

Curriculum, Replacement, and Settler Futurity

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No place exerts its full influence upon a newcomer until the old inhabitant is dead or absorbed.

~DH Lawrence, *The Spirit of Place*

I move slowly in the world, accustomed now to seek no longer for upheaval. I progress by crawling. And already I am being dissected under white eyes, the only real eyes. I am *fixed*. Having adjusted their microtomes, they objectively cut away slices of my reality. I am laid bare.

~Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*

You hear my voice for the last time. I shall soon cease to speak.

~Susquesus, in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Redskins*

THE FIVE VOLUMES OF JAMES FENIMORE COOPER'S *THE LEATHERSTOCKING TALE* are among the most important and earliest literary representations of the encounter between invading white settlers and the Indigenous people of the territory known today as the Northeastern United States, specifically the Adirondack region of the New York state. The main character of the five tales, Natty Bumppo, is the child of European settlers who die in a house fire along with his sister. Bumppo is rescued by a fictionalized tribe of Indians,¹ who teach him their way of life and knowledge systems.

Like Rousseau's eponymous child Emile, Natty Bumppo is educated *in* and *by* nature, and grows to disdain both the Natives who raise him, whom he sees as barbaric and uncivilized, as well as the European settlers, whom he sees as incapable of surviving in harmony with nature. Natty Bumppo grows to be the true enlightened subject, who can learn from the ways of the primitive without becoming them, who remains civilized without succumbing to nature, and who

can traverse the boundaries that separate different groups with his cosmopolitan orientation. In Natty Bumppo, the future of the settler is ensured through the absorption of those aspects of Indigenous knowledge that ensure survival, only to justify erasure and subsequent replacement. At the same time, the settler comes to imagine himself as “Native” by highlighting the ineptitude of Europeans when it comes to surviving in the frontier.

Natty Bumppo, not savage, and no longer European, is positioned to claim “native status,” symbolically taking the place of “the last of the mohicans” and of all the other vanishing tribes. The figure of the frontiers man who is one with nature saturates the U.S. cultural imaginary, from the Adirondack backwoodsman and the Order of the Arrow of the Boy Scouts of America (Alonso Recarte, 2010), to Kevin Costner’s *Dances with Wolves* and the most recent expression of the White settler-becoming-Indian, Johnny Depp’s characterization of Tonto. Natty Bumppo also resurfaces within the contentions over colonization and race that mar the politics of progressive fields such as curriculum studies. Here, the future of the settler is ensured by the absorption of any and all critiques that pose a challenge to white supremacy, and the replacement of anyone who dares to speak against ongoing colonization.

This article does the simultaneously blunt and delicate work of exhuming the ways in which curriculum and its history in the United States has invested in settler colonialism, and the permanence of the settler-colonial nation state. In particular, we will describe the settler colonial curricular project of *replacement*, which aims to vanish Indigenous peoples and replace them with settlers, who see themselves as the rightful claimants to land, and indeed, as indigenous. To do this, we employ the story of Natty Bumppo, as an extended allegory to understand the ways in which the field of curriculum has continued to absorb, silence, and replace the non-white other, perpetuating white supremacy and settlerhood. As we discuss in this article, even as multiple responses have evolved to counter how curriculum continues to enforce colonization and racism, these responses become refracted and adjusted to be absorbed by the whitestream, like the knowledge gained by Natty Bumppo, only to turn to the source and accuse them of savagery, today through a rhetorical move against identity politics. White curriculum scholars re-occupy the “spaces” opened by responses to racism and colonization in the curriculum, such as multiculturalism and critical race theory, absorbing the knowledge, but once again displacing the bodies out to the margins. Thus, we will discuss how various interventions have tried to dislodge the aims of replacement, including multiculturalism, critical race theory, and browning, but have been sidelined and reappropriated in ways that reinscribe settler colonialism and settler futurity.

Settler Colonialism and Curriculum Studies

Settler colonialism is the specific formation of colonialism in which the colonizer comes to stay, making himself the sovereign, and the arbiter of citizenship, civility, and knowing. Patrick Wolfe (2006) argues that settler colonialism “destroys to replace,” (p. 338) operating with a *logic of elimination*. “Whatever settlers may say—and they generally have a lot to say,” Wolfe observes, “the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory” (*ibid.*, parentheses original). The logic of elimination is embedded into every aspect of the settler colonial structures and its disciplines—it is in their DNA, in a manner of speaking. Indeed invasion is a structure, not an event (p. 402). The violence of invasion is not contained to first contact or the unfortunate birthpangs of a new nation, but is reasserted each day of occupation. Thus, when we write about settler colonialism

in this article, we are writing about it as both an historical *and* contemporary matrix of relations and conditions that define life in the settler colonial nation-state, such as the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Israel, South Africa, Chinese Tibet, and others.

In North America, settler colonialism operates through a triad of relationships, between the (white [but not always]) settlers, the Indigenous inhabitants, and chattel slaves who are removed from their homelands to work stolen land. At the crux of these relationships is land, highly valued and disputed. For settlers to live on and profit from land, they must eliminate Indigenous peoples, and extinguish their historical, epistemological, philosophical, moral and political claims to land. Land, in being settled, becomes property. Settlers must also import chattel slaves, who must be kept landless, and who also become property, to be used, abused, and managed.

