenging texts or topics; of fostering trust, *esprit de corps*, and creative risk taking. But we might also consider alongside this the difficulty caused by enthusiasm itself: its potential to block criticality, constrain deeper reflection, or prohibit full evaluation of a given topic. This is especially an issue for American studies, where the enduring global dominance of US popular culture and social discourses means that students are frequently asked to reengage texts (in the broadest sense) that they have first encountered outside academic discourses – from *The Great Gatsby*, to Disney, to #BlackLivesMatter. Their preexisting familiarity with and enthusiasm for such texts mean that scholarly frameworks are often mediated – to a more pronounced degree than in many disciplines – by the students' own subjective feelings, passions, preferences, and cultural understandings.

A figure like Beyoncé provides an especially strong example of this. When I've led seminars on Beyoncé, in the contexts of both musical history and cultural studies in general, students' personal enthusiasm typically defined, and even limited, the scope of the conversation. Many students self-identified as fans and treated Beyoncé with especial awe and reverence, explicitly defining her as an "icon" rather than simply a musician, celebrity, or star, and framing both her musical and social-media output as "culture-defining." Particular praise was directed toward Beyoncé's strident performance at the 2016 Super Bowl half-time show, where, as described by CNN reporter Deena Zaru, Beyoncé (re)employed the iconicity of African American protests past: "Beyoncé's back-up dancers were dressed in all black, with black berets and afros – reminiscent of the way members of the Black Panther Party dressed in the 1960s. And Beyoncé donned a bandolier of bullets, similar to one famously worn by Michael Jackson during his 1993 world tour."[1] Many students proved highly enthusiastic about Beyoncé's ability to make a bold visual statement which they felt spoke to the prevailing zeitgeist of #BlackLivesMatter, the NFL anthem protests, and contemporary feminist movements.

My rationale in assigning Beyoncé as a text was to present her as a highly constructed and curated "star project" which students might profitably deconstruct through critical analysis.[2] Her Super Bowl performance in particular – with its qualities "reminiscent," "similar," and "famous" – seemed, to me, to constitute a simulation of African American protest traditions and tropes

[1] Deena Zaru, "Beyonce Gets Political at Super Bowl, Pays Tribute to 'Black Lives Matter'," *CNN Politics*, 7 Aug. 2017, at https://edition.cnn.com/2016/02/08/politics/beyonce-super-bowl-black-lives-matter/index.html, accessed 5 July 2019.

[2] Phoebe Macrossan, "Intimacy, Authenticity and 'Worlding' in Beyoncé's Star Project," in Stephen Loy, Julie Richwood, and Samantha Bennett, eds., *Popular Music, Stars, and Stardom* (Acton, ACT: Australian National University Press, 2018), 137–52.

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rather than an act of protest in and of itself, and thereby to present a useful textual space for exploring various cultural reception frameworks such as myth, simulation, and celebrity. But for the most part, the students resisted such an invitation to deconstruction, instead choosing to read her self-presentation as both empowering and self-explanatory, as transcending critical analysis.

As a vehicle to help students develop analytic skills, then, Beyoncé proved less effective than I had hoped. As is often the case with misfires in teaching, however, exploring the reasons for this failure has proved illuminating. The reluctance of students to critically analyse a subject of fandom suggests difficulties in meaningfully distinguishing between scholarly critique and the everyday sense of criticism as censorious fault finding. From this perspective, critical reading can seem like a process designed to diminish, rather than embrace, any preexisting enthusiasm. This, in turn, reveals something interesting about the holistic nature of enthusiasm, in contrast to the detail-oriented, deconstructive approach of critical reading, which typically highlights and accentuates features and flaws. But perhaps most significantly, the clear tension between enthusiasm and criticism here casts interesting light on the endurance within academia of historically and ideologically rooted clashes between feeling and reason.

