A Critical Yoga Studies Approach to Grappling with Race: Introducing “Racial Tourism,” “Racial Mobilities,” and “Justice Storytelling” in the Context of Racial Fraud in the Academy

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Abstract: In this Critical Yoga Studies (CYS) examination, I introduce terms, “racial tourism,” and “racial mobility,” and a method, “justice storytelling.” These terms and this method are poised to be used strategically in the quest to grapple with race and racial fraud in the academy. Racial fraud in the academy is exemplified by, but not limited to, infamous scholars such as Rachel Dolezal, Jessica Krug, Andrea Smith, Elizabeth Warren, and BethAnn McLaughlin. The terms “racial mobility” and “racial tourism,” intentionally create space in which to notice and assess racial fraud. In establishing CYS, I aim to provide epistemic space in which to notice and assess the ongoing project of racial categorizations in order to quell disorientation that results from harm. I add these terms to the basket of more highly circulating terms (such as “cultural appropriation,” and “identity fraud”) used to describe and respond to: (1) the specific phenomenon of white scholars engaging in racial fraud, and (2) the broader experience of living with and within inseparable systems of race, racial categorizations, and racism in the ivory tower. CYS is grounded in legal scholarship and critical race theory. I build on “legal storytelling” in an experimental, poetic form I call, “justice storytelling,” which enables healing. I find the terms I introduce, “racial tourism” and “racial mobility,” reveal a state of movement at the essence of the racial takings and accumulation of racial value enacted by white scholars committed to racial appropriation and fraudulently coding as Black, brown, and Indigenous in the academy.

Keywords: racial justice; prison abolition; racial tourism; academic women of color; critical race theory; critical yoga studies; justice storytelling; legal storytelling; racial mobilities; mobilities; George Floyd; Black Lives Matter; digital activism; Chauvin

1. Introduction: Where, in Race, Is Home?

How do we come to believe in race, and when we do, what stories do we engage with? How can we deploy language to help us navigate this confusing and violent terrain called race? In this article, I gather buried terms, “racial tourism,” and “racial mobility,” and add these to the basket of highly circulating terms (such as “cultural appropriation” and “identity fraud”) used to describe and respond to: (1) the specific phenomenon of Blackface in the academy (and redface, yellowface, and brownface), and (2) the broader experience of living with and within inseparable systems of race, racial categorizations, and racism in the ivory tower.

Specifically, I find “racial tourism” and “racial mobility” both reveal a state of movement at the essence of the racial takings and accumulation of racial value exhibited by white scholars committed to racial appropriation and fraudulently coding as Black, brown, and Indigenous. These terms allow for a noticing of the movement along the racial spectra—a noticing that precedes and can bolster the ethical, moral, and legal judgments of the
movement as being, for example, an immoral taking. This phenomenon is exemplified by, but not limited to, prominent scholars such as Jessica Krug, Andrea Smith (Shorter 2015), Elizabeth Warren, BethAnn McLaughlin, and less prominent scholars such as Rachel Dolezal. Broadly, “racial mobility” and “racial tourism” provide an essential framework through which to pause the cycle of harm (exposures of racial fraud) and reaction (outrage, condemnation) and make space to notice, witness, and simply be (“this is happening”). These terms address the jarring, chaotic experience of being a scholar living with racial categories, racism, and race while in the academy.

The basket of terms currently in circulation for this “Dolezal” phenomenon includes: “passing,” “racial fraud,” “identity fraud,” “ethnic fraud,” “cultural appropriation,” “Blackface,” “red face,” “yellow face,” “brown face,” “blackfishing,” “blaccent,” and the critically rejected term, “transracial.” I engage the imagination to offer additional terms for scholars of race, Critical Yoga Studies, and justice—terms such as: hauntings, ghostings, abductions, eliminations, zombie occupations, and settlements. There are many terms to consider for the justice storyteller keen on expressing the harm enacted through fraudulent racial mobilities on campuses. In this article, I lift up two such terms: “racial tourism,” and “racial mobilities.”

I also introduce a justice studies method and narrative practice of “justice storytelling.” As a founding Critical Yoga Studies legal scholar and critical race theorist, I build on the “legal storytelling” method in an experimental, poetic form, which I call “justice storytelling.” In this article, I define the term “justice storytelling,” in alignment with but distinguished from “legal storytelling” and “social justice storytelling.” I use “justice storytelling” to express the individual impact of a white scholar impersonating, accumulating value from, and eliminating a young, Native scholar—as BethAnn McLaughlin did via the social media platform Twitter.

In introducing these terms and method, I continue to establish Critical Yoga Studies (CYS), a field that uses “yoga” as a jump-off site to consider issues of race, gender, colonialism, technology and new media, culture, and global capitalism (Singh 2019). Scholarship, teaching, and scholarly service are essential components of yoga (Singh 2019). CYS uses a “mobilities” framework to analyse movements and stillnesses in the accumulation and redistribution of power in and through yoga (Singh 2020). CYS re-establishes yoga as more than a class, more than a profitable, franchisable, physical practice or asana. The first CYS study triangulated three investigations in yoga to establish that yoga is used to further ongoing accumulations of power, including the following studies of, (1) yoga as U.S. law, (2) yoga as cinema, popular culture, social media; and (3) yoga as global capital (Singh 2019, Singh 2020). CYS anchors in indigenous studies and correspondingly values “positionality” as an essential component of the “step” of observation in the five-pronged scientific process.

(1) A Map of Guiding Questions for Critical Yoga Studies

I enter this study with a set of guiding questions for future Critical Yoga Studies investigations. These questions are designed to be a baton pass to scholars who seek to build upon the potential of these terms, “racial tourism,” “racial mobilities,” and “justice storytelling,” including the fields that contextualize them, such as CYS, mobilities studies, critical geography, justice studies, indigenous studies, and critical race theory (CRT). This CYS study on race in the academy is rooted in the “mobilities” framework, so these fundamental questions focus on the science of “where?” In the next segment, I begin to address this one thread—on “where”—of guiding questions that inform this study of race in the academy and foster future CYS studies of race and wellness.

The following questions provide a broad overview of the “mobilities” and spatial characteristics of the terms I introduce in this article designed to assist with experiencing and enduring race. The terms provide space to slow down, and simply notice that there is racial movement inherent in racial fraud in the academy that exists prior to and alongside the judgment and assessment of this movement as a harm and grave injustice. The questions illuminate where these terms can take us as we continue to map and navigate the
confounding and often fatal terrains of race, racism, and racializations. Ultimately, these questions help to mobilize these terms as tools we may use to clear ground between, as James Baldwin wrote, “what we would like to be, and what we actually are.” (Peck 2017).

Where?: Guiding Questions for Future Study on Race and Race in the Academy Using “Racial Mobilities,” “Racial Tourism,” and “Justice Storytelling”

- Where, in race, is home?
- From where does racial tourism originate?
- Where is its destination?
- According to what logic is this destination determined and reached?
- Where does the activity of racial tourism and racial fraud in academia live on the ever-evolving map of race? Sub-questions on academia:
  - Where do “diversity” performativity hires in academia lead the racial project?
  - Where can we apply pressure points to push back on racism in the academy, and the enabling of race in the academy?
  - Where does the responsibility of Duke Press lie for Krug and Smith, for example?
- Where does the racial tourism in academia phenomenon and the response to it live on the carceral spectrum?
  - Where is it working in service to the carceral?
  - What carceral purpose does this phenomenon and its response serve?
  - Where can our responses benefit from more emancipation, liberation, and healing?
- What do we do with the mounting evidence that race in the academy includes a putrid, rotting, haunting limb and presentation?
- Where does race intersect with enabling in the academy?
  - For example: the academy buoys race when it enables a Black/White binary through performative “diversity” hires of Black scholars—hires not met with equal effort to retain these scholars through safe racial experiences, quite the opposite in most cases.
  - As another example, race is uplifted and reinforced in the academy through prizes, payments, positions, fellowships, a glittering shower of life chances based on race. What impact does this have on racial tourism in the academy?
- Given the focus of this paper on the white appropriation of race in academia: Where does #stopasianhate efforts intersect with white dominated Sinology and Indology departments? Where do we begin to chip away at healing from the specific racialized and racist nature of epistemic violence of settler colonial and neoliberal institutions of learning?
- Where do we apply the frameworks of critical race theory now?
  - Where are Black Lives Matter movements absorbed into the accumulation of power and value for whiteness and settler colonialism?
  - Where do we go from the point at which we have space to notice how resistance movements to racial injustice are usurped and used to affirm, for example, police power over Black lives?
- Where do we focus when we focus on racial justice?
  - Where do racial justice strategies involving “brown,” “red,” and “yellow” people fit into a widely recognized, dominant black/white racial binary characterizing racial debates and definitions in the U.S.?
- Where do I live in relation to the law? Where do definitions of the law exist within me?
- Where do we process the experience of being racialized?
- Where would we be without race?
- Where can we create space to ask, what would a world without race look like (in an anti-“colorblind” way)?