Several belief systems need to be in place to justify the destruction of Indigenous life and the enslavement of life from other lands, in particular the continent of Africa. These belief systems are constituted through “what Michel Foucault identifies as the ‘invention of Man’: that is, by the Renaissance humanists’ epochal redescription of the human outside the terms of the then theocentric, ‘sinful by nature’ conception/‘descriptive statement’ of the human” (Wynter, 2003, p. 263). These include what was termed in the 19th century “manifest destiny”—or the expansion of the settler state as afforded by God; heteropatriarchalism—the assumption that heteropatriarchal nuclear domestic arrangements are the building block of the state and institutions; and most of all, white supremacy. Settler colonialism requires the construction of non-white peoples as less than or not-quite civilized, an earlier expression of human civilization, and makes whiteness and white subjectivity both superior and normal (Wynter, 2003). In doing so, whiteness and settler status are made invisible, only seen when threatened (see also Tuck & Yang, 2012).

Settler colonialism is typified by its practiced epistemological refusal to recognize the latent relations of the settler colonial triad; the covering of its tracks. One of the ways the settler-colonial state manages this covering is through the circulation of its creation story. These stories involve signs-turned mythologies that conceal the teleology of violence and domination that characterize settlement (Donald, 2012a, 2012b). For example, Dwayne Donald examines the centrality of the “Fort on Frontier” as a signifier for the myth of civilization and modernity in the creation story of the Canadian nation-state. The image of the fort works as “a mythic sign that initiates, substantiates and, through its density, hides the teleological story of the development of the nation” (2012a, p. 43):

Fort pedagogy works according to an insistence that everyone must be brought inside and become like the insiders, or they will be eliminated. The fort teaches us that outsiders must be either incorporated, or excluded, in order for development to occur in the desired ways. (2012a, p. 44)

The fort is not simply about the process of colonization—of the exogenous conquering of land and people, but more importantly, about a process of colonial settlement—of imposing a hegemonic logic from the inside, “premised on the domination of a majority that has *become* indigenous” (Veracini, 2010, p. 5, emphasis added). As Donald (2012b) explains, “transplanting a four-cornered version of European development into the heart of the wilderness” (p. 95), the fort stands as a signifier “of the process by which wild and

underutilized lands were civilized through European exploration, takeover, and settlement” (p. 99).

Scholars like John Willinsky (1998) have offered ample evidence of the ways in which schooling has served the purpose of promoting an imperialist view of the world that justifies colonization premised on European epistemological supremacy. While he provides a powerful critique of the colonizing force of the North American curriculum, such analyses stop short of examining how the project of curriculum is implied in the *ongoing* project of colonial settlement, assuming that settler colonies are a thing of the past. Recognizing that colonization is an ongoing process, there have been many postcolonial conceptualizations of curriculum and curriculum history (e.g. Asher, 2005; Coloma; 2009; McCarthy, 1998). Yet such conceptualizations typically ignore important differences in the various kinds of colonial processes occurring in the contemporary world. Because it is different from other forms of colonialism in ways that matter, settler colonialism requires more than a postcolonial theory of decolonization. Indeed, “decolonization in a settler context is fraught because empire, settlement, and internal colony have no spatial separation” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 7). In this light, the specific contours of settler colonialism in curriculum studies are as yet undertheorized, particularly its continued role in ensuring what we describe later in this article as settler futurity. This essay takes part in this conversation by theorizing what we call the *curriculum project of replacement*.

The Curriculum Project of Replacement

The historical work of curriculum scholars like Douglas McKnight (2003), William Watkins (2001), John Willinsky (1998), and Annie Winfield (2007), among others, demonstrate that from its inception and to the present day, the project of schooling in the US and Canada has been a white supremacist project. More specifically, McKnight (2003) and Willinsky (1998) demonstrate how the project of schooling has been historically premised, first and foremost, on maintaining symbolic logics through which to justify the theft and occupation of Indigenous land. Their work points to the ways in which schools were instruments of settlement, as evidenced in the important role they played in what McKnight describes as the “jeremiad” of colonial Puritans who sought to establish a utopian society.

McKnight (2003) argues that this jeremiad cannot be dismissed simply as the pursuit of godly experience, as educational historians often do, but must be understood as the initial inscription of a “sacred/secular symbolic narrative sending American on an ‘errand into the wilderness’ to become a ‘city upon a hill.’ This narrative provided a national identity of sorts, a corporate historical teleology in which America would fulfill the role of New Israel” (pp. 2-3). Similar to the role of the fort in the Canadian imaginary (Donald, 2012a, 2012b), the jeremiad of the “errand into the wilderness,” as described by McKnight (2003), continues to play a key symbolic role in the American fantasy as “leader of the free world” along with its perpetual exasperation with the moral failing of its own citizens.

The critical role of schooling in the project of settler colonialism is further evidenced during the expansion of the “chartered academics” throughout the 17th and 18th century, when small schools were established in local communities, mostly by settler merchants (Beadie & Tolley, 2002). It is also manifest in the establishment of Indian schools within the context of what eventually became elite Universities, such as Harvard and Deerfield, and perhaps most

perversely implemented in the Indian Boarding Schools, where assimilationist projects to “kill the indian, save the man” involved widespread violence and abuse and ultimately served as models for the Nazi genocide (Toland, 2002).

