(Re)Imagining Anti-Colonial Notions of Ethics in Research and Practice

Eileen Galvez, Susana M. Muñoz

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Because the work of scholars and student affairs practitioners is primarily confined within colonial institutions of higher education, their ethics of research and practice are also primarily bound by the same colonial perspective. Colonial practices perpetuate white dominance and therefore harm students, specifically those from marginalized communities in higher education. In this article, we draw from an anti-colonial perspective to complicate these ethics of research and practice. In this way, we intend to shine a light on and challenge the replication of colonialism in research relationships between researchers and practitioners. Utilizing duoethnography, we engaged an epistemology of theory in the flesh to interrogate and unpack the notion of ethics from our lived experiences. We examined ethics in research practice and ethics in student affairs practice. Through these domains, we explored who ethics were made for, in what ways ethics are a form of social control, and the role whiteness plays in how ethical decisions are employed. We conclude with an anti-colonial manifesto urging higher education scholars and practitioners to consider questions, challenges, and tensions for ethics.

In the academy, ethics are often thought of as basic standards or guiding principles within research and practice. These standards are found in institutional review board (IRB) processes, codes of conduct, and ethics statements. Conversations about ethics tend to surface when ethics are egregiously violated. A recent example is the "Operation Varsity Blues" scandal that implicated university officials across the country in facilitating the fraudulent admission of students into so-called elite universities such as the University of Southern California, Stanford, Georgetown, and Yale (Medina, Benner, & Taylor, 2019). Many parents paid up to seven figures for their children to gain admission by falsely advertising them as athletes (Jump, 2019). The public reaction was visceral, in part due to the overt display of privilege and entitlement of these wealthy families. In response to these events, university officials made announcements promising new policies, procedures, and codes of conduct that would prevent such ethical violations in the future (Salovey, 2019). Legislators, scholars, and college applicants soon called into question the ethical practice of other wealthy university patrons who facilitate the admissions of their children into colleges and universities with large donations (Jump, 2019; Willen, 2020). This raises the questions: How are ethics defined? And more specifically, who defines them in higher education? Answering these questions requires considering the interrelationship of ethics with the establishment of the colleges and universities on the Indigenous lands that today are known as the United States.

In 1607, the colonizing of Turtle Island, home to the Powhatan and Monacan tribes, among others (Hantman, 2010), began with the arrival of 104 colonial settlers to lands that they would take the liberty of naming

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Jamestown. Twelve years later in 1619, "more than twenty enslaved Africans [were] sold to the colonists" (Hannah-Jones & Elliott, 2019). Not long after, the first college, Harvard, was established in 1636 (Wilder, 2013), on the lands of the Massachusett and neighboring Wampanoag and Nipmuc peoples (Harvard Project, n.d.). These events are absolutely related. Harvard and other colleges "were instruments of Christian expansionism, weapons for the conquest of Indigenous peoples, and major beneficiaries of the African slave trade and slavery" (Wilder, 2013, p. 17). In other words, the oldest colleges in what is now called the United States were active tools in the colonization of Turtle Island.

Colonial colleges offered a curriculum restricted to "Greek, Latin, geometry, ancient history, logic, ethics, and rhetoric" (Patel, 2016, p. 38). This limited curriculum established what areas of study were considered legitimate or important. Ethics was a foundational field studied through a white gaze in "which others [nonwhite people] appear only as deviants, or points of deviation" (Ahmed, 2007, p. 15). Even as the founders of these colleges stole land and raided resources from Indigenous people—proclaiming to "save the Indian"— and built their infrastructures through chattel-slavery, these actions were not viewed as unethical at the time (Wilder, 2013).

Although *ethics* today is often associated with the protection of moral principles, it is also a word that conjures deep and historically rooted violence for racially minoritized communities. We interrogated ethics within higher education research and student affairs practice through the methodology of duoethnography (Sawyer & Norris, 2013, 2016). Furthermore, we framed the notion of ethics by interrogating our own research and practice through theory in the flesh as a graduate student and practitioner and as a tenured professor in the academy (Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1981). We first discuss the under-pinnings of duoethnography and theory in the flesh. Then, we decolonize traditional written scholarship by engaging in mutual learning through our duoethnography methodology. In that spirit, we also capitalize the words *Indigenous* and *Native* when we are referring to the original inhabitants of this land, but follow the capitalization conventions originally used by cited authors when referencing other sources. The article concludes with an anti-colonial manifesto calling for a reimagination of ethics in higher education.