(2) A Three-Headed Snake: Race, Racism, and Racializations are Inseparable and the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2020

In this set of guiding questions, I illuminate the soil upon which the terms and method I introduce here (“racial tourism,” “racial mobilities,” and “justice storytelling”), can grow to be of strategic use. I address one set of questions in this segment—Where do we apply the frameworks of critical race theory now?—to strengthen a foundational premise of this article, which is to affirm that race, racism, and racializations are inseparable. I argue that these terms are part of the necessary work of carving out space to imagine, what would a world without race look like?

I distinguish my premise and use of these terms from the racial “colorblindness” ideology, in that in colorblindness: (1) positionality is glaringly absent, that is, in “colorblindness” there is no accountability by the researcher-storyteller to the lenses through
which they view the research or storytelling process. (Holmes 2016); (2) embeddedness of race, racism, and racial categories is animated through the colorblindness ideology, which serves to fix and shore up these systems and their chaotic stories through “not seeing” race and therefore promoting the story that race is natural, objective, neutral, unchanging, unchangeable beyond the decision to be “blind” to “color;” and (3) race and settler colonialism are intertwined, ongoing, unfurling, chaotic structures without end or closure. The logic of “elimination of the native” is also evident in the process enacted by “colorblindness” in that this process shames and thereby silences stories of race by projecting blame onto these stories and witnessing. This blaming misidentifies stories of racism and racializations as the cause of racial violence, thereby obscuring racism, and aiding and abetting the shapeshifting processes of racial categorizations and ultimately, racial dominance.

The system of race came with commitments to racial hierarchies, and racism (Appiah 2020). Ultimately, the racial project is always incomplete (Wolfe 2016), this is a source of unending hope and exhaustive labor, cycling through harm and healing. All aspects of race in the academy are in constant combustion, ascribed with endless, treacherous layers, including breathless incentives, lethal distractions, and brutal punishments. Language cannot save us from race and its impacts, and certainly not the colonial and dominant one. However, language can help, and that is a guiding force behind my contributions in this article of “racial tourism,” “racial mobilities,” and “justice storytelling.” I seek to identify and uplift terms that are useful along the way as we live in and with race.

In an illuminating article in the Boston Review series on “Racial Identity & Racial Fraud,” philosophers Robin Dembrot and Dee Payton argue that “transracial” cannot be compared to “transgender,” because the former negates and interrupts potential channels of reparations due back from generations of racial oppression (Dembroff and Payton 2020). We need racial classifications to identify those who have been intergenerationally harmed by racism. The authors caution against essentialism in racial constructs—essentialism is the idea that race is determined by nature and the idea that there is a clear line and shape to race. The article calls for a corrective reorientation away from any essentialist take which legitimizes the distracting question of who is really black? While the article states that there is no clear line around any racial category, but concludes a moral line should be drawn for reasons unique to racial fraud and the injuries sustained by African Americans in the U.S. over time.

Crucially, readers are urged to check any leanings towards essentialism—a core belief that race is real and even valuable for all, which can blossom among the most hardcore adherents to “race is a social construct.” The authors say we need tools to distinguish those who have been intergenerationally impacted by racism. This, they write, allows us to identify transracial as a moral wrong.

In this article, I extend this rich discussion to argue that a by-product of the drift towards essentialism is the belief that somehow we can keep race and just do away with racism. This is wrong, keeping race is keeping racism (Wolfe 2016). This is a three-headed snake—race, racism, and racializations or racial categorizations (Brooks and McKail 2008). We cannot cut two heads away and expect the snake to live. Where would we keep race? In our bodies? No, it does not belong there, this has been established by studies that distinguish race from biology and human genetic make-up (Blackburn 2000; Clair and Denis 2015). While the need to navigate race is real, race is not natural, and neither are its methods and impacts. Ultimately, we are all racial tourists, wandering in a place we hope to learn about, with enough to navigate in relative safety despite mounting suffering all around. Each one of us is inescapably on a spectrum of racial mobility and stillness. Using justice storytelling, I aim to evoke these realities through a tale of universal law, moral code, racial occupation, and elimination (Wolfe 2006).

In this article, I introduce these terms not to push forward the erroneous idea that race is not “a thing,” but instead to carve out space for the imagination to root firmly, generatively in our toolboxes with which we gather the fortitude and cunning needed to
endure and defeat racial violence. I argue it is the responsibility of agents of racial justice to imagine, question, create space for noticing, assessing, feeling, and learning where we are confounded and confused by the disorienting, interlocked processes of race, racial categorizations, and racism. Where are our goals and understandings of race poisoned as the rivers are by unsustainable contradictions in our stories? Race may be endured, it may be celebrated, there may even be ways to celebrate and find freedom within its cages, but it remains true that it is not a system designed for liberation.

a. The George Floyd Justice and Policing Act of 2020: Where do we apply the frameworks of critical race theory now?

In the contemporary example, the rallying cries and platforms of Black Lives Matter and the Movement for Black Lives is a strong counter-narrative to majority stories that justify and absolve racist domination. In the months following the assassination of George Floyd, there was a rush to racial justice literature, but even with the reading, the posturing, the performativity, even with the co-signing, and even with the legal conviction of Derek Chauvin—there have been few significant shifts in power that signal a changing tide against racism. Critical Race Theory predicts that the U.S. colonial legal system will not be a source of system change and racial justice. With the premise firmly in place that race, racism, and racial categorizations are inextricably linked—I deploy a line of inquiry included in the guiding questions above. Where are Black Lives Matter movements absorbed into the accumulation of power and value for whiteness and settler colonialism? Where can we make space to notice how resistance movements to racial injustice are usurped and used to affirm, for example, police power over Black lives? What hidden racial justice strategies are revealed in that bold noticing?

The George Floyd Justice and Policing Act of 2020 (H.R. 7120) extends at least $750 million in funds to police departments, ostensibly for the purposes of self-investigation, which is but one sign that this is not an Act that responds to widespread demands for accountability and deep shifts to the inherently racialized nature of policing (Purnell 2021). The use of the George Floyd case and ensuing uprisings to siphon more money to police forces tells us that the story pattern identified by critical race theorists in that the ongoing absorption of resistance to racism continues to fulfill the predictions and affirm the findings of critical race theory. In an echo of U.S. settler-colonial, patriotic appropriation of civil rights wins and stories, the appropriation of the George Floyd movement (a movement connected to many efforts) is devastating and hopeful only because it can be seen, witnessed, and analyzed as accumulating power and value for whiteness and manifest destiny.

As a specific example within the Act, the George Floyd Act bans racial profiling, among other provisions. What stories are we telling ourselves about race that would enable a ban on racial profiling to make any sense when the only shift in power enacted behind the ban is to slide more money and more value to the police that man the settler colonial and racial occupation? To be clear, I am not sure how we can seek the abolition of prisons and the police state without seeking an abolition of race. Are we not trying to abolish race? How do we parse out the end of racism from the end of race? I understand that there are high stakes in calling for the end of race. Do these high stakes eliminate the need for our imagination to blossom in this line of inquiry? Can we envision a world without prisons but not a world without race? (Gilmore 2007) Race is a carceral system, the carceral system is an essential node in racializations. How can we keep race and eradicate racism? In this article, I argue that this would be akin to enforcing stillness while expecting movement. This would be a perception of “movement,” while elevating stagnation above all.