Intimately linked to schools, the field of curriculum studies has played a significant role in the maintenance of settler colonialism. Early curriculum scholars conceived of educational projects through logics of replacement in which the settler ultimately comes to replace the Native. We trace this early preoccupation with replacement in order to mount a critique of the foundations of curriculum studies and to point out how these foundational preoccupations manifest in contemporary struggles over how to approach curriculum studies in ways that make interventions unlikely.

The replacement narrative is evidenced in the work of most of the early curriculum thinkers who are often placed within the pantheon of curriculum studies. Horace Mann, for instance, enacted a replacement narrative when he described the “Pilgrim Fathers” as facing “the terrors of a wintry clime, an inhospitable shore, and a savage foe, *that they might find a spot*, where, unmolested, they could worship God” (1867, p. 32, italics added). In Mann’s conceptualization, it was the responsibility of the school to ensure that all citizens valued the “sacrifices” made by these “Pilgrim Fathers” and the rights gained through their struggles to gain this “spot” or place. For Mann, the “struggles” of the settlers for the creation of the state are to be celebrated and reenacted through the project of schooling for the creation of a national subject; and this includes the defeat of anyone who stands in the way.

For John Franklin Bobbitt (1918), recognizing the struggles and sacrifices of settlers meant that the curriculum should include a re-enactment of war:

For this reason, let youth continue to refight the colonial wars, the Revolutionary War, and the later wars with England, Spain, Mexico, and the Indian Tribes. Let the accounts of these fights be so presented that youth can refight them in that spirited, intense, and whole-hearted way that is congenial to its hot blood; and which is necessary for firing the enthusiasms of youth and for indissolubly fusing the individual into conscious and acquiescent membership in the national group. The “man without a country” is the man who has never fought with his group for his group. (p. 136)

In Bobbitt’s account, “the disappearance of American Indians of North America” was not caused by “guns, but before the diseases of the white invaders,” and it was their lack of education and inability to efficiently address disease that caused their presumed disappearance. Yet the vanished Indian remains as a mythic presence in the imagination of the curriculum, not as an active presence, but as an illustration of what the settler must overcome.

Similarly, in his essay “The Aim of History in Elementary Education,” John Dewey justified “the worth of the study of savage life in general, and of the North American Indians in particular,” only insofar as “the life of the Indian presents some permanent questions and factors in social life” (1915, p. 160). Thomas Fallace (2010) notes that particularly in his early works on education, Dewey embraced ethnocentric conceptions of race and culture based on linear historicist and genetic psychological terms that construed non-white groups as representing early stages of human development. Although Fallace notes that in his later work Dewey moved toward a more relativist and pluralist stance, he observes that most of his enduring ideas—and the ones that are most often cited by contemporary scholars—are premised on an assimilationist project that viewed non-white groups as having the potential of moving toward civilization.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, the view that all non-white cultures represented earlier stages of development akin to childhood was expressed by all curriculum

thinkers, progressive and technocratic alike (Fallace, 2012). Recapitulation theory proposed that individual development followed the stages of the development of the species, with European civilization representing the full maturation of an adult. While some early scholars believed that blacks and Indians were incapable for being civilized, the dominant view was that schooling could provide the necessary curriculum to civilize these representations of earlier forms of human life, which meant to make them more like their white teachers. According to Kliebard's (2004) historical accounts, in the 1900s:

The prevailing rationale at ... educational institutions designed for blacks and Native Americans was that while those races were not inherently inferior, they were in an earlier stage of development than the white race. By designing the program of studies so as to introduce the more advanced white social institutions and social practices to the less advanced races, their progress toward a state of civilization could be speeded up. (p. 107)

If recapitulation provided a rationale for a curricular project of complete assimilation, eugenics provided a rationale for complete annihilation. Whether it was the social efficiency movement, legal segregation in the schools of the Jim Crow south, or the maddening use of testing for measuring and sorting individuals, the goal of producing a “perfect” human being has been at the heart of curriculum projects throughout the history of the U.S. (Winfield, 2007). The future of the white race, as imagined by eugenicists, required the elimination of lesser humans and the refinement of the cultural attributes that define the white subject, whose manifest destiny it to take the place of the savage in the promised land.

Replacement. Patrick Wolfe (2006) observes that settler colonialism's *logic of elimination* requires the removal of Indigenous peoples of a territory, “but not [just] in any particular way” (p. 402): by any means necessary. This includes not only homicide, but also state-sanctioned miscegenation, the issuing of individual land titles, native citizenship, child abduction, religious conversion, reprogramming (via missions or boarding schools), and myriad forms of assimilation; again “settler colonialism destroys to replace” (p. 388). It is this preoccupation with replacement to which we attend in this article.

Lorenzo Veracini (2011) observes that within settler colonialism, settlers and the settler-state must continuously disavow the existence and presence of Indigenous peoples and Indigenous accounts and histories of land. For the settler, the recalcitrant continued presence of Indigenous peoples and the descendants of chattel slaves is disturbing, is disrupting. The settler-state is always already in a precarious position because Indigenous peoples and descendants of chattel slaves won't do what they are supposed to do, fade away into history by either disappearing or becoming more like the settler, the true description of the human. If they/we won't fade away into history, then the whole ugly business of the founding of the settler-state can't be surpassed, can't be forgotten. Settler coloniality is typified by a “persistent drive to ultimately supersede the conditions of its operation,” in order to “cover its tracks,” and “effectively repress, co-opt, and extinguish indigenous alterities, and productively manage ethnic diversity” (*ibid.*, p. 3). All of this elaborate track-covering is needed to achieve the settler's ultimate aim, which is to resolve the uncomfortable and precarious dis-location as usurper, and replace the Indigenous people as the natural, historical, rightful and righteous owners of the land.