There is a clear institutional favouring of criticality over enthusiasm – how often does "enthusiasm" appear as an explicit, positive quality on learning outcomes or marking criteria, for example? By exclusively valuing criticality, higher education implicitly takes a side in debates that date back at least to Plato, but which became particularly foregrounded in Western thought as a point of dispute between Enlightenment and Romantic ideologies.[3] Advocates of critical reasoning, such as John Locke, dismissed enthusiasm as rising "from the Conceits of a warmed and over-weening Brain"; champions of illumination through inspiration, such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, countered, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm."[4] "Criticality" and "enthusiasm" seem neatly polarized here: the former aligned with rationality and objectivity of knowledge, the latter with feeling and subjectivity of experience and action. But such ideas cannot remain abstract; they gain currency

[3] For a celebrated example see discussions of William Blake's annotations of Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses* in Michael Ferber, *The Social Vision of William Blake* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 29; or John Mee, *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation: Poetics and the Policing of Culture in the Romantic Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 257.

[4] John Locke, "Chapter XIX: Of Enthusiasm," in Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), ed. Pauline Phemster (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 1–463, 452; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Circles" (1841), in *The Essential Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Brooks Atkinson (New York: Modern Library, 2000), 252–62, 262.

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and meaning by their influence on social and political discourse. The historian John Mac Kilgore argues that, in the early years of the American Republic,

> the "enthusiast" described any person who preached a democratic authority invested in the people or the individual rather than in the institutional mediations of government or church, and who claimed the right … to throw off or resist governments and laws when they fail to affirm said authority.[5]

Enthusiasm was, in this context, the mark of "spiritual freedom over institutional form."[6] This notion resonates in our own time, in Obama's "audacity of hope" or Trump's call to "Make America great again." Further, the temporal framing in both cases is significant. While criticality is a useful tool for measuring the past, enthusiasm enlivens the present moment and creates, as sociologist Cornel Sandvoss argues, "expectations of *future* political action."[7]

This historical and political framing complicates easy dichotomies of criticality and enthusiasm, but thereby also clarifies the disparity between critical and enthusiastic readings of Beyoncé that emerged in my seminars. Criticality, because it tends towards retrospective considerations, can too easily overlook effects – specifically, the affective capacity of enthusiasm to engage and inspire. While Beyoncé's Super Bowl performance arguably doesn't present much coherent institutional *critique*, it can evidently be read enthusiastically as a forceful institutional *challenge* – and one that, crucially, relies on a participatory response. By overlooking the integral role of reception in the coproduction of a cultural text, I risked undervaluing the agency and impact of the students' enthusiasm in favour of solely privileging criticality.

A reevaluation of student enthusiasm thus offers significant possibilities for recalibrating the prevailing inequality between criticality and enthusiasm in academia. While blunt enthusiasm may sometimes narrow discourse, it can equally ensure its enduring openness. It can help shift focus away from narrowly defined outcomes and rubrics, in a system that seems increasingly to value final products – summative work, graduations and graduate prospects, research "outputs" – above the developmental process of learning. It can also provide a vital, revitalizing means of circulating new ideas into the classroom, pushing against the overly demarcated boundaries of the curriculum in moments when, as Francesco Ventrella puts it, "the student wishes to learn what their teachers do not know," to express "what is not yet sayable about

[5] John Mac Kilgore, *Mania for Freedom: American Literatures of Enthusiasm from the Revolution to the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016), 5.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Cornel Sandvoss, "Enthusiasm, Trust and Its Erosion in Mediated Politics: On Fans of Obama and the Liberal Democrats," *European Journal of Communication*, 27, 1 (2012), 68–81, 69.

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what is currently visible, … articulating common sense against the stultification of teaching."[8] Enthusiasm allows students to articulate an emotional care, as well as an intellectual curiosity, for their subject; moreover, with the right framing, it can also help them to fully appreciate how discourses exist in dynamic dialogue between the classroom and the wider world.

The difficulties of enthusiasm, then, are both structural and perceptual. To temper the challenges of enthusiasm and unlock its potential as a mode of pedagogical engagement, we need to change institutional perceptions of enthusiasm as being inherently uncritical and unacademic, while also tempering student suspicions of criticality as the death of enthusiasm. And one particular way might be through clearer framings of deconstruction as an exploration of the process of construction, rather than as a process of dismantling; of critical analysis as a pursuit of understanding that can deepen, rather than dispel, enthusiasm.