(3) Road Map

This article begins with a discussion of terms housed within a dynamic literature review which operates both to identify key fields in critical tourism and mobilities as well as provide a definitional context for the terms I introduce to advance these fields, “racial tourism” and “racial mobilities.”
Next, I discuss my method of “justice storytelling,” an experimental and poetic build on legal storytelling, a method I discuss in detail in this segment because it is an essential mode of analysis in my practice as a legal scholar of critical race theory.

Then, I state my positionality, because this practice is a valued aspect of Indigenous scholarship. I share what I bring to this paper in terms of identity and experience, as well as potential bias, and a statement on the necessary partiality of this study.

I move into the story itself, a composite case based on real past cases of a white academic posing as a prominent Indigenous scholar while eliminating her student, a young Indigenous scholar. This story unfolds in a series of poems. I offer an introduction to the story, which provides an overview of the story organized by calendar dates. This grouping is designed to help the reader be attuned to pivotal moments in the story. I conclude the story with an analysis of the types of racial tourism harms evident in the composite case.

Finally, I conclude by reviewing my key contribution, which is to identify and uplift terms and a method that all have the potential to insert a moment of noticing, a breath to take account of the movements and stillnesses, and provide a base from which to navigate more easily these ongoing experiences of racial harm and healing. I offer a set of guiding questions for scholars that build upon these terms from the particular stance of mobility studies and critical geography studies questions of, where? Where do we go from here? From where does the racial tourist originate? Where in race, is home?

2. Literature Review: An Introduction of Terms
2.1. “Racial Mobilities: “Mobilities,” and the Emerging “Settler Mobilities” and “Critical Mobilities” Research Agenda

I introduce the use of the term “racial mobility.” Racial mobility is a term that is in moderate circulation among critical geographers and scholars of race to the extent that they are tracing economic mobility along the lines of “upward” and “downward mobility” (Bloome and Western 2011). This includes studies of the “upwardly mobile” integration of Asian Americans (Lee 2015; Tran et al. 2018), and the “downward mobility” of African Americans experiencing numerous forms of racial control (Cohen 1991), including, for example, being fixed to a dwindling pool of living wage jobs and livable homes (Mendenhall et al. 2006). Critical geographers, mobility scholars, and scholars of race also have used mobilities to mark racial aspects of traditional mobilities subjects that center physical movements as in, “white flight,” and the famous commute of Rosa Parks (Crowder 2000; Parks 2016). But there are few examples of the use of “racial mobilities” to explain the movement of one person within racial categories. One such study explores the Jim Crow era term “mulatto escape hatch” to describe the potential economic and political “upward” mobility of a mixed-race person with a lighter-skinned and white-passing phenotype (Saperstein and Gullickson 2013). Still, even this use is tied to an “up” and “down” economic aspect of the term, “mobility.” The next term I urge towards greater circulation is “racial tourism.” At the time of writing, “racial tourism” is a hardly employed term, appearing once in a study on fashion, race, and cultural appropriation (Vats 2014). In tourism studies, the term “identity tourism” is more widespread and used to grapple with processes of national, racial, and indigenous identities wrapped in physical travel (Abram et al. 1997; Amoamo 2007; Lanfant et al. 1995; McIntosh et al. 2002).

“Mobilities” is an intersectional, multiscalar concept for the study of global change and friction. The mobilities framework questions fixed scales, and any fixed notions, especially of “place.” Mobilities studies grew out of critical geography studies—which is primarily concerned with people, processes, and space. Mobilities studies centers people, processes, and movement. Importantly, mobilities studies trace systems of power through these movements and stillnesses (Hannam 2004). “Mobility studies” describes research trajectories in the social sciences that investigate movements and stillnesses at the micro-scale of the body, up to mid-level scales of public transit, to macro-scales of transnational political friction and environmental flux set in motion by global capitalism (Cresswell 2010).
The mobilities concept is interdisciplinary and accommodates the scope and purpose of my study—to show the movement of race and accumulation of racial value over time and across space. Mobilities scholars examine “diverse, interacting systems of mobility and the related governance and policy concerns around the world” (Hannam 2006). A “‘mobility turn’ is spreading into and transforming the social sciences, not only placing new issues on the table, but also transcending disciplinary boundaries and putting into question the fundamental ‘territorial’ and ‘sedentary’ precepts of twentieth-century social science” (Hannam 2006). A key contribution of the mobilities framework is how it highlights and studies spaces, sites, and modes of movement that were previously seen as mere containers for social processes. Mobilities is an interdisciplinary concept that traces movements and stillnesses, regenerations and stagnancies, frictions and surrenders—and maps the power dynamics of these phenomena (Ahmed 2004).

“Mobilities studies” is not widely associated with critical race theory, settler colonial studies, and indigenous studies. However, there are critical mobility contributions that address race and slavery with regard to “the historical curtailment of black mobilities in the United States undermining their citizenship” (Hague 2010), and in relation to border stoppage of migrant bodies (Flores 2020), and the “enforced stillness of undocumented migrants who are locked into” the vehicles of human trafficking (Martin 2011). “Questions of movement are central to [colonial and racial] processes, yet engagement between mobility studies, settler colonial studies, ethnic studies, and indigenous studies has been limited” (Carpio et al. 2019). However, “scholars have continued to insist on the role of power in the production of mobilities and role of mobilities in the constitution of power” (Cresswell 2012).

My article joins emerging calls from within “mobilities studies” towards scholarship that examines and theorizes the significance of movement and mobility in the production and contestation of settler colonial geographies” (Carpio et al. 2019). I introduce “racial mobilities” as a versatile framework that can effectively reveal, map, and define processes of imperial power in and through race. “Racial mobilities” traces racial movements, ethical and unethical, at every scale, from body to nation. “Settler mobilities” scholarship asks, “What are the relationships between mobility, race, and indigeneity, in settler colonial societies?” (Carpio et al. 2019). With “racial mobilities,” I pivot from the useful but binary economic and educational scale of upward and downward mobility to pose questions of similar nature and focus on the relationship of global power, multiscalar movement, or stillnesses in the ivory tower, and race.

2.2. “Racial Tourism:” Engaging “Critical Tourism Studies” and the Digital

In this article, I resurface “racial tourism,” an underutilized term, in the context of racial fraud in the academy (Vats 2014). I use “racial tourism” to reclaim space in which to notice and analyze (a precursory and/or parallel stage to judgement and condemnation) incessant, often transactional movements within racial categories by people of all races, but in particular by whiteness, in order to escape, endure, usurp, accumulate, and displace. Using “racial tourism,” I ask, where do racial travels and racial mobilities live? Traditionally, tourism studies focus on physical movements (ie. visiting a country) and reading travel literature as a method of tourism (Duncan and Gregory 2002). Increasingly, racial tourism lives digitally, enacted from behind a desk or vis-à-vis a smart, connected device. Networked racialized, settler-colonial occupations travel through social media avatars (Duarte 2017). The burgeoning new media terrain of “racial tourism” is evidenced by the case of BethAnn McLaughlin, a white woman scholar and Twitter user credited with founding #MetooSTEM, who “killed” off “Alepo,” her own Indigenous, Queer professor Twitter avatar who “lived” in the handle, @Sciencing-Bi (Bromwich 2020). In the networked and racially charged algorithmic sphere, “racial tourism” provides an avenue for ongoing processes of settler-colonialism all while behind a desk, in office hours, or at home in front of a screen without engaging much physical movement at all (Kentayya 2020).
In a way, “racial tourism” is a redundant term; is there any other kind? We are always raced, and this categorization system with all attendant brutalities and mediocrities accompanies every move and stillness. However, “racial tourism” sets a scale upon which we may measure the weight of such moves and stillnesses, and take account of the load borne by whiteness passing as Black, Indigenous, and brown in the academy. I situate my use of “racial tourism” as a radical turn in critical tourism studies that identifies imaginary understandings of travel, because physical travel by choice is a phenomenon that generally lives in the imaginations of most of the world’s population.