In the United States, the Natty Bumppo narrative in Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales* (1823-1841) is foundational to a national curriculum of replacement. James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851) was the son of a man who settled on Six Nations land, naming Cooperstown, New York, after himself. Cooper's five *Leatherstocking Tales* are part of the foundation of what was

then and is now understood as American Literature, and are filled with the idyllic streams, forests, hills, and lakes of the Iroquois land his family grabbed and settled. Called by Herman Melville “our national author,” Cooper’s books were the most widely read of the time, heavily circulated due to the newly more available technology of the printing press. Books like Cooper’s helped to forge the national identity of the United States, and did so by tapping into and enlarging settlers’ imaginations of the vanishing Indian, the innovative Frontiersman, and the ill-fated Negro, the very cast of characters which animate settler colonialism, and much of American literature (see also Tuck & Yang, 2012).

The most famous of the five volumes is *The Last of the Mohicans*, required reading in many US public school systems, an enduring go-to narrative in popular culture. It is the source from which no less than three television series, a theater production, an opera, a radio show, and eleven films have been made. In K. Wayne Yang’s words, “The *Last of the Mohicans* is a national narrative that has never stopped being made” (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 15).

Natty Bumppo’s story is told across all five books, becoming the adopted son of Chingachgook, the fictional chief of the fictional “Mohicans,” who renames Nathaniel Bumppo “Hawkeye,” an act that satisfies the ultimate adoption fantasies of the settler. Chingachgook bestows Bumppo-now-Hawkeye, the responsibility for his son Uncas, who becomes a great leader, but is killed by another Indian in battle, ironically defending his love for Cora, the white daughter of a British commander. Hawkeye avenged the death of Uncas, but the elder Chingachgook is left to age into extinction (another settler fantasy) and the message is clear,² Bumppo-now-Hawkeye might, no, *must* replace the Mohicans, and carry on their knowledge and their claims to the land. The reader is meant to infer that Bumppo-now-Hawkeye had really been more Mohican in his actions than most Mohicans had been anyway, so his replacement was an improvement on things, truly. A completion. Indeed, as Claudia Alonso Recarte argues, “it was not rare for readers of *Mohicans* to interpret Natty Bumppo as a man who had absorbed and imitated the ways of the wilderness to such an extent that he had become superior to his environment” (2010, p. 37).

As final extension of the allegory, it is important to remember that the *Leatherstocking Tales* were published at the height of Jackson’s Indian Removal Act of 1830, and throughout the resulting Trail of Tears (1831-1837). Twenty-five million acres of land were cleared through the forced removal of more than 46,000 Native people. The *Leatherstocking Tales* ignore this contemporaneous reality while imagining the Indian as already vanished, as already dead (Tuck & Yang, 2012). We share this account as an allegory for what we call the settler colonial curricular project of replacement, which is intent on relieving the inherent anxiety of settler dislocation from stolen land. The anchoring themes of hybridity, extinction, inheritance, and whiteness that is more Indian (i.e. more deserving of the land) than Indians from Cooper’s tales are the vertebrae of the ideological justification for the dispossession of Indigenous peoples and Black and brown peoples: ignoring that they may have an *a priori* claim to land, or a claim derived from reparation, in favor of the fully arrogant and self-serving notion that “‘we’ could use the land better than they could,” (Wolfe, 2006, p. 389).

Mapped onto the curricular project of replacement, the allegory of Natty Bumppo-as curriculum- highlights the distraction offered by the pursuit of replacement, away from settler complicity in the erasure of Indigenous people toward fantasies of the extinct or becoming-extinct Indian as natural, forgone, inevitable, indeed, evolutionary. And it is in this way that the Indian appears in the early texts of curriculum theorizing, from Spencer (1867), through both Bobbitt (1918) and Dewey (1915), to the absence and enclosed presences in contemporary

curriculum documents (Anderson, 2012; Richardson, 2011). Through an in-depth analysis of recent curriculum documents in two states with contrasting approaches to the teaching of history, Carl Anderson (2012) demonstrates the persistence of the narratives of disappearance that continually center white settler subjectivity. Regardless of whether history is approached through a transmission or a constructivist model, Anderson shows how settler futurity is ensured through an understanding of Native-European relations as a thing of the past, and the inclusion of Native history as a past upon which a white future is ensured. Likewise, Troy Richardson (2011) offers a critique of cotemporary “culture-based” models, such as multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy, that seek to “include” Indigenous epistemologies which have the effect of enclosing and containing the possibility of an Indigenous future. Both Anderson (2012) and Richardson (2011) demonstrate that contemporary progressive and critical approaches to curriculum act through the same “Fort on Frontier” mythology (Donald, 2012a) and the same “errand into the wilderness” Puritan jeremiad that ensure replacement and settler futurity.