University of East Anglia EDWARD CLOUGH

THE MERITS OF HONESTY AND POLITICIZING THE PAST: TEACHING THE AMERICAN WEST ON THE THRESHOLD OF CLIMATE CATASTROPHE

During the winter of 1871 and 1872 I engaged in the handling of Texas cattle in the semi-arid belt of Kansas. I had provided no food for my stock. I knew that cattle could and did winter on the plains far north and west of where I was; but I did not know that there was a difference in the nutritious qualities of the different prairie grasses. I did not understand the peculiarities of the climate of the semi-arid belt, nor the effects of rain falling on dead grass. Stupid me, of course, but I had plenty of company.[1]

When I recently began to teach a course on the nineteenth-century history of the American West, city buses were carrying adverts for the cowboy-themed video game *Red Dead Redemption 2*. Even while the cultural reference points of my own youth slip inexorably beyond the recognition of my students, the western genre clearly still has traction even for them. But what I learned from actually teaching the course was that Western history's most compelling significance might lie less in the cultural fantasies of the twentieth century than

[8] Francesco Ventrella, "Enthusiasm," *Parallax*, 17, 2 (2011), 1–7, 6.

[1] Frank Wilkeson, "Cattle-Raising on the Great Plains," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, 72 (1886), 788–95, 789. I first came to Wilkeson's essay via Richard White, *Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011).

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in the feverish nightmares of the twenty-first. As the class and I read through and talked over accounts of desperate migrant caravans, existential struggles for land and identity, and the disruptive transformation of ecology and society, the echoes from our own age of climate catastrophe grew more and more difficult to ignore. By the end of the course six months later, it was hard to shake the disquieting sense that, in our efforts to understand the way systems and choices interacted with a fragile and deadly environment, we had learned something that we might actually need in our own lifetimes.

Frank Wilkeson wrote of that winter in Kansas that "the cruelties of the business of starving cattle to death were vividly impressed on me."[2] His account confronted readers with a sense of disillusionment about the role of humans and their systems in the natural world: a feeling I think many of us share today. When I teach history I want to build on that connection. In her book *Legacy of Conquest*, Patricia Limerick deflates the mythic grandeur of the American West by asking us to think of it as a place first and foremost, not as a process or a time. While Frederick Jackson Turner's famous essay began with a pronouncement of the end of the frontier, Limerick reminds us that place has no ending.[3] Still, what I want for my own students transcends place. I want to return to processes that link the nineteenth-century West to our own lives, wherever we end up living them. Let me give three quick examples – extraction, displacement, and differentiation.

Extraction. The story of white people's interaction with the West begins not with settlement, development, or even exploration, but with the extraction of resources for the market. From the fur trade to the bison, to the mining of minerals and the drilling of oil, the extractive economy flourished in the West not just because of the actual presence of those resources, but because of its peripheral relation to the political and social core of the capitalist world system. Peripherality, which appeared to white people at the time in the guise of wilderness, created the conditions for the ruthless exploitation of nature *and* of human labour. It allowed for something crucial to colonial capitalism: the spatial separation between the destructive process of extraction and the creative process of accumulation.[4] You can see the same thing in the

[2] Wilkeson, 789.

[3] Patricia Limerick, *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987); Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1921), 1–38.

[4] Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1983); David Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1982). The great exemplar of this spatial approach to capitalism in western history is William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1991).

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global journey of the cobalt in your mobile phone from a mine in Congo, to a factory in China, to your pocket in the UK.

Displacement. The periphery, of course, was not a natural wilderness but a political project accomplished through the violence of dispossession and genocide.[5] In order to turn land into sites of extraction, colonial states and their associated corporate interests had to displace people who already lived with that land and bring in new people who would labour on it. Mobility – coerced and incentivized as well as apparently free – is one of the great motifs in our representations of the West. Where wagon trains and railroad tracks are made to symbolize the painful, heroic conquest of nature in all its vastness, we can also see mass mobility as an effective way of conquering *people*. Breaking people's rootedness in place, in home, need not destroy community relationships, but it's a good starting point for doing so.[6] Think of the migrant workers on Dubai's construction sites, or on the strawberry fields of Kent, who are there precisely because they can be exploited so much more efficiently than local citizens.