“Racial tourism” is a term that has appeared once before in the peer-reviewed scholarship I researched. The term was used in that case to critique the fashion industry for treating racial phenotypes and ethnic markers as costumes for profit and spectacle (Vats 2014). There, “racial tourism” was briefly defined as allowing models to “publicly explore difference” “without any of the risks associated with being a racial minority in real life” (Nakamura 1996, quoted in Vats 2014). I extend this term to the academic site, and the phenomenon of white men and women in the professoriate ousted as impersonating Black, brown, and Indigenous women in order to advance careers, and shape and dominate academic conversations on race and justice. Racial tourism in academia enables the use of “difference” and the Other without any moral or ethical encumbrances and engages in “postracial ideologies, recognizing difference for its exoticness and novelty instead of its continuing material significance” (Vats 2014). The term “identity tourism” has circulated more widely, but even in that rich conversation, the use of the term is limited to strict disciplinary focus on global travel and traditional understandings of tourism (Martin and Nakayama 2012; Pitchford and Jafari 2008; Picard and Wood 1997; Bruner 2001).

Critical tourism considers global tourism’s impact on endangered lands, oppressed peoples and bodies, and dominated cultures (Hannam 2004, Kampadoo 1999). Conversations on the critical turn in tourism studies indicate power analysis is key, “Power is a key issue to be researched, and a critical approach to tourism would seek to expose whose interests are served and the exercise of power, and the influence of ideology in the researched situation and research itself.” (Tribe 2007).

Historically “tourism studies” grew out of industry-focused market research, consumer studies, and data geared towards enhancing profitability, analysis, and growth of commercial tourism industries. A “critical turn in tourism studies” inserted social, political, historical, and cultural research into tourism studies. Critical tourism studies began to provide layered examinations of power—sustainable and unsustainable impacts, and colonial trajectories of dominance—in tourism through studies of host communities, peoples, cultures, and lands. Critical tourism scholars argue that the “divide” or “dichotomy” in tourism research should not be viewed as a fixed binary between industry research and critical studies. Instead, critical tourism scholars advocate for the future of tourism research to be an increasingly interdisciplinary blend between these two, seemingly disparate angles of the field. “Tourism mobilities” is an example of such a blend—this sub-field of “mobilities studies” offers a rich, interdisciplinary trajectory of tourism research that walks the line between the nuts and bolts of tourism as a site of commerce and the politics of tourism as a site of power.

“Tourism mobilities studies” is a rich sub-field of “mobilities studies” which is devoted to tourism, transit, and travel research. Tourism mobilities studies have: explored “non-place” transit spaces such as airports and transportation waiting areas; questioned assumed and easy associations between travel, movement, and elitism; and, unpacked and defined interconnected systems of travel, security, surveillance, and war.

3. Method: “Justice Storytelling” in Relation to “Legal Storytelling,” Critical Race Theory, and “Storytelling for Social Justice”

3.1. Justice Storytelling Requires Positionality

I introduce the term and method, “justice storytelling.” Justice storytelling picks up where legal storytelling leaves off by highlighting the individual impact and experience of a justice issue (as opposed to an exclusive focus on a sweeping law or broad policy
concern), while shedding any mandatory embedding of traditional, settler-colonial legal technologies. For example, in "justice storytelling," the conflict in the story may not involve courts, judicial processes, or traditional grievance procedures. Indeed, scholars invested in racial fraud as the defining characteristic of their racial mobility are not subject to criminal proceedings, or even formal grievance procedures within their institutions. "Justice storytelling" centers a moral, ethical quandary that may implicate a legal debate, a legal scholarly conversation, and which may have a traditional legal manifestation, but a "formal" legal showing is not required. Justice storytelling allows for a broad, imaginative, emancipatory understanding of what law is, how law moves in and around us, how individuals enact and grapple with the law that lives on in many codes. I name and use the "justice storytelling" method as a justice studies scholar, and as a lawyer concerned with the coercive qualities of settler-colonial law and its machinations towards exclusive control over what counts as "law." "Justice storytelling" brings justice to the storyteller and author, in that the storytelling itself makes space for bridged binaries, absolute abolition, liberation, or yoga. For this author, that means telling a story in poetic form, and choosing not to translate each poem for the reader.

A key ingredient in justice storytelling is transparency, the storyteller must grapple with their own positionality in the telling. The reader must be able to access something about the storyteller, about where they are coming from, what they are coming with, how they situate themselves with regard to why this story must be told like this. Where are you in the stories you accept, and the stories you tell? The practice of rigorous positionality negates the inertial drift towards "colorblindness," which enables the storyteller to "not see" themselves as white or racialized, even while fixing race firmly in place with this evasive move to silence the fact that race exists violently.

3.2. Author Positionality: Who Am I in This Language Making? Who Am I in This Story?

I approach this article from the perspective of a person who has circled the globe, quite literally, my entire life. A global perspective on race and justice is intrinsic to who I am. A disproportionate focus on racial justice matters in the U.S. resonates as unjust to me. For me, it is only natural to consider race, racial categories, and racial justice matters in a global context, beyond politically created nation state borders. I am multilingual, and the stories I tell are intended to mend, and reimagine the world as whole.

I grew up in India and Sweden, but mainly in Southern California, immersed in the birth of hip hop in my public schools. At home, I was raised by indigenous botanists with an open-ended interpretation of Hinduism. My mother is highly trained in the Indian classical arts of tabla and song, mainly in the form of ghazal and bhajan, and I accompanied her as she sang publicly on a weekly basis. Both parents were and remain dedicated to their yogic practices. In 1998 I sailed around the world, connecting with student activists in 9 countries. I have spent half of the last five years living in Kochi, Kerala and in Akumal, Yucatán Peninsula, Mexico.

I am the first in my Malla tribe and only person in my generation to have been born outside of India. The Malla are a non-federally recognized tribe in Madhubann Dari village, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, India. I have spent time in one of our ancestral villages, there are still crops growing there, on our indigenous land in Ufrauli, between Gorakhpur and Haradwar. I intentionally reclaim “Indigenous” for myself, despite being told all my life that I was not truly “native” by U.S. settler colonial standards. As with other native experiences, mine is colored by the silenced elimination of my immediate family and tribe through various forms of genocidal warfare, including biological warfare, post-colonial chaos, and racist capitalism (such as with COVID-19 in India).

Unlike most of my peers of all races in the elite educational institutions I have attended and taught in, I do not have famous, celebrity, or well-appointed parents, no U.S. based judges or lawyers in my family to help me establish myself in law teaching. I am the first person in my family to be a tenure-track professor at a U.S. university. I am a single, working mother of an African American, Indian, and Indigenous child. Until recently, I
have lived much of my adult life falling within federal poverty guidelines. I have been either a student or teacher in academic institutions for over three decades. As a student, I have never experienced academic higher learning as being free from sexual violence. This experience biases me towards identifying the gross dysfunctions of the ivory tower and most institutions of learning. But, this reality has never stopped me from being in “school.” All of this biographical information about myself, affects my approach in this article in several ways, including:

- I am self consciously knocking down doors between a public discourse conversation and an ivory tower debate through this article and the story herein.
- I identify as trans, femme, non-binary, and queer. As a mobilities scholar, I recognize trans as a state of movement, of existing across, and through. I appreciate the ability of “trans” to emancipate from non-binary confines into realms of movement, stillness, layers, and spectra.
- I identify as a brown and red person, who has also been included in the category of Black in relatively recent histories of race. As an Indian person, and indigenous woman, I have a personal and professional stake in the conversations urged forward here.
- I am the founder of Critical Yoga Studies, and chipping away at its building blocks, and in service of this, I initially used “racial tourism” as a key descriptor in my extensive, year long ethnography project on yoga tourism in Kerala, South India.

A note on capitalization: For some the capitalization of all racial identifiers may need to be consistent in order to show an equal amount of respect due to each category. Some may believe the capitalization of Black is linked to a universal standard of respect that must be administered through capitalizing all names for oppressed peoples and struggles. I do not believe that capitalization must be administered consistently in order to be correct. I chose to capitalize Black as an implicit acknowledgement of a now widely used sign of respect for Black people and solidarity practices. I can send up this capitalized B for Black as a flare, high and visible, in solidarity without needing the exact same graphic choice for brown. First, there is debate around the use of brown, and I do not have time here to explore these debates, but I am convinced brown is necessary to help us navigate and understand race, and brown is powerful, and beautiful. Like bell hooks, and others, I often chose a “lower case” for my own name and other words as a small act of sovereignty, a tiny shift towards agency within the confines and disciplines of academic language and attendant rules and norms.