Replacement in Contemporary Curriculum Studies

We argue that the contemporary field of curriculum studies has not escaped its preoccupation with replacement. We see this manifested in how non-white, non-settler contributions to curriculum studies, along with the scholars that make those contributions, are frequently replaced, renewing settler interpretations as central to the field and the history of fantasies of replacement in its founding. For example, scholars of color who are concerned with the plight of non-white students are sometimes dismissed as too focused on identity politics, and stuck in an intellectual past that has been outgrown by the more advanced white scholars, who have moved on to a post-racial analysis, having integrated a more sophisticated analysis of identification. Those who challenge the appropriation of Brown, Black, and Indigenous ideas and the renewed installment of white bodies are dismissed as essentialists, as saying that race matters more than it really should, and are called the true racists. It seems as though space must always be held open for the participation of white scholars, or else it is called exclusionary. The accusation of being too focused on identity politics holds significant weight; it is waged as a way of discrediting work and ideas deemed disruptions (see Alcoff, 2000). It seems that to some curriculum scholars, the spectre of identity politics would be better exorcised from the gene pool of curriculum studies, lest it return again, and again.

Replacement is both a molar and molecular project (see Deleuze and Guattari, 1987).³ That is, replacement works at a molar capacity (as a whole, almost undirected, undetectable, but pervasive) and at a molecular capacity (observable in the inter-personal, literal, seemingly accidental). The settler colonial curricular project of replacement seems to happen organically, without intent, even though Indigenous erasure is the arch aim of settler colonialism. It happens generally, through the commonplace tendency of appropriation and commercialization of Indigeneity, but also specifically, through the removal of Indigenous bodies and the occupation of tracts of land by settler bodies.

In academe, settler colonial replacement is evident in both disciplinary structures as well as institutional practices. When white settler scholars are hired as experts or to fulfill roles related to challenges of multiculturalism—now refracted as diversity—they become the expert “backwoodsman,” the allegorical Natty Bumppo who has gained expertise from ‘diverse,’ ‘indigenous,’ ‘decolonizing,’ or ‘brown’ others, now further replaced by the new ‘native,’ no

longer accountable to those who have been historically underrepresented in the academy. Replacement is also at work in conferences and associations that focus on the work of people of color in one year—perhaps related to a particular theme, perhaps inviting scholars of color and Indigenous scholars into performative discussions—and then retreating to all-white spaces and ideologies in subsequent years, particularly as the demands of those invited are finally understood as profound challenges to the field and practices as usual.

Settler Futurity. The settler colonial curricular project of replacement is invested in settler futurity, or what Andrew Baldwin calls the “permanent virtuality” of the settler on stolen land (2012, p. 173). When we locate the present of settler colonialism as only the production of the past, we overlook how settler colonialism is configured in relation to a different temporal horizon: the future. To say that something is invested in something else’s futurity is not the same as saying it is invested in something’s future, though the replacement project is invested in both settler future and futurity. Futurity refers to the ways in which, “the future is rendered knowable through specific practices (i.e. calculation, imagination, and performance) and, in turn, intervenes upon the present through three anticipatory logics (i.e. pre-caution, pre-emption and preparedness)” (p. 173).

Considering the significance of futurity for researching whiteness and geography, Baldwin (2012) wonders whether a past-oriented approach reproduces the (false),

Teleological assumption that white racism can be modernized away. Such an assumption privileges an ontology of linear causality in which the past is thought to act on the present and the present is said to be an effect of whatever came before [...] According to this kind of temporality, the future is the terrain upon or through which white racism will get resolved. It cleaves the future from the present and, thus, gives the future discrete ontological form. (p. 174)

Thus, in this historical analysis of the settler colonial curricular project of replacement, we seek to emphasize the ways in which replacement is entirely concerned with settler futurity, which always indivisibly means the continued and complete eradication of the original inhabitants of contested land. Anything that seeks to recuperate and not interrupt settler colonialism, to reform the settlement and incorporate Indigenous peoples into the multicultural settler colonial nation state is fettered to settler futurity. To be clear, our commitments are to what might be called an Indigenous futurity, which does not foreclose the inhabitation of Indigenous land by non-Indigenous peoples, but does foreclose settler colonialism and settler epistemologies. That is to say that Indigenous futurity does not require the erasure of now-settlers in the ways that settler futurity requires of Indigenous peoples.

Thwarted Interventions to the Settler Colonial Curricular Project of Replacement

We observe that, knowingly or not, there have been multiple earnest attempts by scholars in curriculum studies to intervene upon the settler colonial curricular project of replacement. We discuss three of the major attempts—multiculturalism, critical race theory, and browning, and, in the conclusion, weigh in on another emergent attempt, rematriation. We focus on replacement as a function of whiteness and white ideology, because the interventions have been constructed as responses to structural racism; however, we maintain that white supremacy is supported and enacted through settler colonialism. Both of us have been intimately involved with these

interventions, particularly in browning (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2006; Gaztambide-Fernández & Murad, 2011) and rematriation (Tuck, 2011). Thus, when we write about how these attempts have been thwarted, have been sidelined and reappropriated, we don't do so lightly, or with satisfaction. But we think it is strategically and politically important to mark and understand how the settler colonial curricular project of replacement is relentless in its recuperation and absorption of such critiques – effectively replacing those who offered the critiques with (now) more informed white bodies.⁴

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is perhaps the most widespread response to white supremacy in the curriculum, and it has many manifestations and critiques, including how it operates to promote the narratives and the claims of the descendants of slaves and settlers of color at the expense of Indigenous people.⁵ Christine Sleeter and Peter McLaren (1995) observe that multicultural education initially was concerned with meeting the demands of African Americans, and then other groups of color, women, people with disabilities, and queer rights groups. The primary demand of a multicultural curriculum is inclusion. In the US, multiculturalism grew from the Civil Rights movement, framing inequity in relation to institutionalized racism and oppression, and insisting on the strengths and contributions of communities and families. As “tourist” and other superficial approaches proliferated, educators of color grew disillusioned with multiculturalism, principally because of the “failure of white people and institutions to grapple substantively with our own racism at personal as well as systemic levels, concomitant with the escalated transfer of economic resources and the mobility of capital away from poor communities” (p. 13). Sleeter and McLaren flag it as ironic that radical educators of color have refused multicultural curriculum and education expressly because it has been so appealing to white educators.