THEORY IN THE FLESH

Drawn from the works of Women of Color, theory in the flesh epistemology is the critical reflexivity of our lived experiences that have shaped our bodies. We problematize, resist, and disrupt the entrenched systems of power and oppression by critically interrogating the legions of pain etched in our bodies by the social conditions we navigate. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (1981) presented theory in the flesh as "one where the physical realities of our lives—our skin color, the land or concrete we grew up on, our sexual longings— all fuse to create a politic born out of necessity" (p. 23). Our bodies serve as sources of power and knowledge in how we see the world. Through critical reflexivity, we share our lived experiences within the context of ethics to question and critique its application to research and practices. We not only interrogate how we have been harmed by systems of oppression and their manifestation inside our bodies, but we also grapple with how we may have perpetuated harm to others. In the spirit of anti-colonialism, we present the origins of our relationship and how our embodied subjectivities shape our encounters with ethics.

DUOETHNOGRAPHY

Duoethnography is when two or more researchers use the power of dialogue to juxtapose a social phenomenon in order to produce new meanings, challenges, and insights (Sawyer & Norris, 2013, 2016). Duoethnography never produces a neat, clear, and noncontradictory narrative revealing truth, clarity, solutions, or a singular meaning. Duoethnographers explore experiences of the same phenomenon by addressing differences between the researchers (Sawyer & Norris, 2013, 2016). Throughout the duoethnography process, we asked each other how we came to understand and experience notions of ethics, as well as what new understandings about ethics we (re)imagine in the field of higher education.

The construction of our duoethnography occurred through approximately nine hours of phone conversations, sharing our stories, listening to each other's experiences, feelings, and exchanges that questioned, probed, and extended the thinking of ethics. We used the literature to contextualize our claims, assumptions, and reflections. Aligned with duoethnographic methods, we leave our stories open for new questions, inspiring others to critically reflect upon the notion of ethics in order to create a more humane system of higher education (Sawyer & Norris, 2013, 2016). The ethical stance we took with one another was to view each other reciprocally as both teacher and student. The ability to be vulnerable with one another and learn from each other through forming a relationship required patience and trust. The trust that we have cultivated for one another over the span of three years stems from mutual respect; yet our relationship is rife with power dynamics and complexities. Our dialogue is presented not as a transcription, but rather, a co-constructed reflection of our phone conversations.

PART ONE: THE STORY OF US

Susana: I'm trying to remember the first time we met.

Eileen: I know that I had been searching for community. As a student affairs practitioner, largely working with marginalized communities and at primarily white institutions, I quickly realized how isolating it can be to do this work. Particularly, I was looking for mentorship from other Latinas as my home institutions lacked representation. After a few years of working in higher education, I was finally provided professional development funds, and I attended the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) national conference. There, I began to learn of your work through the Latinx Knowledge Community, and that's how I got the idea of inviting you to Yale University to talk with our Latinx students of La Casa Cultural.

Susana: Yes. Thanks for jogging my memory. I was humbled by the invitation, and I remember being super nervous about visiting Yale. My imposter syndrome was trying to make an appearance, but you took me to eat arepas and that helped to alleviate my stress. I also knew (but you didn't) that I was going to serve as your advisor as you had recently been admitted to the doctoral program I taught at, and I was excited to share that news with you.

Eileen: To be honest, I was nervous as well! I did not know how to necessarily engage as I had admired you for some years at that point. I was hoping that I would get to work with you. I considered you a possibility model as one of the few Latina faculty of higher education and as someone who worked as a practitioner; it is validating to have you as my advisor.

Susana: I think back at our first encounter and I feel proud about how our relationship has evolved and changed through what we have both endured within the academy.

