

# Engaging the Faces of ‘Resistance’ and Social Change from Decolonizing Perspectives Toward Transforming Neoliberal Higher Education

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## Introduction

‘RESISTANCE’ IS AN UNDER THEORIZED CONCEPT in education, particularly in the study of higher education. While the term is pervasive in educational discourse, what resistance means and evokes remain cloudy. Furthermore, in recent years, the question of colonialism is garnering attention in educational research (particularly in curriculum studies) evident in the resurgence of books and journal special issues examining the intersections between colonial relations and knowledge production, representation, and indigenous struggle (e.g. Coloma, 2009; Dei & Kempf, 2008; Grande, 2004; Kanu, 1999; Smith, 1999; Subedi & Daza, 2008; Willinsky, 1998). However, the theorization of resistance remains scarce in postcolonial and anticolonial discourses within the field of education. Both these latter schools of thought critically examine the multiple faces of colonialism in the past and present context, and encapsulates the intransience of colonizing practices (with different emphases) at the discursive, material, and cultural arenas in the academy and beyond. In this essay review, I examine two books with the objective of addressing these gaps in terms of resistance, neoliberal higher education, and social change. I critically analyze David Jeffress’ (2008) sole authored book, entitled “Postcolonial Resistance: Culture, Liberation and Transformation” (PR) and Arlo Kempf’s (2009) edited book, entitled “Breaching The Colonial Contract: Anti-colonialism in the US and Canada” (BCC).

I will use these books to critically examine the concept of resistance in post/anticolonial perspectives and apply it to the context of neoliberal higher education. I also critically examine the two books to answer the following questions: How does anticolonialism differ from postcolonialism? How does postcolonial theory address the question of resistance? How does the idea of indigeneity fit into postcolonial theorizing? What does resistance look like from these two theoretical perspectives? I will first briefly summarize these two books. In the following sections, I will illuminate how these two books converge and diverge, as well as their strengths

and weaknesses. To this end, I discuss two emerging overarching themes: 1) the four faces of resistance, and 2) anticolonialism versus postcolonialism and the question of indigeneity. Based on my review, I argue that we need intricate and context specific understandings of resistance that connect the discursive with material relations of power. I conclude by examining how these books enrich the question of resistance and social change in neoliberal higher education.

### Brief Overview

These two books offer numerous theoretical and concrete examples of thinking through the concept of ‘resistance’ and ‘social change’ from post/anticolonial theoretical perspectives. *PR* examines how postcolonial theory conceptualizes resistance in dominant ways. The book is divided into an introduction, four chapters, and a conclusion. David Jeffress’ goal is to provide an alternative way of conceptualizing resistance, which he calls ‘transformation.’ He argues that postcolonial theory neglects such models of transformational resistance exemplified by both Gandhi and the South African liberation struggle. For Jeffress, resistance as transformation is intrinsic to Fanon’s concept of decolonization—a “new humanism” centering a politics of transformation through restructuring social relationships. In other words, Jeffress’ objective is to reframe the idea of resistance as an effort to *transform* social relations rather than simply viewing resistance as a *reactive* movement, which either opposes or subverts colonial rule. Jeffress draws on literature, historiography, and literary criticism as pieces of evidence to reconceptualize the concept of resistance. He specifically draws on literature, “to examine the way in which works of literature take part in, comment upon, the cultural frameworks of storytelling or narrative that inform colonial authority and the ideal of liberation” (p. 14). *PR* offers a timely contribution to the field of postcolonial studies by helping us critically examine contemporary struggles and the frames of resistance informing them.

According to Arlo Kempf, the editor, *BCC* offers “an anticolonial conversation already long underway” (p. 2) analyzing “a broad spectrum of topics and contexts” (p. 6) within the context of Canada and United States. This edited collection consists of a foreword, an introduction, 12 chapters, and an afterword. The collection represents an impressive compilation of interdisciplinary scholarship by prominent senior scholars, junior faculty and graduate students. Kempf’s aim for the collection is twofold: to re-center the agency of the colonized and foreground the accountability of the colonizer. Referencing African Canadian activist scholar George Dei, Kempf argues for rethinking the term ‘colonial’ by moving beyond its generic views such as territorial imperialism or states of indirect/direct cultural control. Instead, he argues that we need to view colonial as anything imposing or dominating. This reformulation, “allows for the recentering of objective assessments of power relations” and “the myriad ways which colonialism has shed its skin only to emerge in a new form—shape shifting to accommodate the needs of the colonizer (newly and broadly conceived)” (p. 1). Such a concept of colonial reminds me of Walter Mignolo’s (2005) idea of coloniality referring to the logic of domination underlying both the Euro-American past and present control of the economy, subjectivity, and politics. Colonialism, instead, refers to the specific historical periods and places of imperial domination. *BCC* covers a wide range of topics, ranging from Fourth world struggles to the colonial ableist discourse in World Health Organization (WHO) policy. The book focuses on resistance and the degree to which anticolonial activism and theory applies to different sites (discursive and physical) across the United States and Canada (p. 2). Kempf’s volume would

have been more effective if divided into sections. As a result, I found it hard to make sense of the sequence of chapters. Moreover, the inconsistency among contributors of BCC in situating themselves in the text raised questions regarding their anticolonial approach. While in PR, Jeffress fails to deal with education, Kempf does include some essays in BCC addressing educational issues, such as classroom pedagogy, intellectual labor, indigenous education, student walk outs, and multicultural education.