Indigenous education scholars such as Sandy Grande (2004) have offered a critique of multiculturalism for ignoring the significance of Indigenous (struggles for) sovereignty and stressing the project of inclusion, which does not help, or even prevents Indigenous peoples from achieving decolonizing aims. “American Indians are not like other subjugated groups struggling to define their place within the larger democratic project,” Grande writes. “Specifically, they do not seek greater, ‘inclusion,’ rather, they are engaged in a perpetual struggle to have their legal and moral claims to sovereignty recognized” (p. 107). Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith observes that multicultural definitions of justice can be “overly precious about the project [of emancipation via inclusion] as a universal recipe” by operating from a “stance that assumes that oppression has universal characteristics that are independent of history, context and agency” (Smith, 2000, p. 229).

In response to a curriculum that excludes the history and experiences of non-white peoples, multiculturalism demands an opening for including “other” cultures as part of the whitestream. However, the whitestream cannot include without occupying, and making itself the center that encloses the other (Richardson, 2011). Consider, for example, the mainstream multicultural re-tellings of the story of Rosa Parks, as a “good,” “non-threatening,” Black woman, who, with the help of many friendly white people, was the “mother” to the civil rights movement, in contrast to the real story of Rosa Parks, who participated in the Highlander School, and emphasized Black mobilization and solidarity (see Carlson, 2004):

By emphasizing the important role of whites in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, we tell a story that whites like to hear, but it also distorts the reality of what happened and has the effect of getting those who consider themselves “good” whites off the hook for the continuation of racism. (Carlson, 2004, p. 308)

When being inclusive, whitestream curriculum begins to absorb and contain, consuming and erasing the other, by always-already positioning the accumulated knowledge as other to, less refined, more subjective and less reliable than the whitestream. The story is just a better story when there are more white people in it. Once the story is properly populated and the subaltern knowledge is absorbed, actual participation by Othered bodies is not necessary. Like Natty Bumppo, the whitestream can integrate what it needs—once the white settler learns to dance like the other, learns to eat like the other, learns to dress like the other, and to consume and even to make objects like the other, the other is no longer needed, discarded, replaced. This is followed by a move away from the initial language of multiculturalism, to a language of diversity, which can more fully be reoccupied by white subjects. Under the banner of “we are all the same because we are different,” the language of diversity completes the replacement, positioning white people as the true diverse subjects, the new natives, and protectors of the value of human difference.

Critical Race Theory

As the commitment to multiculturalism became replaced by a depoliticized version of diversity, many curriculum scholars of color turned to the frameworks of critical race theory as a way to shift the register of analysis. Critical race theory understands racism “not as isolated instances of conscious bigoted decision-making, but as larger, systemic, structural, and cultural, as deeply psychologically and socially ingrained” (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993, p. 5). Critical race theory invites an analysis of how racism produces its own categories and institutional operations, such as the granting of citizenship and other legal rights. In education, it points to how forms of knowledge like literacy and numeracy are constituted as white property (property goes undetected as a settler construct), and the material benefits that this grants to those constituted as “white” (see Ladson-Billings & Brown, 2008; Prendergast, 2003).

This analysis has led to an examination of how white supremacy produces an exalted category of whiteness, how certain groups vie for whiteness and gain ascendancy in the racial hierarchy on which colonization is premised (Thobani, 2007). Thus, among other turns, critical race theory sparked a turn to an analysis of whiteness itself, interrogating whiteness as unearned privilege (e.g. Fine, Weis, Pruitt, & Burns, 2004). In versions that (in our view) have learned best/most earnestly from critical race theory, whiteness studies document the “rhythms and movements of white domination through the state, private, and major public institutions, and to recognize the self-conscious departures from and resistances toward racialized (in)justice enacted through white bodies and allies” (Fine, Weis, Pruitt, & Burns, 2004, p. ix).

Yet there has been a proliferation of far less considered approaches to whiteness studies, which do not address issues of privilege and power, often devolving into apologist accounts of the plight of white subjects. Apologist accounts serve only to bring whiteness to the center, giving space for white people to air their experiences of racialization, attempting to rescue themselves from the damages of racial thinking, and appropriating the language of critical race

theory. In some circles, these white scholars are celebrated for their performances of critical reflexivity, but little else changes, and the cumulative effect is that white experience of the world resumes its place as the rightful and natural perspective. In apologist approaches to whiteness studies, non-white critical race scholars are yet again replaced, dismissed after providing the necessary frame. Our allegorical Natty Bumppo carries on, fully vested in the glow of his own pride for having revealed that, after all, he is not quite white either and therefore not responsible—innocence retrieved.