3.3. Justice Storytelling in Relation to Legal Storytelling and Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory emerged from Black, Indigenous, and brown legal scholars who dared to notice how all knowledge production and dissemination—with an acute initial focus on U.S. law (including civil rights law) and legal scholarship—fuels and defends race, racism, and racializations (Bell 1980; Harris 1990, 1993; Harris 2012; Matsuda 1987; Massaro 1988; Williams 1991). Central tenets of critical race theory include: (1) centering race across all scholarly disciplines, (2) using narrative and storytelling methodologies to elevate and value the lived, racial experiences of people of color, (3) a turn from a liberal focus on incremental reforms to a rotting legal system to a revolutionary goal systemic upheaval, (4) a commitment to social justice, and (5) a commitment to true, bold interdisciplinary study, which explains why CRT has proliferated and lives on across scholarly fields (Bell 1989; De La Garza and Ono 2016; Taylor 2003).

Narrative shapes our lives and our lives are shaped by narrative, this is a central tenet of literary theory and legal storytelling methods (Bell 2000; Delgado 1989). For critical race theorists, legal storytelling is a narrative methodology that centers divergent, disruptive, and persuasive stories towards liberation, healing, building empathy, supporting memory, encouraging wonder, and bringing to the fore the humanity of individual lives as a direct counter to abstractions inherent in legal doctrine (Levit 2009). A law is made to apply to large swaths of the population, whereas a legal story is an interpretive structure that can give voice, identity, and perspective to one person (Delgado 1989, Delgado 2017). Critiques
of legal storytelling methods identify the mainstreaming of legal storytelling into legal scholarship that reifies race and racist power rather than challenges it (Woolley 2017), and call into question the premise that storytelling can be an effective method of analysis (De La Garza and Ono 2016). Critical race theorists counter by insisting that legal storytelling is the only method that values the experiential, lived knowledge of those at the bottom of the racial hierarchy (De La Garza and Ono 2016; Solorzano and Yosso 2001).

In particular, I draw inspiration from Richard Delgado’s law review article, “Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative” (Delgado 1989). In it, Delgado creates a single race-tinged event and tells the story of this event in five ways in order to explore and challenge “majority stories” with “counter-narratives.” Delgado writes, “in the realization of how one came to be oppressed and subjugated, one can liberate from self-harm.” Delgado states that the “in-group” will benefit from listening to the stories of the “out-group,” and ascribes healing powers to storytelling in that it can impact the dominant group, shift them, transform them. He argues there is inherent healing power in this, that the in-group cannot help but listen to. Delgado uses Eurocentric forms of legal storytelling (identifying the law as synonymous with settler-colonial law, legal process, and legal academia; male-dominated dialogue, conflict) and breaks up the narrative line with analysis and context.

Unlike Delgado’s legal storytelling, I engage “justice storytelling” to intentionally depart from settler-colonial law, Eurocentric storytelling modalities, and instead, I chose to engage in other definitions and experiences of the law, and the poetic. I let the story spin from beginning to end, a design intended to allow the reader to “lose themselves” and be transported by the story. My method differs from Delgado in that I stray from the majority-narrative/counter-narrative dichotomy. Instead, I identify the need for counter-narratives to intervene in both majority-narratives and popular, heavily circulating narratives amongst the “out-group.” In this case, the out-group is also those of us impacted, offended, displaced, and erased by racial tourism and fraudulent racial mobilities in the academy. I enact justice when I introduce new terms designed to help notice and heal from the experience of race in the academy. These terms, including “justice storytelling,” “racial tourism,” and “racial mobilities,” are a central contribution of this article, which I offer to advance critical yoga studies, critical race theory, critical geography, mobilities studies, and legal storytelling. I recognize that language, and a settler-colonial language in particular, is a limited resource for liberation, and yet, I believe words are an essential way to encourage healing.

I also distinguish my approach from Delgado’s in that I do not construct these stories with the primary intention of changing anyone’s mind, especially not an “in-group,” “dominant,” or “majority” reader. First and foremost, my intended audience is myself. I am creating a story with terms and a poetic flow that reflects my own lived experience as a racialized Indian, brown, and indigenous scholar. My intended audience is Black, brown, and Indigenous women and femme’s who are being hunted and haunted by the specter of academic racial tourism. I also depart from Delgado’s assumptions, in that I do not believe that legal stories have any clear power to pivot those interested in racist domination towards racial justice change.

Critical race theory argues that the law is never racially neutral; civil rights law, for example, with its liberal, gradual bent on slow reform was and is structured to reinforce race, racism, and racial categories. In the contemporary example, critical race theory must pivot from its piercing analysis of seminal civil rights legal battles (found to reify race) to examine current platforms of Black Lives Matter by asking; how is this powerful platform—which produces and disseminates knowledge about race—defending race and thereby racism? How will this platform be absorbed and used to uphold a settler-colonial and racial capital system? Where does the platform make space for revolutionary advancement signaled by significant shifts in power that upend the racist system? Critical race theory finds that racial justice movements that have mainstreamed into the nation-state and its legal technologies have ultimately been used to shore up race.
3.4. “Justice Storytelling” in Relation to “Storytelling for Social Justice”

There are powerful conversations on storytelling for social justice (Bell 2019; Phillips 2010), used for example in the practice of environmental justice storytelling (Houston 2013). I honor these storytelling practices, and distinguish my use of “justice storytelling,” from “social justice storytelling,” in that I am using the term “justice” to connect with and further build justice studies, a legally centered, developing academic field. In this article, “justice storytelling” centers emancipatory definitions of the law, by speaking of legal code as moral code, as ethical code, as universal law found in both the Buddha and Octavia Butler’s teachings that, “God is Change.” There is an ethical violation in the story herein, and the professor also violates academic standards of integrity. But there is no formal legal show of a court or any traditional legal proceeding, and this absence is essential to my use of “justice storytelling.” In what court do we try the suffering of the world? Where do we turn for justice? Can settler-colonial legal systems hold our battles for equity and humanity?

4. The Story: God Is Change: What Octavia Butler and Buddha Both Knew about Universal Law

4.1. Introducing Justice Storytelling in Action

This “justice storytelling” is a way of specifying and locating the pain of the experience, that is borne by individuals, and a method that involves transparency and accountability on the part of the storyteller through a discussion of that storyteller’s positionality—what lenses does the storyteller wear, and how does this affect their research? Here, I engage an experimental method based on legal storytelling, I name it, “justice storytelling.” In my justice storytelling process, I create a racialized event based on a composite of the infamous academic racial tourism and racial fraud cases. Like legal storytellers, I believe narrative methodologies have the power to captivate the attention and listening ear of those telling the story—audience, orators, and listeners who may, for the first time, feel present as a result of the telling, reading, and hearing. This story is grouped around a few key calendar dates.

4.2. Story Synopsis: By Calendar Dates

The story begins with the new year, 1 January 2020, and a poetic perspective on academic institutional grievance procedures. Valentine’s Day, 2020 marks a pivotal moment, when the indigenous student confronts an administrator about storytelling on her recruitment tour. That same day, the student meets her vulturing and white advisor. And, that very same evening, her white advisor creates a Twitter account under the name: @critindiginouslaw. In Fall, 2021—the student’s first year—she divulges her fascinating, innovative research on universal law using connections between Buddha and Octavia Butler in an email to her advisor. Her advisor promptly uses this research to fuel her growing Twitter following, and calls the student in, to both milk the student for content and undermine the student. Around one year later, in January 2022, the professor receives a lucrative, powerful book contract with a major university press for the student’s research. Ten months later, in October 2022, the white professor wins a major book award, and her @critindiginouslaw Twitter following is at 35,000 and growing fast. The student is devastated, and not sure where to turn. The student enters the formal grievance process with little hope for true redemption, she turns to poetry to heal and find the will to live. Five months later, in March of 2023, the professor makes moves to kill off her indigenous Twitter avatar; sending herself (as herself) value and accolades in the process. Simultaneously, the student begins to lose grip on her physical health. The student dies in late March, 2023. In April 2023, an official statement is issued by the University chronicling the racial tourism and fraud perpetrated by this white professor. There is an unofficial eulogy as the final entry in the poetic story.