To sum up, both books critically examine the question of resistance. PR teases out the different facets of resistance and seeks to center transformational resistance in postcolonialism. BCC operating from an anti-colonial standpoint suggests acknowledging the agency of the colonized and accountability of colonizer to enact social change in North America. In the following sections, I tease out how these two books illuminate the different facets of resistance, and differentiate anticolonial from postcolonial perspectives.

### The Four Faces of Resistance

The overarching theme connecting these two books is the question of resistance. The eclectic ways in which they speak to this topic are both their strengths and weaknesses. Both books remind us that resistance was and still is an important theme within colonial relations. While PR reminds us how contemporary postcolonial studies neglects certain resistance models of the past, BCC provides contemporary examples of ongoing anticolonial struggle across geographical borders and social spaces within the North American context. PR effectively teases out the nuances of the concept of resistance, yet its author fails to link it with contemporary colonial struggles. Ironically, BCC, a collection that claims to be about resistance, unfortunately under theorizes the question of resistance. These books speak to four faces of resistance that I will discuss next. More specifically, I will discuss the different facets of resistance theorized by PR, and then explore some examples from the BCC chapters when applicable that are congruent to the key theoretical assumptions of these four faces of resistance.

The first face of resistance is the cultural resistance framework predominantly used in postcolonial literary studies. Scholars/activists from this approach assume writing constitute acts of resistance since they expose the cultural assumptions and binary thought underlying the colonial narrative and provide an alternative reading of colonial authority. In the introductory chapter of PR, Jeffress highlights the limitations of this cultural resistance framework. He argues that literature is perceived as resistance so long as, 1) colonial narratives are displaced or 2) postcolonial literature is constructed as the Other to the colonial narrative. According to Jeffress, such a writing/reading act fails to transform the social relations of power and maintains the metropole as the normative reference point. In BCC, such a cultural resistance framework is apparent in a number of chapters. For instance, in Chapter 9 of BCC, Katie Aubrecht and Tanya Titchosky conducts a textual analysis on the interconnection between mental illness and the normalizing gaze of dominant health agencies such as the World Health Organization and the World Bank. They argue how embodiment is a space of knowledge that is colonized to such an extent that the idea of difference among bodies, senses, and mental states is erased. Similarly, in Chapter 10, Patrick De Walt draws a powerful, but a scary parallel, between plantation systems and current higher education system. In this insightful article, De Walt, uses the system of enslavement to analyze how higher education is implicated in “harvesting intellectual labor,” whereby “corporate and intellectual capitalism looks to sustain, expand, and promote its own

interests in the guise of pursuing and cultivating knowledge” (p. 201). Here universities exploit faculty and student labor to harvest knowledge. In short, the ‘speaking or writing back’ approach tries to disrupt the normalizing effect of dominant colonial narratives (that have a material effect on minoritized bodies), with limited material impact. In summary, the cultural resistance framework, underlying these BCC chapters, contests colonial power and its narratives by challenging the cultural presuppositions of colonial epistemology and providing alternative readings through acts of reading and writing.

Resistance-as-subversion employing colonial discourse theory is the second face of resistance. In this approach, resistance undermines the hegemony and authority of colonial knowledge production by *subverting* the binary thought and essentialist identities produced by colonial knowledge. For instance, in the first chapter of PR, Jeffress presents Homi Bhabha’s work as an exemplar of this framework. Bhabha locates resistance *in the spaces between* colonial expectations and the native’s response, so that the disempowered can calculate strategies, ‘alter,’ and ‘displace’ authority within these in-between spaces. In this model, subverting colonial authority is possible because such power is never total, nor absolute, due to hybridity, mimicry, and liminality. According to Jeffress, Bhabha provides postcolonial studies with the conceptual tools to “illuminate the way in which more material forms of opposition, struggle, and protest can be seen as enabling, and enabled by, modes of discursive *refusal*, wherein the colonial narrative does not simply fail but is transformed by the colonized in politically meaningful ways” (p. 29). However, an overarching critique of this model is that subversion in itself falls short of changing social material relations—transformation. Furthermore, subversion tends to overlook the material relations of power (e.g. the conditions of labor exploitation, and/or access to resources)—a central part of the colonial problem. This framework is also limited to individualist notions of agency. In other words, resistance-as-subversion using colonial discourse theory reduces colonialism into a cultural project by ignoring: 1) the material impact on colonized people, and 2) significance as an ideology and structure of material relationships (i.e. capitalism). In summary, resistance-as-subversion evokes resistance from within the ‘cracks’ and ‘in-between spaces’ of colonial power by undermining colonial authority and colonial knowledge systems. It enables political struggle by discursively refusing colonial identities and binary thought processes. However, this resistance overlooks the material structures of power and collective notions of agency.