Simultaneously, works by major scholars in curriculum studies have waged complaints against the critical analysis of race, crying foul *against* the scholars of color who are cast as dupes for the mere act of invoking race itself. In these instances, curriculum studies adheres what Eduardo Bonilla-Silva (2010) thoroughly conceptualizes as a colorblind ideology, which “aids in the maintenance of white privilege without fanfare, without naming those who it subjects and those who it rewards,” (p. 3-4). The irony is that using critical race theory or critical whiteness studies in curriculum studies has borne differential results for white scholars and for scholars of color. In the context of the academy’s competitive individualism, in which there is only one expert in a subject on a faculty, or only one chapter about a subject is needed in a volume or conference session, the bodies and works by scholars of color are frequently replaced by bodies and works of white scholars, reflecting a retrenchment of prior efforts to diversify, anemic as those efforts may have been. And yet, to call attention to the problematic practices and politics of replacement is to break an unspoken code of colorblind culture.

Browning

The “browning” of curriculum studies is a move that deliberately seeks to uncover and highlight the myriad of complicated ways in which white supremacy and colonization constantly manifest themselves in curriculum scholarship (Gaztambide-Fernández, 2006, Gaztambide-Fernández & Murad, 2011). Like seeking for *pentimento* on an old painting, browning seeks the traces of stubbornness, or failed attempts at redress, even wayward repentance left beneath the new paint. These lines are sometimes subtle, like the refusal/inability to pronounce a name correctly, or wearing clothing marked by colonial images, and other times more obvious, like praising the “fathers” of curriculum history without acknowledging their racist views and how these informed their work and contemporary influence. Citation practices also carry the marks of a racist past/present, by invoking ideas and attributing them to white scholars. Consider, for instance, how the debates between social efficiency and progressive views of education rarely account for the differences between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois, or how DuBois is typically overlooked or sidelined as a social and educational thinker, or that so many curriculum scholars—engaging with psychoanalysis know so little about Frantz Fanon (1963, 1967) and his analysis of subjecthood.

Browning proceeds by bringing attention to these practices, interrupting the dominant narrative by rudely inserting itself, reclaiming academic space, and calling the names of those who have been replaced and forgotten. To brown the curriculum, is to make it messy, to show how it is already dirty and stained, to refuse romanticized creation stories and fort pedagogies (Donald, 2012a, 2012b). Like pan-searing, browning brings out the flavor through charring. It can be experienced as an irreverent burn that dislodges the handle from the hand, it deliberately seeks to anger, to force the hidden hand of the racism that lurks at every turn of the curriculum

studies discourse. Browning highlights the present absences and invokes the ghosts of curriculum's past and futures, unsettling settler futurity.

Though it seeks to be disruptive, some have responded to attempts to brown the curriculum by being positively unflappable. The ironic response to this attempt to bring into the discourse that which has been systematically covered and silenced is that “we’ve been there, done that,” and then to proceed to list the multiple examples of white scholars doing the work of multiculturalism and critical race theory. *Been there, done that* is the ultimate dis(missal) in the academy. It communicates that the work of uncovering racism, settler colonialism, and exploitation in curriculum studies is discrete, bounded, and thus accomplish-able; indeed, it has already been accomplished. Moreover, such work is seen as a sideline—perhaps even a distraction, not central to the concerns of the field. It suggests that there is only one discussion of racism, settler colonialism, and exploitation that can be had in curriculum studies, and to dwell on it or to raise other interrogations is to hold the field back. That is, to say *been there done that* to browning is to miss the point entirely, because its aim is to disrupt so that there is no *that* to return to.

Because browning is so anti-paradigmatic to curriculum studies, the tumult of browning must either fail or be domesticated. In 2011, the *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy* invited a special Perspectives section on the topic of “browning,” in which ten scholars wrote short essays challenging the current directions of curriculum studies from Indigenous, queer, critical race, and post-, anti-, and de-colonial perspectives. After the publication, during the 2011 conference, a Town Hall session was planned for an open discussion of the articles and the implications for browning for the future of the Curriculum & Pedagogy Conference. But few had taken the time to consider the work, or even to read the content; rather than a discussion that took the ideas raised seriously, the session became a confessional, and white participants dominated the conversation with expressions of guilt, helplessness, innocence, and dismay. Thus, when the opportunity came to hold an intentional discussion about the possible contributions of browning approaches to curriculum studies, the opportunity was squandered, and white affect (without any consideration of the actual scholarly work) was made the primary rendering of the ideas.

Predictably, the public cathexis of white guilt at the conference resulted in a turn away from the relentlessness of browning toward the more flattering framing of diversity, and the organization created a new committee on “democracy and equity.” From this disappointment, brown bodies become the inevitable casualty, as the exhaustion of constantly having to explain, to recover in and against the whitestream desire for civility, takes hold. Only white bodies remain, lessons learned, knowledge consumed, (brown) bodies replaced, (white) vision restored.

Conclusion: Rematriation and Refusal

The term rematriation refers to the work of community members and scholars in curriculum studies who directly address the complicity of curriculum in the maintenance of settler colonialism (Tuck, 2011). While not yet fully theorized, we discuss rematriation here because it, by design, aims to undercut and undermine the legacy of settler colonialism in curriculum. Rematriation can be described as a form of what Donald (2012b) calls an ethical relationality, an “ecological” understanding of human relationality that does not deny difference, seeks to understand mutual implication, puts Indigenous epistemologies at the forefront, and requires a more public form of memory.