I definitely felt the love and care you provided as I balanced my leadership role and applied for tenure. Moraga and Anzaldua's (1981) theory in the flesh allows Women of Color to examine our own scars and bruises we acquired during our violent journeys in higher education. You held space for me to be my authentic self during some painful times. For you, I know attending graduate school on top of working as the Director of La Casa at Yale cannot be easy.

EILEEN: That's an understatement. The knowledge that I have gained in my coursework has changed how I approach my practice. What I did not anticipate were the microaggressions I experienced inside the classroom and within our professional associations. It's like epistemic violence and higher education go hand in hand. Violence becomes part of our DNA.

SUSANA: Right? It still angers me that you sat through an academic presentation on whiteness and free speech policies only to find your story and thoughts co-opted by the presenters in the name of research. This practice is the epitome of inhumane methodologies.

EILEEN: Ugh. That was one of the most dehumanizing experiences of my life. In particular, I knew that that entire experience felt unethical to me; and yet, this work had been reviewed and was allowed to be presented. It was then that I knew that there was something missing—even disturbing—about ethics in higher education; however, I appreciated you and others for the support, while I navigated that pain. I felt erased and violated. I had to write my way out of my rage (Galvez, 2018), and congruent with theory in the flesh, I continue to feel the residual impacts of this experience in my body. It remembers what my aggressors so casually did to try and erase me from my own words and experiences. Even this piece is written partly to reclaim myself and, more importantly, to have a scholarly dialogue on how to prevent this in the future. My resistance begins with understanding the origination of my pain.

Power and Oppression: Our Encounters With Ethics

SUSANA: I love your fight against injustices. In fact, I can see why this was a critical point for your thinking about ethics. Ethics in higher education is more understood through the standards provided by institutions like our colleges and universities, IRB applications, and professional and academic associations. While each entity is slightly different, they collectively provide ethical standards in their own ways. As a whole, we can think of ethics as the "principles or standards related to moral conduct; ethicality refers to how one conforms to those principles and standards" (Reybold, Halx, & Jimenez, 2008, p. 111). But, before we interrogate these institutional "standards," I want us to think about how we as individuals think about ethics in our lives. When you used your voice to write about what happened to you, it was clear to me that you employed theory in the flesh to actively resist violence persisting in your body. How did you come to make meaning of your own subjectivities? How does this understanding connect to how you practice ethics?

EILEEN: It goes back to my roots and ancestors. The lessons from my grandmother, the value I place on my family, my parents' experiences as Salvadoran refugees and survivors of the Salvadoran Civil War. Rooted in that trauma, my mother taught me to speak up about inequality and unfairness. The lessons were never explicitly told: I received them by watching her, and they turned into my moral and ethical compass. I have carried them with me as I navigate this world as a US Salvadoreña, having grown up in poverty in South Central Los Angeles, being a first-generation graduate, a woman of size, and as an *hija, hermana, tía*, and friend. Now, as a grown woman with my own voice, I know I have a responsibility to use my privilege to speak

up and be in community with others, to not take the complacent route of silence. What about you?

Susana: I identify as a white passing cis Chicana immigrant with citizenship privilege. I am often faced with the tension of abiding by university codes and standards of ethics, even when these practices are incongruent with who I am. I also remember upon my own arrival to the US, teachers regarded my Spanish language as a deficit, and in an act of their own "goodness" urged my parents to use English in the household in order to dismantle my dominant native language. Anzaldúa (1987) called this "linguistic terrorism" (p. 58), and as a child I began to question my self-worth as I embodied the shame that came with not speaking English fluently. Dominant notions of ethics entered in my early career days as a student affairs practitioner when my sole duty was to support minoritized college students. Yet, when Students of Color assembled to peacefully protest the university's inhumane racial climate, I was directed to not show up or participate in their plight for human justice and equity. So, when I was abiding by these university codes and ethics, I was in direct contradiction to the administrative role I held. I enter the conversation on ethics as someone who has caused harm and has been harmed by practicing these institutional principles. So, it sounds like we both understand ethics as being rooted in whiteness.