Jeffress then uses Indian political struggle in South Africa to rethink Bhabha’s notion of mimicry. He compellingly argues for the use of colonial discourse theory in social transformation. Historically, the colonized used colonial discourse theory as a tool to deconstruct colonial knowledge and create alternative readings of the self and colonial authority. These new imaginaries in turn informed and led to collective struggles toward transformative possibilities. In short, Jeffress is unsatisfied with Bhabha’s ideas of resistance as the failure or fragmentation of colonial authority. Instead, he demonstrates how such authority was countered and in some instances changed into opportunities for reconciliation. Such a revised resistance-as-subversion model is apparent in Chapter 5 of BCC. In this chapter, Antonio Lopez examines the student walkouts that took place in El Paso, Texas in March 2006. Students used colonial discourse theory to deconstruct the “the hypocrisy of American exceptionalism and liberal discourses of color blindness” (p. 96). They unpacked colonial discourses of immigration such as House Bill 4437 (which further criminalizes undocumented US-Mexico border crossers and may result in constructing a 700 mile fence) and used these alternative readings to mobilize for student walkouts. For Lopez, these walkouts represent a form of anticolonial resistance towards Euro-

American colonial/modern disciplinarity. However, as Jeffress has theorized, these student walkouts while subversive to colonial authority fail to change social relations of power (i.e. immigration policies).

The third face of resistance is the resistance-as-opposition framework. Based on a binary Manichean (good/evil) frame, this approach challenges the social-material relations produced by colonial difference. Resistance here “constitutes organized political and military struggle against colonial rule and the structure of the colonial economy” (PR, p. 3). Such forms of resistance are apparent in the theories informing particular chapters in BCC. In the foreword of BCC, Peter McLaren, informed by a neo-Marxist framework, supports an anticolonial pedagogy that contests the exploitation embedded in capitalist production and social relations. To this end, he critiques poststructuralist and culturalist formulations of theorizing as being embedded in “contingently subversive capacity” and “anti-politics of postmodernism” (p. xii). Instead, McLaren suggest that we need to “advance the struggle for a socialist alternative to capitalism...into a post-capitalist future” (p. xiv). In chapter 8, Peter Sawchuk brings an anticolonial lens to union movements in Canada. In line with McLaren’s reminder of capitalist oppression, Sawchuk directs our attention to the internal colonial relations reproduced within the Canadian nation-state in the context of global capitalism that stratifies labor forces to a degree where people of color continue to be at the bottom of totem pole. He highlights how “community unionism” among hotel workers represents a mode of anticolonial resistance. Sawchuck states, “we can see a challenge to these [capitalist/racist] relations through an emerging form of collective action structured by the intersection of communities of color and organized labor against the backdrop of capitalist labor processes and control” (p. 173). In short, such a resistance framework centers on collectively opposing the intersections of race, gender, and class relations within the totality of capital.

Jeffress, in chapter 2 offers four critical responses to resistance-as-opposition. First, Jeffress questions whether Manicheism is the only way to understand the colonial relationship. Second, based on a collective identity, this model reinforces the binary framework of colonial knowledge by essentializing the past and manipulating colonial knowledge to forge an identity (rather than something derived from the process of struggle). In other words, resistance-as-opposition perpetuates the colonial identities produced by the colonizers. However, anticolonial activists like Fanon, based on an ethic of humanism, have argued the need to deconstruct and transform these colonial identities. Third, resistance to one field of power reinforces another as we can escape certain relationships of power but not the whole structure. Fourth, resistance-as opposition, i.e. act of saying 'no'--closes the possibility of transforming the web of power. Jeffress, to his defense, acknowledges the existence of binary material relations between colonial subjects and acknowledges the narratives of antagonism tied to identity and political action. However, he questions whether such a frame of analysis helps us in the project of transformation, i.e. "understanding how these differences can be transformed" (p. 63). Drawing, particularly from Frantz Fanon and Edward Said, he compels us to see the transformative dimensions of resistance arguing that it remains under theorized in these two activist scholars’ writings.