Rematriation involves rethinking the aims of research in curriculum studies so that Indigenous communities and other over-researched but invisibilized communities can reject narratives and theories that have been used against us, and re-story knowledge and research to forward our own sovereignty and wellbeing (Tuck, 2009). This framework is borne out of the insistence that the academy does not need to know everything. Not everything, or even most things uncovered in a community-based inquiry process need to be reported in academic journals or settings. There are some stories that the academy has not proved itself to be worthy of knowing (See also Tuck & Yang, forthcoming).

Elsewhere, Tuck has proposed the following rematriated aims of curriculum studies: remembering the true purposes of knowledge in/for our communities:

- uncovering the quiet thoughts and beliefs of a community
- mapping the variety of ideas in a community
- making generational knowledge of elders, youth, parents, warriors, hunters, leaders, gardeners, fishers, teachers, and others available to other generations
- using home languages to express ideas, and to bring new language to new and recovered ideas
- honoring all of our relations by engaging in the flow of knowledge in community in ways that reflect epistemology/cosmology and relationships to land (Tuck, 2011, p. 36).

Rematriation is a curricular project to be engaged by Indigenous peoples in participatory processes, the results of which may never feed back to the academy. It intends to break the loop of academic appropriation of Indigenous knowledge, and in doing so, challenges many of the assumptions about the inherent beneficence of the academic gaze. It makes some of what has been collected by academic researchers off limits, and installs limits on what can be harvested in the future.

Though sometimes Indigenous scholars carefully articulate their frameworks so that they cannot be interpreted as separatist, there are no safeguards in place against this interpretation. Indeed, it is a framework that insulates itself away from the larger body of curriculum studies work. It does not try to intervene on the larger field, except for by example, and thus does not try to rescue curriculum studies from its own problematic tendencies. In terms of effectiveness or capacity to intervene upon the curricular project of replacement, therein lies the problem. As a framework invested in Indigenous futurity, and not in settler futurity, rematriation offers little in terms of lifeboats. Instead, it insists that there are forms of knowledge that persist outside of the colonial territory, and says, *no, you can't have them*. Rematriation performs as a refusal in relation to the larger curriculum field.

Refusal

One of the core reasons that each of the interventions we have described above has failed to interrupt settler colonialism and settler colonial replacement is that each has tried to make powerful shifts without alienating white settlers. In part, this is because of complaints by white settlers, such as “well, now what am I supposed to do?” and “how will I fit into this?” The expectation is that any viable alternative frame will account for the needs of the settler, address

their anxieties, and assure them that nothing is going to require them to change or disrupt their lives.

Insofar as these and other interventions try to accommodate the affect of the settler, they cannot succeed in reshaping or reimagining curriculum studies. What is needed is a discourse of refusal, refusing to require that new works in curriculum studies soothe settler anxieties. There must be work inside curriculum studies that dis-invests in settler futurity, that refuses to intervene, that observes a writ of “do not resuscitate.” This refusal is not just a *no*, it is what is needed to generate work that is useful to us. But it is also not an invitation, it is an exaction. We exact expropriation; to speak without explication; to claim without settler colonial justification; to refuse any response or allegation.

Meanwhile, settlers in curriculum studies must hold one another accountable when they invade emergent work by requiring it to comfort their dis-ease. That is as far as we will go to provide instructions. There isn’t an easy ending. We anticipate that even with all of these refusals and exactions, this article is just as likely as any other to be incorporated and absorbed – our lines quoted, APA style, to either agree or dismiss, in some dusty footnote at the end of some argument about the proper way to do curriculum studies. We wonder who will notice when the Natty Bumppos of the field will both praise and dismiss, remove and replace, take what is necessary and position themselves, once again, as the true “native,” the true inheritors of a post-post-reconceptualized re-occupation. The most cynical view is that refusals will always be replaced as long as the vestiges of settler colonialism in curriculum studies go unobserved. Refusers will be erased, subtly written off the page as remnants of the past in a settler colonial future, and like Chingachgook, who was replaced by Natty Bumppo, their names will be misspelled on their gravestones.

Notes

¹ Here and throughout the article, we use the word “Indian” to refer to representations of Indigenous peoples in contexts of what Gerald Vizenor calls “manifest manners,” the “simulations of dominance” in which “notions and misnomers [are] read as the authentic” (1994, p. 6).

² Chingachgook dies and his grave is marked with a misspelled tombstone in *The Pioneers*, which was written in 1823, three years before *The Last of the Mohicans*, but which actually takes place after the wars depicted in the latter book. Thus, the fate of the imagined “mohicans” is already written.

³ Molar-molecular, for Deleuze and Guattari, is much more than scale (big-small/global-local), and involves how they are seen, taken up, observed.

⁴ As an aside, an interesting observation that arose as we developed this argument, is about the use of Dewey to argue against frameworks that might intervene upon curriculum politics as usual. Dewey is frequently employed as a settler move to innocence (Malwhinney, 1998; Tuck & Yang, 2012) to deflect direct challenges to the settler colonial curricular project of replacement, a slight of hand while a coin is pulled from behind the ear.

⁵ For example, Michael Marker’s (2006) critique of the emphasis on pluralism within multicultural education (ME) rests on how ME positions itself as comparative without examining the “historical and constructed nature of the anthropocentric normal,” (p. 497) and frames encounters with indigenous knowledge as “a glimpse into an ethnic community, rather than a challenge to the mainstream values and goals of schooling” (p. 503).

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