Eileen: Yes! Ok, so ethics in practice and research left unexamined through a racialized lens can in fact be unethical. Moraga and Anzaldúa (1981) explained that decolonizing systems of power and oppression cannot be realized unless we understand our own complicity to these systems. The questions I want us to grapple with are: (a) For whom were ethics made? (b) In what ways are ethics a form of social control? and (c) What role does whiteness play in how ethical decisions are employed?

PART TWO: RESEARCH ETHICS

Eileen: Can I ask if you have ever caused harm in your own research?

Susana: Yes, I have. The words "I don't remember asking you for protection" are etched in my brain as a reminder of assuming goodness on my part, making a choice without consulting those who may be impacted, and possibly diminishing a research participant's agency. Here I was —someone who had worked with and for undocumented college students for over a decade—and I considered research ethics as a "blanket of security" by which scholars take considerable care to outweigh risks and benefits as they place this blanket of security to protect, to care for, and to minimize harm. Using a pseudonym to "protect" participants' anonymity is a common practice in research; however, in my identity and social activism project (see Muñoz, 2015), participants felt like placing a pseudonym along with their narratives was an act of erasure. In other words, I tried to place the blanket of security on individuals who did not ask for it, did not feel it had the power to protect, nor was it constructed by or for them. Fuck! I caused harm. These colonial structures and practices are tools of erasure for historically marginalized people.

I thought about how the needs of participants are put aside in a checklist of "ethics." Ethics feels like one of those concepts that you think about and understand when it has been violated. It is almost as if you understand it by what it's not. Research that is harmful spotlights Otherness, transports us to prior traumas, and feels violent. Because harm is subjective, it makes defining ethics difficult. Resnik (2015) simply put it as "norms for conduct that distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior" (para. 1), but who gets to define what that is?

Eileen: What you just explained sounds like what Limes-Taylor Henderson and Esposito (2019) asked of us: "How do we

gauge harm . . . if we cannot recognize it?" and "Why do we fail to interrogate the ways we define harm?" (p. 883). They point out that, historically, we have come to know harm in the ways that it has been rooted in ethics review boards. Even today, they are so strict and rigid that they do not allow for the flexibility to be responsible for both harm and safety in unimagined ways.

Susana: Well, then how do we better recognize harm?

Eileen: We need to employ an anti-colonial lens by recognizing the historical underpinnings of why we needed protections in the first place. We need to name and understand research ethics as a tool of colonization, and how research ethics are regulated today have been formed in large part to responses to abuses of participants through experiments and research throughout history (Lankford, 2015; Centers for Disease Control [CDC], n.d).

Residual Colonization in Research Practice

Susana: In order to do that, we must first understand what protection is. The root word *pro* means "before" and the latter part of the word comes from *tegere* which means "to cover" (http://www.etymonline.com/word/protection), so to cover or shield. But it's not that simple is it? How do you determine who is in the position to cover others? What is the motivation to protect? And what happens if you need protection from those in positions of power intended to protect you? Just these questions alone lead us to think about the power imbalance in various aspects. In the academy, we know that protection was deemed necessary after egregious acts against other humans.

Eileen: Yes, I know about the Tuskegee experiments on Black people in the 1930s (Kalmbach & Lyons, 2003), and in the 1950s researchers sterilized Puerto Rican women without full disclosure in order to develop the birth control pill (Lankford, 2015). Inhumane research experiments were also conducted by Nazis on Jewish, Black, and other oppressed communities that led to the Nuremberg trials calling for specific standards to medical science and experiments. These called for requirements "that any participants in an experiment offer voluntary, legally competent, informed, and comprehending agreement" (Thomas & Pettitt, 2017, p. 272). This became institutionalized in the US through the courts in 1957 as informed consent. Years later, the World Medical Association published the Declaration of Helsinki in 1964. Thus, the US was once again influenced through principles and regulations of medical research that included consent, conflicts of interest, consideration of risks versus benefits, and an ethics committee review (Ross, 2014).