The fourth face of resistance is the resistance-as-transformation framework. Departing from the earlier three frameworks of resistance discussed above, Jefress teases out this fourth framework in chapters three and four of PR. He uses Gandhi and the South African reconciliation initiatives to theorize and support the relevance of resistance as transformation. This form of resistance fosters a mutual interdependence between Self and Other rather than antagonism. Within this framework, resistance “requires both the affirmation of human

connection (i.e. as the disruption of the binary framework for social difference) and the alteration of structures of exploitation” (p. 105). Gandhism, for instance, required and supported liberation because of a particular *way of being*, and not as the outcome of struggle or revolution. Furthermore, Gandhi, according to Jeffress, “constructs oppression as a structure constituted by those who participate within it and, hence, foregrounds the responsibility, and agency of the subject” (p. 130), as well as requires the privileged to take account of their role in colonial violence. In short, Gandhian resistance foregrounds “the transformation of the material and discursive structures that maintain oppression, and a ‘new humanism’ *is* resistance rather than its after-effect or aim” (p. 134). Gandhi deconstructs the self/other binary of colonial discourse and acknowledges the structures of inequality producing the conflict.

In Chapter four, Jeffress continues his argument about the potential of resistance in transformation by examining the reconciliation process in South Africa. He argues that this project of reconciliation deconstructs colonial knowledge and produces an alternative discourse demanding an alternative structure of relations through recognition, redistribution, and connection. Furthermore, while colonial discourse theory’s deconstruction of colonial identity illuminates the historical function of power within the colonial project, it fails to provide a *framework for dismantling* these structures of identity or contending their political effects. Moreover, the frameworks of identity and relationships established through colonial discourse limit anticolonial theorists’ construction of resistance against colonial oppression. Reconciliation, on the other hand, requires recognizing the memories of the past, and acknowledging the abuse, violence and discourse of apartheid violence. It also involves changing the discourse to offer a narrative of meaning, not for the past, but for the present and the future. In short, this transformation model articulates an alternative discourse to set up a new set of relationships. Reconciliation is not symbolic of conflict resolution, but continues the process of transformation of both the narratives within which people make sense of their experiences and the material structures prescribed by these narratives.

In BCC, this resistance model seems apparent in contemporary colonial relations, in Chapter 6 by Zainab Amadahy and Bonita Lawrence. This chapter critically examines the complex relationships between African-descended Canadians maintaining a settler relationship with Aboriginal peoples, despite their long history of intermarriages, collaboration, and adoptions. African descendants are continually forced to move to Indigenous land due to past and present colonial processes in the international scale. To foster living in co-existence, the authors argue for reclaiming the idea of mutual-interdependence embedded in indigenous knowledges. They state:

[I]t is important to recall that the framework for how Indigenous peoples relate to non-Indigenous peoples is laid out in our histories, stories, and spiritual tenets...Whatever emerges from relationship-building between Black and Indigenous communities should take place within this framework as opposed to competitive materialistic ones, which to date have not served either people. (p. 131)

Similar to the Amadahy and Lawrence’s chapter, in the concluding chapter, Jeffress leaves us with some thought provoking ideas, such as, are we working towards liberation as “freedom to”, or “simply freedom from?” (p. 181). Jeffress concludes that ahimsa and reconciliation are resistant mainly because of the way they seek to *dismantle* (rather than critique) the binary framework of colonial knowledge and the dominant revolutionary/conflict narrative. This model

is also about altered identities, discourses, and social relations, rather than simply a reversed structure of material relations of power and identities.

In summary, both books remind us that we cannot ignore the material dimensions of colonial domination, which sometimes get misplaced when we see a colonial act as part of only a discursive apparatus. These books also foreground the question of meaning and knowing as an entry point informing resistance by unpacking dominant narratives to change the imaginary and for self-determination, i.e. let go of mental colonization. Hence, as the BCC collection argues, colonial is not only territorial, but an arena where sites of difference become operationalized for oppression and domination to emerge (I discuss this further in the next section). To undo colonial relations, we need to acknowledge the material and epistemological arenas (including the non-material, that includes the spiritual), as sites of resistance. Both books highlight the intricacies and nuances of oppression and domination, while shedding light on the complexity of social change, including raising the question, ‘to what end’.

### Post- versus Anti-: The Question of Indigineity

The other major theme cutting across both books are the ways each theorizes anticolonialism and postcolonialism respectively. Beyond the different prefixes attached in front of colonialism, I wondered about the differences between these two theoretical perspectives. Based on my analysis of these books, I will argue in this section, that the questions of Indigineity, activist orientation, and the interrogation of settler nation-states, are the key differences between anticolonialism and postcolonialism.