A. Time Limits: Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students (From Oregon State University’s Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students https://gradschool.oregonstate.edu/current/grievance-procedures (accessed on 13 November 2020))
A grievance shall first be presented orally within 60 calendar days from the time the graduate student knew or should have known of the facts giving rise to the alleged grievance. At the level of departmental administrator, or above, the grievance or appeal must be submitted in writing. The responsible administrator at each step below the graduate dean is required to respond in writing to the grievant within 15 calendar days from the time the grievance was received. The graduate dean shall respond within 30 calendar days, including review and reporting by a Graduate Council committee. Any appeal on the part of the grievant to the next step in the grievance procedure must be made within 15 calendar days from the time the grievant was informed of the action at the prior step. If at any step of the grievance procedure the University fails to issue a response within the times specified, the grievance shall be considered denied.

B. Time Limitless: Grief Procedures for Graduate Students

**Log: 1 January 2020**

Important Institutional Storytelling Rules to Abide By

Story Rules
Rules of Stories
The Story of Rules
Ruling Class Story Rules
Rules of Story Engagement
The Ruling Story of Story Rules
Rules of Narrative Methodology

**Log: 14 February 2020**

Doctoral Cohort Recruitment Tour, 9:30am

Indigenous Student Recruit speaks with a High Level Graduate Administrative Officer.

Student asks about interdisciplinary narrative methodology and storytelling courses.

Officer to Student:

Beat? Generally, drum
courses take place both
Fall and Spring in
Building B, Room 3
Very Diverse, Notably.
Hear? The beat? No, Our
Story Program
is Written, no beat to be Heard
exactly, though there are Devices,
Punctuations, Pentameters,
Disciplines for such Things.
Do you mean Heartbeat? Yes? No? A beat, Here?
No Here we Read and Write
Stories.
Song?
As Stated in the Course Catalog,
Music Happens in Building B
Poetry? Is Offered every Other Year, Fall, English Department.
Stories? Defined by a Beginning, Middle, End, Conflict, Dialogue, Mise-en-Scene—
these are Well Accepted Hallmarks of the Method.
I Suggest English. Yes, the English Department is Your Best Path to Stories. Building A.
A Historic Landmark Building. Beautiful. It Used to Be an Ammunitions Storage Unit.
In Which War?
All of Them.

Log: 14 February 2020
Doctoral Cohort Recruitment Dinner, 6:30pm
Indigenous Student Recruit sits next to White Tenured Professor.
They discuss her Indigenous Legal Theory research statement at length.
Research statement is already near publication ready.
Clearly, Student has the foundation for an innovative dissertation.
Professor asks avid questions, volunteers to be Student’s advisor.
Student notices Professor’s gaze is off, is searching, hungry.
Student knows a thing or two about a predatory gaze.
Student remains hopeful. An advisor already!

Log: 14 February 2020
Twitter Account Created Anonymously by White Tenured Professor, 10:00pm
Handle: @critindiginouslaw
Followers: 0
Post #1, 10:10pm, “Not every legal system is legitimate, ask me how I know
#settlercolonialism”

Log: 20 September 2021
Email from Student to Professor, 9:00am
Subject: Checking In
Greetings, I hope you had an easeful summer. I have been diligently working on re-
search and writing. I wonder if you had a chance to review my article draft manuscript
that I shared in May? It is nearly ready for submission, as I said, your edits would
be appreciated. As my advisor, you are most familiar with my work. But, in case it
is helpful, in this draft I have included a new segment that uses a hybrid compara-
tive law, literary analysis model to place two Universal Law models—one Black, one
Brown, and both immensely popular—in conversation with one another. I will give
you a synopsis here:

God is Change: What Octavia Butler and Buddha Both Knew About Universal Law. (It may
be that this segment needs to be its own article, I would appreciate your opinion on
this.)
In The Dhammapada (approximately 500 bce), Siddhartha Gautama known as the
Buddha issues a code for universal law, and in The Parable of the Sower (1993), Octavia
Butler’s protagonist, Lauren Oya Olamina authors and embodies a strikingly similar
code. Both texts center a clear message, “God is Change.” For example, “All is change
in the world, but the disciples of Buddha are never shaken.” (The Dhammapada,
Chapter 18, Impurity) resonates strongly with “The only lasting truth is Change. God
is change.” (Parable of the Sower, Chapter 1). The Buddha espouses, “By oneself
is evil done; by oneself one is injured. Do not do evil, and suffering will not come.
Everyone has the choice to be pure or impure. No one can purify another.” (Chapter
12). Through Olamina, Butler codes, “To get along with God, consider the conse-
quences of your own behaviour. People tend to give in to fear and depression, to need
and greed—until they are exhausted and destroyed. Any Change may bear seeds of
benefit. Seek them out. Any Change may bear seeds of harm. Beware.” (Chapters
8, 10, 11). When we place these liberatory texts together in conversation, there is
much to be learned about Black and brown connection, familial and legal, moral and
timeless.
My work provides new insights on theoretical debates about how traditionally siloed
legal and cultural meanings inform, overlap, and encompass one another. The engine of my investigations is the rapidly advancing power of cultural movements to contend with racism in the wake of widespread, waning belief in the ability of conventional U.S. law to address racial injustice, among other social justice concerns. More people are seeking Universal Law, which the Buddha describes as Dharma, the underlying unity of all life, the order of an indivisible whole, the moral order in human life, so it also means “law” as in a central law of creation (The Dhammapada). According to Universal Law, what it means to be law abiding is to be unconditioned, unfettered, to be without fear, one who can disassemble the conditioned personality. To Butler, the law abider of Earthseed code would be adaptive, free to change, similarly unchained. I am very excited to share that there is already publication interest in the idea, and I look forward to your reply about next steps for this exciting development. I think this will be a really impactful addition to the study of law, storytelling, liberation and racial justice.

Best,
Student

Log: 20 September 2021
Twitter Account: @critindiginouslaw
Followers: 13,000
Posts #800: 10am
“Everyone wants to talk about abolition, let’s talk about Universal Law—a thread.”
“What is our post-abolition alternative? #universallaw”
“What do you get when you mix Buddha and Octavia Butler? GOD IS CHANGE. #universallaw”

Log: 21 September 2021
Email from Professor to Student, 10:00pm
Re: Checking In
Dear Student,

Thank you for reaching out to me, and for sharing your exciting news. Why don’t you come to my office hours tomorrow, so we can discuss further. I don’t want you getting too in over your head.

Log: 22 September 2021
Office Hours Meeting, Professor and Student, 1pm–2pm

Student explains in greater detail aspects of this bold new legal scholarship she has created using the Buddha and Octavia Butler.

Professor to Self What’s that
What did
She
say
hmmmm
an idea so fine
She so rough
cannot possibly know
its nature, impact, potential
for development
I will adopt it
make it viable
scientifically
domesticate it within
the correct disciplines
so it can grow
for all of our benefit
for all of humanity
I will take it from here
I am the best
version of her and
She?
Cannot begin to pay me back.

**Professor to Student**
The idea has merits
(sooth her)
but you cannot say that
without saying this
you have to say all these first
before you get to say that
(displace her)
do you know these texts
have you read at all
(shine a kaleidoscope of shame into her eyes)
what exactly have you read?
(blindfold her, spin)
I strongly recommend you wait
this is not ready to be developed
it will be a distraction for you
(I will take this from here. It is called stewardship. She is called a Ward.)

**Student to Self**

*my memory*
doesn’t work
*like that*
every book
*a cell that splits*
*and grows into my marrow*
every idea becomes blood
*i shed and make way*
*for more walls of wonder*
to build thick
*and then fall down again*
every cycle

*i am not my memory*
i am not a host of lists
*i am too close to theorizing*
to call it
*by its name*
*so i call it*
*by my own*

**Professor to Self**
She comes in here
Her thick, round carriage She is a salmon run upstream, an as yet undead river a leap and my net it is thrashing with a meal.