Susana: The researchers of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study intentionally committed cruelty in the name of science for over 40 years and even continued after the new regulations were initially implemented (CDC, n.d.). And like colonization, these types of violations have not existed solely in the past. As recent as 2003, members of the Havisupai Tribe discovered that blood samples provided to Arizona State University for the disclosed purpose to research diabetes, were also used to "conduct research on schizophrenia, inbreeding, and human population migration theories" without their consent (Drabiak-Syed, 2010, p. 175). Researchers benefitted from these samples by writing and publishing nearly two dozen papers and dissertations, 15 of which had nothing to do with diabetes. Black and Indigenous people have been robbed by the academy of their agency to determine how their bodies and blood are used in experiments. These ethical violations will be embodied and have the potential to manifest into other forms of health and mental trauma. While these dominant notions of research ethics in US institutions require that we have respect for persons, beneficence, and justice, the continuous harm of Peoples of Color through research contradict these ethics (Kalmbach & Lyons,

2003). Drabiak-Syed (2010) encouraged us to "re-envision the concept of harm to include group harm, cultural harm, and dignitary harm for research involving Native American populations" (p. 216) which requires the academy to interrogate its roots in whiteness and white supremacy.

EILEEN: With this in mind, how can historically minoritized populations trust these systemic parameters when instead of protecting them, they have provided a false confidence of morality and justice within research (Cannella & Lincoln, 2007)? What is the point of professing land acknowledgments in the academy if we have not pursued an anti-colonial research ethic?

SUSANA: To be clear, the bodies that govern US research are primarily concerned with the enforcement of regulation without much examination or translation of historical violence on minoritized bodies. Protection has emerged as a security measure to safeguard the institutions whose names are attached to the research and not vulnerable participants (Lincoln & Tierney, 2004).

EILEEN: It seems that codes of ethics have been shaped as a response to escape culpability. That culpability is rooted in coloniality as it is both a literal and metaphorical extraction from the bodies of Peoples of Color by institutions built through whiteness. Sabati (2019) calls this the "colonial unknowing," which is "an active erasure of academia's complicity in producing ongoing contexts of racialized social injustice" (p. 1057). The academy needs to enact its own theory in the flesh by naming its institutional legacy of violence, pinpointing how systems of oppression continue to infiltrate practices and policies, and identifying what measures of action need to be taken to resist these hegemonic notions of research ethics. Perhaps we need to ask those we work with and work for what humane research spaces should look and feel like, rather than making assumptions that can lead to trauma and violence.

PART THREE: ETHICS IN STUDENT AFFAIRS PRACTICE

EILEEN: As a practitioner working with marginalized student populations, I think a lot about my roles as both an advocate and an administrator. Much of my work is heart work, and yet when I read codes of ethics in our field, I don't recognize the heart. Even as they say, "Do no harm," I think of harm to whom? Because the language always feels legalese.

SUSANA: Yes! Colleges and universities enforce ethics through contracts, the IRB, and guidelines that often go against the people the research is meant to serve. I have had to argue and fight to ensure that I am centering my participants needs and not just making a general counsel feel good about not having a potential lawsuit (in their eyes).

EILEEN: To be honest, ethics are only talked about when they are broken or in the news —whether because of lack of communication, making assumptions, or plain dehumanization in the pursuit of academic accolades that target our voices, bodies, and spirits. It feels like we are being socialized to not take the lead from or follow knowledge rooted in our communities—and for what, a publication?

SUSANA: Your job—working with Latinx students. My job—a scholar working with and for undocumented students. These are jobs and they would not exist without the labor of students. As a practitioner, you are a cultural broker. The systems have you between students and the institution. But it does not have to be that way. The institutions need to get out of the way and just let you and other practitioners do your jobs to provide humane spaces for students.

EILEEN: I resonate with that, and I struggle. I do not believe that I would be doing the students I serve justice without sincerely advocating for them; yet for some student affairs professionals and administrators, advocacy is almost seen as unprofessionalism. And somehow ethics is tied to "professionalism."