According to Jeffress, postcolonialism is a signifier of postcolonial studies that began “as a critique of the English literature canon and English colonial historiography.” Its focus and analysis lie in the politics of representation tied to the culture of colonialism, and the “discourses of civilization, modernity and humanism” rationalizing colonial domination (pp. 4-5). Interestingly, Jeffress associates anti-colonial thought with ideas derived from anti-colonial revolutionaries (such as Amilcar Cabral, Aime Cesaire, Leopold Senghor, C.L. R James, and Frantz Fanon). However, throughout the book, when discussing postcolonial resistance, Jeffress draws on theorists from culturalist, poststructuralist, and materialist schools of thought. Hence, for Jeffress, postcolonialism includes all these schools of thought. After reading PR, I was left with the thought that perhaps anti-colonialism was the materialist version of postcolonial studies?

The materialist identity of anticolonialism was also present in Peter McLaren’s BCC prologue. McLaren dismisses postcolonial theorizing by conflating it solely with cultural and poststructural versions. While acknowledging the use of postcolonialism in unpacking the conceptual, epistemological, and cultural dimensions of learning, he argues, we simultaneously need “to recognize that the totalizing power of capital creates constitutive limitations in which subjectivities are formed” (p. xii). Unlike postcolonialism, McLaren posits that anticolonialism acknowledges the connections between capital and subjectivity. Conversely, Henry Giroux, in Chapter 4 of BCC, points out that postcolonialism advances theoretical inquiry by implicating both dominant and radical theories within the history of European colonialism, which continue to “determine both the institutional conditions of knowledge” and “the terms of contemporary institutional practices” (p. 85). Giroux’s version of postcolonialism critically examines epistemological and agency dimensions of colonial relations stemming from European colonial

history. According to these two authors, postcolonialism examines the remnants of colonial relations at the interstices of epistemology, representation, agency, and identity

Kempf's introductory chapter and Chapter 1 of BCC further distinguish anticolonialism from postcolonialism. According to Kempf, anti-colonial thought is a resistance oriented approach that centers the transhistorical dimension of colonial (persisting in colonized and colonizing nations) and demands the accountability of the privileged/colonizer to undo colonial relations (p. 26). Ontologically, anticolonialism assumes that the oppressed can overcome oppression and change is possible, and epistemologically centers the knowledge of the oppressed. In this paradigm, colonization describes the process by which abstract social relations become sites of concrete (material and non-material) oppression along the lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and language. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, according to Kempf, anticolonialism critically examines the presence of colonial relation in two major arenas: 1) the plight of indigenous peoples' struggle around the globe, and 2) the globalization of whiteness by partnering global capital with the "spread of mainstream Euro/American cultural values" and interlocking "with gender, sexuality, ability" (p. 5). Anticolonialism, according to Kempf, is the project of undoing social locations as sites of concrete oppression. These definitions of anticolonialism suggest that this perspective predominantly understands resistance from a resistance-as-opposition model, as opposed to resistance-as-subversion or resistance-as-transformation.

Unlike Giroux and Jeffress, some contributors of BCC coming from an anticolonial approach extend their definition of colonial relations beyond Europe, its episteme, and questions of identity. For instance, Kempf's definition of colonial extends beyond European colonialism, and includes "nation-to-nation, person to person and region to region," and argues that these levels of colonial relations mutually constitute each other (p. 18). Kempf further posits that "people are made foreigners in their own lands by way of the colonial encounter and that numerous markers of difference (class, ethnicity, race, gender, sexuality, ability, and others) serve as the basis for exclusion from/by dominant pedagogical, political, and cultural practices" (p. 26). Unlike postcolonialism, anticolonialism focuses on the complexity of identity *only* to offer a better understanding of power relations, strategies for resistance, and accountability. To this end, according to George Dei in the epilogue of BCC, anti-colonial discourse focuses on collective bodies working together in political struggle despite their nuanced differences. Rather than mere discursive analysis as evident in many descriptions of postcolonialism, anticolonialism is about political action. Echoing this idea of praxis within anticolonialism, Johnathon Langdon and Blane Harvey in Ch. 11 of BCC, reimagine enacting anticolonial pedagogy within higher education classrooms. They argue that an anticolonial approach to education unpacks Eurocentric ways of knowing from the standpoint of Non-western knowledge systems, acknowledges the material reality of minoritized, and connects these understandings with action and practice.