**Student to Self**  
*something splintered about this rainbow she handed me am i but a screen to project onto me?*

The Professor concludes by asking Student to take a step back, do much more reading, and shelve the Buddha/Butler project until she has cleared at least one additional year and comprehensive exams.

**Log: 10 January 2022**  
Letter of Acceptance from Big University Press  
Dear Professor,

We are thrilled to advance to the next stage of publication of your new book, *God is Change: What Octavia Butler and Buddha Both Knew About Universal Law*. No doubt, this important scholarship will appeal to many readers both in and outside of academia. Please see attached documents awaiting your signature. To many more books together, Professor!  

Big Editor

**Log: 26 October 2022**  
Major Book Award Announcement to Professor for *God is Change: What Octavia Butler and Buddha Both Knew About Universal Law*.

**Log: 26 October 2022**  
Twitter Account: @critindiginouslaw  
Followers: 35,000  
Post #1480: 1pm  
“So excited for Professor’s book award! Her research, you HAVE TO check for her research. The most down white ally we have y’all! As she says, #universallaw and sovereignty by any means necessary. #indigenouswarrior”

**Log 27 October 2022**  
Personal Journal, Student, 5pm  
Student has seen the robbery of her research unfold before her eyes. Her self-esteem is gutted, she is anxious, but writing—as always—gives her a sense of being able to ride the waves of change.
I finally started the formal grievance procedure. I like the word grief better than grievance. But Ahmed told us about the importance of complaint, right? Right! But...I am tired. I can’t and can believe this shit. When words fall short, there is poem. Right.

Student Journal Entry 1

all I remember
I am taught to forget
b.a. stands for
bureau of indian affairs
but the indian is silent
m.a. codes for manifest arrival
the coldest stage of destiny
the doctors, the ph.d
I am talked at of
philosophy, authority
I can’t seem to test
the hypothesis of legitimacy
for accuracy and replicability
objectivity is a word
central to their identity
and they only ascribe
the word robbery
to me

Student Journal Entry 2

the method of learning
is memory
don’t forget to remember
enough to forget
you don’t belong
set adrift on memory bliss
1991 r&b
a sweet sound shoots an arrow through
a tunnel of childhood darkness
once the waves of learning
a crush of conditioning
wash you away
we will build you back correctly
cut that awful hair
scrub your skin a little brighter
your clothes much whiter
we will build you back correctly
perfectly
scattered
positively
beached

Log: 23 March 2023
Twitter Account: @critindiginouslaw
Followers: 52,000
Post #1908-9: 6am
“Friends, this is Professor, I am with the family of @critindiginouslaw. They asked me to share with her beloved community. Like many in her indigenous tribal community, she has contracted the virus.”

“She is in the university hospital, receiving the best medical care. I am heartbroken for her but we are praying, join us to lift this sister up #indigenouswarrior”

**Log: 23 March 2023**
Personal Journal, Student

I feel strange today. Light headed. I can’t tell why. I am staying hydrated, I’ve been tested and I’m good. But I keep almost fainting, I think. I don’t have time or money to go to the hospital now, all this grading, and I have to work on my research. It is strange, I just wanted to share it here, at least I can know that I see myself. I need to start working out more. Get more grounded.

**Log: 29 March 2023**
Twitter Account: @critindiginouslaw
Followers: 60,000
Post #1910: 9am

“Community, we have lost our Indian warrior. Send prayers, another victim of this virus. So so devastated. We were supposed to get matching Native Tattoos together. That is how close we were, like sisters. #indigenouswarrior”

**Log: 29 March 2023**
Personal Journal, Student, 7am

I am in the hospital finally, and thank goodness. They say they have to consider intubating me. I don’t know, but I just want to get better. There is a lot of good work to do. See you on the other side.

**Log: 29 March 2023**
Medical Records: Student pronounced dead at 9am due to complications of the virus.

**Log: 20 March 2023**
Personal Journal, Student

```
education
that is one thing
they
could never take from you
daughter
is your education
so I went to school
and I learned
that she meant
to tell me of the takings
as in chin to chest
an arrow down
shoulders curved in sorrow
i learned education
is something
they
could never take away
```
and is the root of all they take
they call this
complexity, flux, rupture,
discordance, they have many
names for this
but never could get
my name right

Log: 1 April 2023
Official University Statement

We are aware that Professor has been revealed to be the person behind a Twitter hoax involving the identity of an Indigenous woman professor, who was reported to have died of the virus. The Professor asks that her privacy be respected, she is shell-shocked at this moment, and devastated by her actions. For now, we have placed Professor on leave, and have temporarily revoked her appointment to a joint endowed professorship with the Indigenous Studies department.

Log: 1 April 2023
And The Unofficial Institutional Eulogy

We cannot identify the body
too many claims at this point,
liability too high on this one.

Claims? Well, two.
One cloaked in paper
and one shines in indigo blue.

There is no body here,
because we cannot identify
the remains of what is wrong
and what is right.
Only a ghost remains, and
we shut that account down.

4.3. Story Analysis: Racial Tourism, Racial Mobilities in Action
a. Racial Mobility

When this white woman professor plays an indigenous person who she then kills off (as Beth Ann McLaughlin of #metooSTEM fame did on Twitter) she is halting mobility, stymieing progression forward from the confines set in place by the creation of race; she shores up race, stopping, rubbernecking, piling up stones and stories to build this wall into an Othering categorization of: “there is a me, there is a you, because I want to be you,” and this state of covetousness reinforces racial categories, it is a doubling down on race and thereby racial domination, a stillness and stagnation, a putrefaction and active decay of human potential. Racial mobility of this appropriative, displacement sort is not generative, ultimately. It has more to do with a decrease in already diminished life chances than reparation, solidarity, redistribution of accumulated racial and capitalist power. Racial mobility of this thieving and occupying sort is not generative of a movement towards peace, but stagnation in a state of chaos. Racial categories, always unfinished, are shaped by borders increasingly militarized and devastatingly ineffective—are chaotic, arrhythmic, no dancing to the chains that mark all categories of race. James Baldwin says: “Of course you can despair. Walk down the street of any city, any afternoon, and look around you. What you’ve got to remember is what you’re looking at is also you. Everyone you are
looking at is also you. You could be that person. You could be that monster, you could be that cop. And you have to decide, in yourself, not to be.” (Dixon 2020) If there is no Other, no inherently separate you or me, what then could we dismantle in the system of race, racism, and racial categorizations?

a. Racial Tourism

How is this journey of the white professor into the identity, body, and spirit of the indigenous student akin to that of a colonial, white tourist seeking to go native, or go full colonial, or check off all their bucket list, “It’s a Small World,” fantasies involving dominance? In this case, the professor sees a site in the student, a place she is drawn to, wants to possess and occupy. The professor’s interaction with the student is not rooted in mutual respect, appreciation, or solidarity. Instead, covetousness and envy rule; which forms the basis for a keen, green eye of “discovery,” “founding,” and recognizing a great wellspring of value in the student’s ideas and research productivity. Next, there is a methodical accumulation of this student’s valuable human-made capital by the professor, who reassures herself that she is, after all, the only one who knows exactly how to develop this otherwise wild terrain that stands virtually unoccupied by her student. The professor may feel she is doing her student a deep favor by developing the ideas, by imbuing this research with powerful potentials. The professor is the one of the two who knows how to expertly translate the primitive ideas to something others will want to visit, engage with, give power to, and pay for. Once the professor begins to accumulate the host of golden tickets based on the student’s ideas and labor, she begins to feel more alive, more sexy, more powerful than ever—more herself, she imagines. This is because the professor finds it easier to live in the facsimile of another, easier to start fresh, to don a new identity in the unfamiliar than to be present to her own emptiness, bitterness, and cunning cruelty. Ultimately, this occupation and murderous elimination of the student bodes well for the professor. None of the accolades or powerful deals offered to the professor were revoked, not from the university press, nor from the award committee. While she may have incurred backlash, she would weather the storm, and engage the disproportionate life chances endowed to her any time she saw fit.