The physical bodies of Professionals of Color and their language styles are often regulated through standards intended for white bodies (Nguyen & Duran, 2018). Professionalization is presented as a color-evasive tool, the whole, "I see no color" trope. Annamma, Jackson, and Morrison (2017) argued that racism is veiled through color-evasiveness, in this case, professional standards that diminish cultural norms of Professionals of Color (Nguyen & Duran, 2018). For me personally, I think of how much pressure I feel to edit myself. That presentation of neutrality whereby Practitioners of Color are unable to be objective—these feel like tools of whiteness or assimilation to whiteness. When I have to contort myself to fit an ideal that is rooted in violence, it leaves me scarred. These scars inform the many contradictions that I have to navigate daily. This may be due to the direct connection between colonialism and its reproduction through whiteness and the ties of whiteness to professionalism and color-evasiveness.

Susana: The ethics of student affairs has a direct relationship to the ethical standards established from scholarly harm. We can see color-evasiveness in the policies college and university administrators craft for students, as if they were to fit our students universally. Advocacy can and should be a form of active ethicality, of holding institutions accountable to the needs of students. We have a responsibility to reconstruct what ethics means to us beyond legal or standard requirements, as ethical challenges are hardly ever standard. This is how theory in the flesh is practiced: assessing the messy parts of yourself. It means working through your privileges and unpacking your lived experiences that shape and inform your worldview. Without having a deep understanding of who you are and why you are doing what you set out to do, you are going to run into some ethical challenges. Personally, I also think it's ethically necessary to understand the purpose of your work and how this purpose is connected to the needs of the communities that you plan to work with and for. Otherwise, we run the risk of

becoming "helicopter researchers," the ones who fly by and take and never give back to the community that gifted their time and stories (Hodge, Weinmann, & Roubideaux, 2000, p. S43). Eileen, what do your personal ethics look like?

Eileen: My version gives space for students to bring their whole selves: a space that allows for vulnerability, mistakes, and to be seen with their various salient identities. Most importantly, my ethics center self-determination—by students, faculty, staff, service workers, and community members—which also includes forms of accountability to each.

Susana: Our versions differ from how we experience ethicality as a field. It may be possible that the professionalization of student affairs creates expectations of high ethicality by practitioners. Drawing on biomedical ethics, Kitchener (1985) identified five ethical principles: to respect the autonomy of others, to do no harm, to center the benefiting of others (students), and to be just and faithful. These ethical standards have directly influenced organizations like the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), NASPA, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS). For example, in the ACPA (n.d.) *Statement of Ethical Principles & Standards*, the organization has identified four ethical standards: professional responsibility and competence; student learning and development, responsibility to the institution, and responsibility to society.

Eileen: These are ethical standards that are said to have a base in justice and equality. Kitchener (1985) posited that the principle of being just assumes standards of impartiality, equality, and reciprocity. Kitchener also questioned the notion of the roots of benefiting others by emphasizing that "help to others at the expense of their autonomy leads to paternalism" (p. 23). Paternalism itself is a term that is complicated based on its use and origins. In many cultures, this may be rooted in tradition that values paternal

relationships (Kim, 1994); however, the US has a historical legacy of paternalism with Black and Indigenous peoples through its lack of recognition of sovereignty rights and through enslavement (Aycan, 2006). Paternalism has a direct connection to protection, in that a person or institution takes actions or makes decisions in the name of protection through an inherent power imbalance (Dworkin, 1972). Kitchener interrogated ethics through a patriarchal lens. And while Kitchener also cites justice, these ethical principles are also replicated from ethics that have been harmful to minoritized communities, and thereby perpetuated colonialism.

Susana: The role of the practitioner needs more interrogation itself. Sundberg and Fried (1997) stated that "making ethical choices and thinking through ethical issues are at the very core of our work as student affairs professionals" (p. 67). The title of *professional* places expectations of mentorship, role modeling, and even of holding "the moral conscious for the campus" (Reybold et al., 2008); however, our individual morals and values are ones that we carry with us, even when we compete with the ethical standards of professional organizations.

Eileen: As we've mentioned before, we have to interrogate ethics through an anti-colonial lens. Dei (2006) considers an anti-colonial orientation an "approach to theorizing colonial and re-colonial relations and the implications of imperial structures on the processes of knowledge production and validation, the understanding of indigeneity, and the pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics" (p. 2).