However, BCC fails to convince me how the collection as a whole came from an anticolonial approach versus a postcolonial framework. Less than a handful of the contributors distinguish between the two theoretical perspectives. Moreover, most authors in BCC fail to justify their use of the anticolonial perspective, even though they highlight the inadequacy of postcolonial approach. Furthermore, authors like Giroux, continue to use the postcolonial framework. As a result, I was left with some unanswered questions, which included: How are the authors conducting anticolonial work? How do these papers engage with each other beyond citing the editor's first chapter? A clear definition of what made these essays anticolonial would have helped me as a reader to discern the distinction, beyond just using the label, and further convey



the power of anticolonialism in contemporary contexts. Overall, one has to interrogate how authors in BCC conceptualize postcolonialism to differentiate it from anticolonialism. Contributors of BCC predominantly view postcolonial discourse in terms of poststructuralist and cultural analyses (except for Giroux), and overlook the materialist and psychoanalyst schools of thought that comprise postcolonialism (see Loomba, 1998; Young, 2001; Mcleod, 2007). Some of these latter schools of thought would resonate with some of the anticolonial tenets expressed by some BCC authors. In short, the power of the anticolonial approach was lost in BCC through a lack of explicit discussion *across* the collection on the rationales for an anticolonial approach and the differences between such an approach and the postcolonial framework.

Despite its shortcoming, BCC consistent with Kempf's articulation of anticolonialism raises the question of Indigeneity. By indigeneity, I am referring to an epistemology or a way of knowing that privileges the politics of the colonized or a collective that continues to experience the brunt of colonialism in the contemporary context. In other words, borrowing from Smith (1999), Indigeneity represents a group of people's epistemology for whom decolonization is "unfinished business" (p. 7). By the term Indigeneity, I am not referring to a people's fixed identity. Instead, I am signifying ways of being connected to a sense of "original occupancy" of a physical land (where colonialism is not over) and politics of collective self-determination, and ways of knowing passed from generation to generation (despite being displaced from the original land) that include multiple ways of knowing (see Gegeo, 2001). While many of the signifiers identified with Indigeneity apply to indigenous peoples around the world (hence, Indigeneity is used interchangeably with indigenous peoples), it applies to other groups, such as Tibetans in China, or Okinawans in Japan, or other minoritized groups forced of their land due to transnational capital.

Coming from the perspective of Indigeneity, some contributors of BCC critically scrutinize the nation-state. For instance, in chapter 2 of BCC, Ward Churchill maps out how the three worlds, "First, Second and Third Worlds" are built at the expense of their hosts—Indigenous nations comprising the Fourth world. Churchill further posits that we continue to overlook Fourth world struggles by using the three world discourse. In Chapter 3, Calderon interrogates the *colonial* blindness of Normative Multicultural Education (NMCE) discourse in U.S. schooling. According to Calderon, the NMCE discourse inserts Native Americans in the same category as African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Latinos/Latinas in educational policy. She argues that collapsing Native American issues as part of minoritized educational issues renders invisible "native self-determination, its accompanying nation-building projects, and it does not take into account the importance of native cultures and knowledge in maintaining native sovereignty" (p. 54). Calderon argues for an anticolonial education model that "demands a rejection of Western metaphysics, a move toward epistemological and ontological diversification, and the shattering of colonial blind ideologies and practices (p. 73). My only contention with Calderon's argument is her use of ableist language of "colorblindness" that continues in anti-racist discourse. Calderon's chapter in BCC raises the question of multicultural education that still stems from civil rights discourse and hence overlooks the politics of indigeneity.

On the other hand, PR focused on past anticolonial movements remains oblivious to the question of Indigeneity. This is apparent when one turns to the index section of the book, and notices that the phrase "indigenous peoples" is missing in the index list. However, Jeffress does briefly cite and mention Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith's work. Despite this brief mention, PR reproduces the weakness noted by many indigenous scholars about postcolonial theory. As

Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues, indigenous scholars are averse towards postcolonial theorization because it leaves out “indigenous peoples, our ways of knowing and our current concerns” (p. 24). This overlook seems a major weakness of PR, particularly when Jeffress aims to bring postcolonial theorizing into the cotemporary context. The failure to discuss indigenous peoples’ struggles suggests that Jeffress’ postcolonial theorizing is stuck on the past as it theorizes resistance based on historical examples of colonialism and resistance. In other words, by focusing on past examples, PR continues to perpetuate the critique lodged on postcolonialism by Ella Shohat (1992) and Anne McLintock (1992) who argue that postcolonialism as a signifier continues to reinforce the idea that colonialism is a past issue. In short, PR fails to connect with questions of colonial domination and resistance that are prevalent today (see Shohat, 1992). Given this omission of Indigeneity, I questioned the usefulness of the transformational resistance model in the context of cultural genocide and fourth world struggles. Interestingly, Jeffress draws on the award winning novelist and activist Arundhati Roy to discuss the efficacy of an ethic of humanism. However, recently Roy, who identified as a pacifist, has changed her position after her recent work with indigenous struggle in Kashmir arguing that violence is necessary in this context because of the way these groups are being exterminated by the nation-state (Democracy Now, 2010). In short, the effectiveness of resistance models needs to be evaluated within its specific social context, rather than using the same yardstick. To sum up, PR fails to center the idea of Indigeneity in thinking through the question of resistance and perpetuates the critiques lodged against postcolonialism by focusing on past struggles.