Moreover, this is a story of non-consensual intimacy, from the predatory gaze of the professor to the use of the student as a shell body for a popular Twitter account. I imagine this genius young woman coming to her doctoral program eager for safe and non-intimate, collegial relations in her life. But, this is a divergent reality, no one actually died when Beth Ann McLaughlin killed off her Indigenous femme avatar on Twitter. It is challenging to identify and convey harm when what transpired was the death of an imaginary person. Additionally, it is not simply whether the racial tourist professor has harmed the Student in this case. It is also about the harm the professor is experiencing and the harm they are showing signs of, the harms they have caused, and the slingshot of it back into the institution and into dominant sectors of society. For the purposes of this article, I focus on the healing possible when creating a poetic, alternative reality where the harm is much more apparent and easily categorized as criminal. When the student loses the chance of establishing a new level of professional relationships and human progress, that is non-consensual intimacy. The student loses an entire relational avenue, she is robbed of this avenue for navigating the world, and robbed of navigating herself.

5. Conclusions

In this article, I continue to build Critical Yoga Studies “brick by brick,” or publication by publication. In establishing CYS, I aim to provide epistemic space in which pause the cycle of harm (ie. instigated by exposure to racial fraud in the academy) and reaction (outrage, condemnation) and make space to notice, witness, and be (“this is happening”). The terms, method, and guiding questions offered in this study create epistemic space to notice race, to continue to be despite racism, and assess the ongoing project of racial categorizations in order to quell disorientation that results from harm. I add these terms to the basket of more highly circulating terms (such as “cultural appropriation,” and “identity fraud”) used
to describe and respond to: (1) the specific phenomenon of white scholars engaging in racial fraud, and (2) the broader experience of living with and within inseparable systems of race, racial categorizations, and racism in the ivory tower. CYS is grounded in legal scholarship and critical race theory. I build on “legal storytelling” in an experimental, poetic form I call, “justice storytelling,” which enables healing. I find the terms I introduce, “racial tourism” and “racial mobilities,” reveal a state of movement at the essence of the racial takings and accumulation of racial value enacted by white scholars committed to racial appropriation and fraudulently coding as Black, brown, and Indigenous in the academy. I make a narrow contribution to the conversation on racial fraud in the academy by adding the terms “racial tourism,” and “racial mobilities” to the large basket of terms used to debate and process the experience of race in the academy—particularly as presented in the haunting phenomenon of white scholars touring and fraudulently moving amongst Black, Indigenous, and brown identities while eliminating these same identities. These terms allow for the noticing of movements and stillnesses along racial spectra. Teasing out the noticing from the judging, the observing from the concluding is a step I deem important for strategic responses and wild imaginings about what must be done in order to live.

I use “justice storytelling,” an experimental, poetic riff on “legal storytelling,” and an expansive but decidedly law-centered, justice studies relative of “social justice storytelling.” Using the poetic to unravel the elimination of an Indigenous human being, I seek to evoke a feeling, sound, the senses, noticing that the human senses can be a strategic way to ground in a system of race that is chaotic. For race is not orderly, it is an unfinished business, and in the story, we may get a peek at the raw materials in all their upheaval, their categorizations confused (Wolfe 2016).

This paper focuses on the site of the academic institution, an ever-ripe site for the study of race, which is always on a spectrum that includes at its base the original purpose of education in the settler-colonial structure—to assimilate, dominate, erase, condition, and propertize (Lomawaima 1995; Singh 2019). The academic institution exists on a spectrum of all institutions, including prisons, and hospitals. I examine students and teachers, professors and graduate students, those who are further along on the academic ladder, and those who are towards the bottom of the academic labor hierarchy. I study those who are white, who believe themselves to be white. I consider all people, who are reduced to seemingly natural, monolithic racial categories—categories that are also, terribly disorienting and erasing. As one example, the erasure present in the Black/White binary is harmful to all sides.

I write this article in the aftermath and in the midst of enough such racial tourism incidences to know for sure that this phenomenon is happening, has been happening, and will continue to happen; and is only the most easily identified tip of the iceberg for the ways race moves in academia—so racial tourism and racial mobilities in the academy bear witness. Critical tourism teaches that when there is racial tourism of this accumulative nature, there is always, also occupation and displacement.

Race itself is an occupation—not natural to the human structure or to humanity—and it requires immense work to maintain it. Various layers of racial exploitation build the walls that create separate races; reify race, raising race, building it into something solid, but the goal itself is delusional. No matter how much agency we embody and enact within the racial categories, it remains true that the racial categories were not meant to further mutual love or self-love. No matter the way we enact racial agency, and make the racialized experience insurrectionary, revolutionary even, and even fly and fresh, the genocidal nature of the experience cannot be altered. Each and every racial category was designed to Other, and they all do incessantly. There is nothing redeemable about race, and there is no way of, for example, keeping race and doing away with racism. These things are all one, and they are all part of structures and processes that are ongoing. But these, they have a beginning, and thus, there can and will be an end. There is a hopeful movement to be found in the unfinished business of race (Wolfe 2016).
I distinguish “colorblindness” reasoning from my primary point which is to link race, racism, and racialization. I say the need to navigate race is real, its impacts are real; but none of this makes race a natural, irrevocable system of human categorization. I emphasize the call to action here has to do with vigilance, particularly at the point where the endurance of race meets an addiction to race. I identify race as a shape-shifting system of inhuman, inhumane, and dehumanizing domination which is designed to be well learned and deftly, fatally enacted by the dominated against themselves. A relatively recent and short period of human history includes racial categorizations. This is not to say there were no differences, and this is not to associate “difference” with bad or oppressive. Quite the opposite. Colorblindness is colorblandness, without season, with no taste. Colorblindness does the work of race, by embedding it, hiding it in plain sight, enabling racism and all its sharp bladed edges, its hungry cages, “invisible” under colorblindness reasoning, race appears natural, “I don’t see race” is not the same as “I don’t believe in race,” or “I challenge race,” it is, however, the same as “I refuse to see myself, my racial privileges, and how I too suffer under racial categories.”

Race, the system of race, racism, and racialization—the inseparable relationship between all these terms and phenomenon is the fertile and terrifying ground upon which I build my case. In this article, I draw these together, lace them, and identify how they are part of the same web. I advocate for these to be considered in the same breath, always. Race must be navigated, it is strategic to navigate race adeptly, and this includes finding freedom within it—as indigenous scholars may find roads to free-thinking using dominant colonial languages. However, I argue that it is healing to hone the ability to navigate race alongside imagining and even seeking the abolition of race. With this study, and these terms, I aim to create more space in which to notice race, stay balanced within the rising extremes of racial categorizations and racism, and be present to truth amidst growing digital “content” cacophonies—represented in part by supersaturation of social media information, embedded racism and patriarchy in the dna of algorithms, and digital forms of settler-occupation, racism, and racial fraud in the academy.

We deserve space to imagine vis-a-vis race. In addition to responding to each racist atrocity with outrage, grief, trending hashtags, and strategy—we can also heal by breathing and noticing where we are at present within the ongoing, shapeshifting, never ending project of race. We need terms, questions, and methods that carve out space in which to notice and imagine. Just because we have adapted to race; built an ability to endure, celebrate, even thrive in a system of race and racial capitalism; this ability to endure does not logically equate to it being strategic to foster an attachment to race. I argue there is merit to imagining a world without race, the way we imagine a world without prisons when aiming for abolition. Can we imagine a world without race? Do we want to imagine a world without race? What can this imagining clear the way for? Can we imagine that at some point; to some extent, we are doing the work of racism by upholding racism; is there no extent to which this is a constant, pervasive threat? Growing accustomed to race, attached to race, is this the same as growing the intrinsic value of race, despite its destructive beginnings, birthed as it was in colonial extraction and displacement, and its disastrous gestation so far? Is race sustainable? To what extent is race shoring up the least sustainable aspects of development and imperial warfare?

James Baldwin said, “I don’t believe in white people. I don’t believe in Black people either, for that matter. But I know the difference between being Black and white at this time. It means I cannot fool myself about some things that I could fool myself about if I were white.” (Dixon 2020) Herein, I provide terms, a method, and a web of guiding questions for future work on that sliver of space in which we may imagine how to deal with race, racism, and racial categorizations—which are very real systems to navigate, and which have been given to us in order to facilitate domination of the earth and all living beings.

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