Susana: And yet, many of us are not trained in our craft through an anti-colonial lens. For me, I have had to work on unlearning my prior teachings that perpetuated whiteness and colonization. This opportunity to enact theory in the flesh which calls for critical reflexivity should not be haphazard but an intentional component of our educational journey.

Ethics as a Tool of Colonization

Susana: The academy is regarded as the ivory tower of knowledge where research is presumably vetted through systemic processes that provide legitimacy to the fields of scholars and their scholarship. This process has continually replicated itself over time through the education of students and those that enter the professorial system. These highly regarded and privileged systems carry with them an assumption of ethicality.

Eileen: While the oldest university in what we now know as the United States was established in 1636, formal ethics review checks would not become a part of that ivory tower until more than 300 years later, even as the topic was studied during that entire time.

Susana: To imagine a different concept of ethics, we also must interrogate the role of whiteness and coloniality in research ethics in the academy. Due to its history and direct goal of dominance, coloniality continues to be pervasive and omnipresent. In modern day academia, research has been promoted to be objective and neutral as a way to "deny indigenous cultures' rights to self-determination" (Denzin & Giardina, 2007, p. 17).

Eileen: And that same formula has also been applied to non-Indigenous marginalized groups through education research. Through this logic, researchers that adhere to whiteness through Western tradition view themselves as saviors that will provide freedom and empowerment to oppressed communities (Bishop, 1998). To be more specific, the savior complex is derived from the white savior mythology that perpetuates a false narrative that a white savior "signals a heroic colonizing force, responsible for civilizing primitive, indigenous (non-White) peoples" (Maurantonio, 2017, p. 1133). In the academy, white researchers have benefitted from the lived experiences of marginalized communities by being designated experts of those communities, even as outsiders. As such, they take on the role as scholar-saviors.

Susana: While social justice may be utilized as a lens to "provide voice" to oppressed and marginalized communities, many of these researchers have arrived at the work through self-designation and not by requests of said communities. It is that self-imposition that recreates colonial practices in the academy and implicates researchers as furthering the colonial project (Limes-Taylor Henderson & Esposito, 2019).

Eileen: "Self-imposition." I recognize this in scholarly readings, and I've witnessed practitioners do this. They are well-intentioned scholars and practitioners. I am sure that I have done this as well. My need to want to help others has in the past gotten in the way of actually placing the needs of students first. As practitioners, we are not meant to be saviors. No one has asked us to be that. Yet we selfishly impose ourselves. Colleges and universities are filled with well-intentioned individuals.

Susana: In those roles, as scholars and practitioners, we must ask ourselves, what does it mean to work with and for communities? Who are we really serving? Is it the institution, is it ourselves, or students? Maybe it's all of those, and in between all of that, good intentions can live; but good intentions sometimes turn into microaggressions, violence, and trauma. They become reasons for a lack of accountability. In many ways, our training as researchers and practitioners has conditioned us to follow certain codes and practices that are rooted in whiteness. We exemplify theory in the flesh when we do a deep dive into how we have been the colonizers.

Eileen: Good intentions can advance colonialism while expressing concern for researching vulnerable communities. Roffee and Waling (2017) conducted a study that looked at how ethics were applied in research of LGBT populations. Ethical challenges included "unethical research and concern" and "responding to future and potential harm to participants" (p. 5). Koulouriotis (2011) looked into the ethicality of research

with nonnative speakers of English. What they found is that researchers of these communities are concerned whether or not participants understand the concept of informed consent and practices as it pertains to the Canadian imaginary, which may have different meanings for the participants. Lu and Gatua (2014) also looked at immigrant populations, Kenyan and Chinese, in the United States. Their case studies showed that ethicality must go beyond initial ethical review approvals. Successful and responsible coconstruction of knowledge with immigrant populations provide a sense of autonomy to the participants and adaptation to their needs throughout the study.

Susana: Even with the recognition that research ethics should be concerned when researchers of privileged identities extract knowledge from communities identified as vulnerable, there is defensiveness by white scholar saviors. In a study exploring the ethicality of researching refugee populations, Perry (2011) called concerns about the tension between the academy and protecting of refugees, paternalistic. Perry stated that "the professed desire to protect refugees can imply that others must protect refugees because they are not capable of doing so themselves" (p. 900). While Perry went on to acknowledge various forms in which refugees can be in disempowering positions, leaving them vulnerable, Perry stated that nevertheless "conducting research with refugees is an important method of advocating for refugee issues, solving real problems, and potentially empowering those who have experienced severely disempowering circumstances" (p. 901).