However, I cannot generalize the strengths and weaknesses, nor the points of convergence and divergence, between anticolonialism and postcolonialism based on just these two books. I could argue, however, based on my analysis of these two texts, that the question of Indigeneity, activist orientation, and the question of settler-nation state, seem to be the key difference between these two frameworks. Part of the struggle with teasing out the differences, is interrogating the ways in which these terms are represented by different authors, as they vary in meaning across authors. Hence, these books are an excellent entry point in swimming in this quick sand of concepts, and trying to find our way of making sense of what these schools of thought may represent, what they mean, and how do they intersect/diverge.

### Theoretical Enrichments for the Field of Higher Education

As a scholar who specializes in the study of equity and social justice, and the globalization of higher education, I found resonance in some of the ways in which these two books help us reimagine and enact social change in both our university and college campuses in an era of neoliberal reform (Spring, 2009; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010; Olson & Peters, 2005). In a climate of university global rankings, growing competition among nation-states for high-skilled labor, increased rivalry between higher education institutions, and the escalating role of transnational institutions in higher education policy, I witnessed daily (through my teaching and scholarship) how North American universities and colleges are self-promoting and reconfiguring to serve the ‘race’ for harvesting intellectual labor, profit, and knowledge consumption (see Bassett, 2006; Cnaan & Shumar, 2008; Giroux, 2002; OECD, 2008). Using the discourse of remaining competitive within the knowledge economy, international organizations (such as the OECD and World Bank) are particularly collaborating with nation-states to restructure higher education to serve global capital (King, 2009; Naidoo, 2008). Furthermore, English has become the dominant

language globally in terms of research and scholarship that privileges the West (Spring, 2009). In such an era of dominant neoliberal subjectivity pervading higher educational policy and practice (Caanan & Shumar, 2008; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010), these two books provide ample ways of reimagining and evoking sites of resistance within these contexts.

So how do we resist these forces of domination? First, we need to understand the myriad ways in which resistance *already* takes place in higher education institutions evoked by students, teachers, faculty, administrators, and staff in a various contexts (see for example Baez, 2000; Caanan & Shumar, 2008; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Wagner, Acker & Mayuzumi, 2009; Shahjahan, 2010). Examining every day acts of resistance offer us a more nuanced picture of power relations (see Abu-Lughod, 1990). These books help us see the intricacies of resistance and the myriad ways people mobilize for change depending on context, both in the past and the present. For instance, BCC's coverage of a diversity of topics provides me a sense of hope that resistance and change are happening in the contemporary context. Furthermore, PR reminds me of the forms of resistance that have been ignored in postcolonial studies. The strength of these books lay in specific chapters highlighting the human face, lived experiences, and material effects of power on everyday lives of minoritized bodies. We need to also caution from romanticizing resistance. The study of resistance becomes a slippery rock when we romanticize it without critically interrogating the colonial relations that could be reproduced through acts of resistance (see Abu-Lughod, 1990).

For me as a reader, these books also raised numerous questions about the normative assumptions surrounding the discourse of resistance and how we (in higher education), conceptualize and imagine resistance in higher education theory, policy, and practice. For instance, when we speak of student resistance, do we understand resistance as being a collective act and/or an individual act, or a subversive act and/or oppositional act? Rarely, do we consider resistance from a transformational resistance model. Furthermore, by focusing on and celebrating individual acts of resistance by student affairs administrators, or faculty, or students, or staff, how do we ensure accountability in terms of policy changes and allocation of resources to bring about material change in structures of power (e.g. more resources needed for equity and diversity initiatives)? These books remind us that we need to tease out the various forms of resistance and understand the linkages as well as the limitations of focusing on micro versus macro-forms of resistance. These books also foreground how the limitations of the hegemony of power (e.g. neoliberalism) and the fluidity of subject positions (social positionality in the academic hierarchy) may be a possible site to mobilize for change. In other words, dominant discourses of neoliberalism are often contested and contingent as they require us to perform particular norms to be naturalized and repeated in order to be effective (Cannan & Shumar, 2008). For instance, during a recent doctoral seminar on globalization of higher education, I was reminded how university staff in lower ranks are increasingly facing job insecurity, work intensification, and increased surveillance from higher level administrators. However, given their positionalities, these staff members also highlighted how by viewing some of the contradictions between the mission of their universities and their everyday work experiences that reduced resources (e.g. for student development or diversity initiatives), they would attempt to change or disrupt the dominant discourses in the context of their workplaces, e.g. during meetings or informal conversations with colleagues. However, a sole focus on this latter subversive strategy may overlook the material dimensions of colonial power and oppression (commodification and exploitation of academic labor) and collective sources of oppression. For instance, the doctoral students in the seminar mentioned above, spoke of the materially risks involved with critiquing their work

places on campus or in public due to job insecurities tied to funding cutbacks and their role in maintaining the positive ‘brand’ of their universities to improve student recruitment and retention.