Differentiation. The process of moving people around the West in order to extract resources and accumulate means of production was also, necessarily, a process of differentiation between kinds of people. It relied on reproducing categories like Indian and coolie, as well as prospector and homesteader, categories that identified different relationships between people, the space around them, and the state. The West helped shape the ideology of race in the United States just as much as the South did, and in at least as many subtle and complicated transmutations.[7] Those racial and social categories, in turn, facilitated the legal and economic systems of expropriation, exploitation, and displacement that underpinned capitalist development in the United States and far beyond. In our own time we need not look far for policy and rhetoric aimed at separating Brits from foreigners, economic migrants from asylum seekers, or hardworking families from work-shy scroungers – but only at times, and in ways, that best justify exclusion or exploitation.

[5] To begin discussions of this idea in the classroom, I have been using Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2014); and Walter Hixson, *American Settler Colonialism: A History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[6] For one example of such a process and its limits see Gregory Smithers, *The Cherokee Diaspora: An Indigenous History of Migration, Resettlement, and Identity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

[7] Richard White, "Race Relations in the American West," *American Quarterly,* 38, 3 (1986), 396–416; Limerick, 259–92.

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It will be clear that I think teaching history is an unavoidably political task. I am not interested in studying the past for its own sake. What I want to do is use the past as a crowbar to open up the mechanisms of the present. But a crowbar is an honest tool – there's no disguising it as something else – and that is something I want to think carefully about. Honesty is exactly what many of the children and adults protesting with Extinction Rebellion and the Climate Strike movement are asking for as well: honesty from governments, from media, and I suppose also from institutions of higher learning, about the likely futures of our planet and the probable effects of how our world currently works. Honesty is just what many migrant people did not get when they decided to make their way west in the mid-nineteenth century, into conditions and situations of which they had almost no understanding – fortified with an unhealthy dose of American optimism. "Stupid me, of course, but I had plenty of company." Native peoples got less honesty than anyone, as broken treaty after broken treaty tells us. How can we be honest with our students about what we're doing as historians and teachers? How can we be honest with ourselves?

Perhaps asking those questions also has some bearing on the way we think about climate catastrophe and its relation to our own lives. When we're confronted with the possibility that life as we know it – life as colonial capitalism has created it, with accessible air travel, streaming prestige television, a secure food supply, and so on – might not last another forty years, and we might have to live in quite a different way if we're going to live at all; when we're confronted with that possibility, what does teaching and writing history start to look like? I do not think this is so much a question of "what else should we do?" than it is one of "how do we do this in the best way we can for the situation we find ourselves in?" Perhaps one thing we can do – one thing I can do – is tell more stories that are not just about systemic causes, but about how people coped with and responded to them, made them part of an ongoing history.[8] But the least we can do, I think, is to think seriously and talk openly about how this all matters.

Within our own lifetimes, we may or may not need to know more about the nutritious qualities of the different prairie grasses and the peculiarities of the climate of the semi-arid belt, as Frank Wilkeson discovered on the Kansas range 150 years ago. But if we are going to have any hope, we and our students will need to confront climate catastrophe – not just practically, but intellectually and emotionally. As teachers and historians, we have trained and

[8] Nick Estes, *Our History Is the Future* (London: Verso, 2019); Jeffrey Ostler, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019).

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equipped ourselves to reproduce a language of critical, relational analysis that is both sensitive to what is intimately human, and capacious enough to draw, with a broad brush, systems on a global scale. I know there are many millionaires who would rather put their money in a luxury survival bunker. For the rest of us, it seems just possible that the best place to survive this thing will be the classroom.

University of Birmingham TOM CUTTERHAM

IMAGINING COMPARATIVE RACIALIZATION: TEACHING RACE, REPARATIONS AND INTERRACIAL JUSTICE

Since the late 1990s, the alleged Age of Apology, studies of reparations movements have become increasingly important in analyzing the legacy of catastrophic crimes against humanity such as the Shoah and apartheid. This scholarship responded to the decade's increasing numbers of truth commissions, most famously the Truth and Reconciliation Committee in post-apartheid South Africa and the plethora of official and unofficial apologies by heads of state for their nation's past wrongs: those of Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand for their genocide of indigenous populations and President Clinton's unofficial apology for slavery while touring Ghana in 1997. What will the first two decades of the new millennium be known as? We can think of the Foreign Claims Act, instituted in 2003, that compensates families of Iraqi civilians who have been killed in Iraq as collateral damage.[1] Or perhaps the $7 billion paid to the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, each award assessed based on the individual's lifetime earnings.[2] Or even, perhaps, the symbolic payments made more recently to the victim's families in the Virginia Tech shootings and the BP Deepwater Horizon Disaster Victim Compensation Fund.[3]