Conversely with resistance, these books help us see oppression in holistic ways, in terms of how it gets encoded across borders, bodies, transhistorically, and how there are material and nonmaterial dimensions of oppression. These books help us bring the question of history, political economy, the nation-state, representation, epistemology, and ways of being to bear with pedagogy inside and outside of higher education. The question of nation-state is raised by BCC where the question of democracy and social justice in the context of settler societies residing on Fourth people’s land may be forgotten among minoritized bodies who are stuck on discourses of civil rights, multicultural education, and diasporic struggle. For instance, the whole idea of land-grant universities and the Morrill Act in higher education in the United States becomes a site of interrogation, as it raises the question of whose land was being distributed in the first place (N. Osei-Kofi, personal communication, June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010). In short, this historical amnesia is a product of the silencing and marginalization of indigenous knowledges in academia and society in general.

These books also complicate our understanding of social change. Particularly, PR asks us to think and complicate different forms of social change and reimagine how it can come about within higher education and larger society. For instance, does social change mean just disrupting the status quo (i.e. faculty using arts-based pedagogy or publishing counter-narratives), or working against the status quo, or is it working towards an alternative vision that is embedded in an ethics of humanity? These books help us reformulate higher education as not something that takes place in the walls of colleges or universities, but are implicated in the everyday fabric of life. They remind us that materialist formulations of subjugation cannot be separate from discursive regimes that codify, construct binaries, and reshape the minds of the colonizer and colonized within higher education settings. For instance, we cannot separate the funding cutbacks towards equity studies (e.g. ethnic studies, women’s studies, disability studies etc.) that we are experiencing on our university campuses from the global competition among higher education institutions tied to the global knowledge economy. While acknowledging the binaristic models of oppression, it is important not to be defined by it, but to transcend and transform these binaristic social relations in some contexts. These books remind us that to undo colonial relation in higher education requires the bridging of materialist and discursive sites of resistance. As a result, these books affirm other possibilities of conducting resistance, such as changing the narratives of power first (e.g. discourses of meritocracy or performance accountability) in our classrooms, offices, and meetings, in order to change the material realities. And/or beginning with dismantling the material reality (e.g. capitalist structures of higher education) of our university/college campuses, for instance, by actively pursuing funding sources beyond corporations. Finally, do we resist *against* something, or do we resistance *for* and *towards* some alternative vision of higher education?

Jeffress reminds us, through citing examples of Gandhi and South African reconciliation process, that our ways of knowing are interconnected to our ways of being. Transforming our ways of knowing and concrete materialist relations is insufficient to enact transformation in higher education. We need to also reclaim and nurture alternative ways of being (see Stewart-Harawira, 2005). These sites of ontological resistances seem to be essential for social change to occur in higher education. More specifically, we need to transform governance structures, faculty-student relations, classrooms, and administrative services in higher education so that we

can nurture alternative ways of being. For instance, I and other faculty colleagues have used arts-based pedagogy to move beyond the mind and nurture ‘slowing down’ and embodied ways of being in higher education spaces. While the latter strategy is not a panacea for social transformation, it may be one way to affirm alternative ways of being in the neoliberal academy.

However, one place that these books and our conversation need to push towards is the ‘embodied’ cost of resistance. To put it differently, what do we pay for through our bodies, emotion, spirits, as we resist? While we can continue to theorize resistance in academia, there is an embodied nature of resistance that cannot be captured in academic prose, but only in personal narratives, poetry and other art forms. These multiple ways of knowing seem to be missing in these two books. Such a discussion of the role of the physical body (however, discursively produced) and the invisible spirit within needs more attention in the discussion of resistance. We need to move beyond examining resistance through our ‘minds’ (i.e. conceptually) that pervades higher education due to Cartesian dualism. Resistance, oppression and social change will be decolonized if we center multiple ways of knowing and being that move beyond the Eurocentric ‘mind’. The question of our bodies and spirit seem central to me in any discussion of resistance, and a place that we need to visit more often in the higher education context.

I would encourage people to read both books, but warn both books would require reading some foundational texts, before one could grapple with the plethora of issues dealing with colonialism, resistance and social change. Hence, I would recommend these texts for advance-level graduate seminars and hope these books would find an audience with academics and graduate students in cultural studies, higher education, curriculum studies, educational policy, ethnic studies, and global studies. In short, while these books helped answer many of my questions regarding the question of resistance in postcolonial studies and the differences between post- and anti-, they left more questions to be answered, which I hope, in turn will inspire readers of these books to engage with in the future.

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