I discuss here my course on comparative reparations movements that I have taught in various iterations and with different student populations across the United States. Although this course was developed at University of California, Los Angeles in the early 2000s, which had several well-funded, growing ethnic-studies centers and offered a great selection of courses on race, I have found teaching about comparative reparations movements to be immensely

[1] Azmat Khan and Anand Gopal, "The Uncounted," *New York Times*, 16 Nov. 2017.
[2] Howard Witt, "Torment Lingers in OK City," *Chicago Tribune*, 17 April 2015.
[3] Roger Parloff, "From 9/11 to Orlando, Ken Feinberg's Alter Ego in Compensating Victims," *New York Times*, 3 June 2017.

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popular and satisfying for students wherever I teach as a way of merging the study of literature and culture with the study of political activism. What does one *do* once one has learned to recognize race, racial inequality and injustice? What do words do in materially changing the world around us? And by extension, what kind of impact does the literary and visual imagination have on creating new ways of conceiving justice?

This course examines the way words are used to attempt to heal deep political, economic and social rifts in US society, especially over issues of racial justice and historical racism. Together we trace the increasing emergence of formal apologies and monetary reparations in US politics. How do artists and writers creatively and imaginatively attempt to resolve long-standing political, social, and economic injuries through their art and thus lay the foundation for interracial justice? We analyze how these political developments are reflected in contemporary American literature and culture and how these cultural texts actually spur political consciousness and reparations: how tensions are resolved or reconciled, or even remain marginal and overlooked. This course considers the interconnected, present-day reparations discussions of past historical injustices such as the Holocaust, Japanese American internment, slavery, theft of Native American lands and resources, and World War II sex slavery (so-called "comfort women"). With novels, short stories, poetry, lyrics, children's books, plays and essays, students examine how authors construct arguments, what artists and writers convey through their visual and textual works, and the ramifications and influence of these texts on American society and global movements for reparations.

This content, applied to the strategy of comparing reparations movements, has proven to be an effective means of explaining how race is constructed through interracial comparison, racial hierarchization, and racial triangulation – for example, how the category of "Asian American" depends on constructions of white, black, Latinx and Native American as discrete groups.[4] The course ruminates on what interracial justice might look like. As critical race scholar Eric Yamamoto has posited, it entails the

> hard acknowledgment of the historical and contemporary ways in which racial groups harm one another, along with affirmative efforts to redress justice grievances and rearticulate and restructure present-day relations. So conceived, interracial justice is often integral to building (or rebuilding) relationships among communities of color – the establishment of "right relationships, the healing of broken relationships."[5]

[4] See Lynn Mie Itagaki, *Civil Racism: The 1992 Los Angeles Rebellion and the Crisis of Racial Burnout* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

[5] Eric K. Yamamoto, *Interracial Justice* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 9–10, quoting S. E. Merry and N. A. Milner, eds., *The Possibility of Popular Justice: A Case Study of American Community Mediation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993).

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I developed this course to address the institutional contexts of teaching at institutions with very small numbers of Asian American students and with student populations generally unfamiliar with diverse Asian American communities and histories. Since 2004, I have taught in regions that have been perceived as off the map of Asian America except as footnotes to its history: the Rocky Mountain West and the Mid-west. Currently, I am teaching at the University of Missouri in Columbia, where only 2.3 percent of its student population are Asian Americans. I have previously taught at the Ohio State University in Columbus, and, although it is one of the largest state universities in the nation with 56,000 students, this huge university boasts only a 5 percent population of Asian American students, or 3,000. Before that, I taught at the University of Montana, where Asian Americans comprised only 1.5 percent of the student population, actually double the percentage of Asian Americans residing in the state.

My multiracial teaching practices have developed through my own experiences with teaching Asian American studies in a way that activates the interest and knowledge students might already have of Jewish history, Nazi death camps or African American literature and culture. I also connect each of my courses to the faculty expertise and research strengths in each teaching environment to build student interest: for example, in indigenous literatures and cultures while I was teaching at the University of Montana with its vibrant Department of Native American studies.

I provide flexible modules for the course. At UCLA I could teach a more Asian American-centric course that focussed on the reparations movements for Japanese American "internment" camps, World War II sex slavery, Asian settler colonialism in Hawaii, and Korean immigrant storeowners in the 1992 Los Angeles "riots." On campuses with student populations more unfamiliar with Asian American history and culture and perhaps hesitant to enroll in an exclusively Asian American studies class, I instead build the syllabus around Japanese American World War II concentration camps and how the successful redress movement renewed interest in other reparations movements, such as those for slavery and Jim Crow. Yamamoto identifies the political importance of Japanese American grassroots activists to other US reparations movements, due to their unprecedented success in pushing for the 1988 Civil Liberties Act: "The Japanese Americans' redress movement has become a model for some African American reparations activists. 'Everybody thought it was a joke for years,' said Raymond Jenkins, and 'when the Japanese got $20,000 each, then they stopped laughing.'"[6]

[6] Yamamoto, 56.

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The symbolic payments of $20,000, equal disbursements to living survivors of the US concentration camps, have inspired and set precedents for other forms of restitution. I follow a module on World War II concentration camps with one on former residents of Rosewood, Florida – survivors of the 1923 massacre were able to successfully receive reparations in 1993 from the Florida State Legislature for the loss of their property in the race riot.[7] As another example, Kenneth Feinberg, special master to the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, repeatedly criticized the way in which the funds were disbursed based on income, with the Congressional guidelines ranging from $250,000 to $6 million, suggesting that one's life was only valued by one's earnings.[8] Feinberg advocated instead for equal payments to each of the grieving families, a policy he superintended in the equal symbolic payments made to each of the families of those killed or injured in the Virginia Tech shootings.[9]

Obviously, such ethical questions invoke larger debates about the value of life and material possessions. I ask my students, why do some movements and their client populations receive monetary restitution, while others don't? Why do some receive symbolic payments and others a sliding scale based on other criteria such as lifetime earnings or officially documented property lost? Why are Japanese Americans considered deserving recipients of equal symbolic payments and yet descendants of enslaved persons are not? At the beginning of our discussions, for example, students invariably resist the possibility of monetary reparations for slavery, when most of the prominent movements advocate not individual disbursements, but the establishment of a fact-finding Congressional commission into the legacy of slavery, and later a scholarship fund.[10]

These difficult questions of value, and indeed of merit, are closely tied to "racial formations," in Michael Omi and Howard Winant's term, or "racial fabrications," in Ian Haney Lopez's.[11] What studies of comparative reparations show is that these formations and fabrications are based on assessments of value in relation to other racial groups. Racial hierarchies emerge when some groups' claims of life, liberty, and property stolen are devalued, while others'

[7] Adam Yeomans, "Florida Pays Survivors of a 1923 Racist Attack," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 Feb. 1995. [8] Lisa Belkin, "Just Money," *New York Times*, 7 Dec. 2002. [9] Parloff.

[10] Adeel Hassan and Jack Healy, "America Has Tried Reparations Before. Here Is How It Went," *New York Times*, 19 June 2019.

[11] Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the US*, 3rd edn (New York: Routledge, 2014); Ian F. Haney Lopez, "The Social Construction of Race: Some Observations on Illusion, Fabrication, and Choice," *Harvard Civil Rights–Civil Liberties Law Review*, 1 (1994), 1–62.

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injuries are given the political operational space to be successfully, but more often inadequately, addressed and repaired.

This pedagogical project has implications for comparative race studies in relation to the subject position of Asian Americans as passive spectators to racial injuries suffered by other groups. Perceived as the model minority, Asian Americans are alternately dismissed and vilified as bystanders to the struggles between blacks and whites or as sojourners to the more long-standing claims on America held by other racial groups. Thus Asian Americans are not constructed as agents of history, of politics, of culture. However, by examining comparative reparations movements, students begin to understand not only how Asian Americans are victims, bystanders *and* perpetrators of racial injustices, but also how racialization works, how legal assessments of value through reparations movements modify racial identities, and how our understanding of these movements expands and constricts the democratic projects within the US and beyond.

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