Eileen: Pelzang and Hutchinson (2001) stated that placing insider/outsider researcher status without "fluid[ity]" is "problematic and cannot be solved by matching the cultural and racial identity of researchers and participants" (p. 2). While flexibility and adaptability are needed for a culturally responsive ethics, what is not fully examined is how scholars and researchers of higher

education benefit from the extraction of knowledge of marginalized populations that they do not belong to. Scholar-saviors recognize their collection of knowledge as data as intellectual property (Harris, 1993). That "cultural property" is an example of settler colonialism's element of "erasing to replace" (Patel, 2016, p. 37). The work of scholar-saviors cannot be liberatory if they fail to interrogate their role and actions which aim to (re)center whiteness in their plight to extract knowledge from marginalized populations.

SUSANA: In these research relationships, active exploration of power and dominance is needed. As a white woman tenured-researcher, Aveling (2013) asked whether non-Native researchers should research Native communities. While she had history of being an outsider researcher, Aveling concluded that she and other non-Native researchers should not do the research that Native researchers can do as Native epistemology calls for "ways of being, knowing and doing," that can only ever be done by Native researchers (p. 13). As colonization has continued its legacy of extraction of colonized people, the question expands to those communities as well. Even in what is acknowledged as a primary concern of research ethics, the weighing of risk versus benefits, insider/outsider roles require further examination (Ross, 2014).

EILEEN: Through interrogation, we recognize that vulnerable populations are raided through the research process with an uneven set of risks and benefits for them. While there may be a study that is published past their need of immediacy, researchers risk participants' vulnerability for the possibility of being considered an expert on those populations, for various financial benefits, and publishing in their name (Limes-Taylor Henderson & Esposito, 2019). In fact, Sarna-Wojcicki, Perret, Eitzel, and Fortmann (2017) found that even in the case of participatory research on rural livelihoods, only 6% of published articles listed nonacademic

contributors as coauthors. This brings us to question how participatory is this type of research (Barreteau, Bots, & Daniell, 2010)? In a system wherein knowledge is viewed as property and the lack of attribution or citation can lead to charges of academic dishonesty, the failure to give credit to those without whom there would be no knowledge to contribute is another form of "erasing to replace" (Patel, 2016, p. 37). Instead of participation, researchers are showcasing forms of exclusionary research practices (Cannella & Viruru, 2004). There is financial gain that creates a "market domination over diverse epistemologies" (Cannella & Lincoln, 2007, p. 318). Once again, the scholar-savior perpetuates the legacy of colonization, dominance, and goal of ownership.

SUSANA: However, the researchers are not alone in their complicity. The boards that condone and sponsor this extraction regulate in a form to protect autonomy, a "concern for welfare and justice," yet the impact to human participants is to "produce, organize, and manage [their] bodies . . . to police and control populations" (Kouritzin & Nakagawa, 2018, p. 387). Researching or policing communities relies on a practice that makes communities vulnerable when we expect them to expose their histories, traumas, and lived experiences. Yet, researchers believe that their collection of these stories will benefit or improve lives of said vulnerable communities (Warner, 2004). These communities may also share these beliefs as researchers are representative of institutions, and through it, provide a sense of validity by way of "knowledge creation" (Koulouriotis, 2011). The existing power imbalances require further examination in the role that ethics plays. We subscribe to models of research that are purportedly neutral yet center whiteness. When we try to push back and disrupt the expectations of absorption and obedience, we are "pathologiz[ed] and criminaliz[ed]" (Tuck & Fine, 2007, p. 150).

EILEEN: It is clear that colonization and ethics work hand in hand. Colonization

was and continues to be a violent form of knowledge extraction of Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities in higher education. Over time, ethics has provided the justification for these acts to be considered "'rational' and 'civilized' ways of being" (Sabati, 2019, p. 1059).

Susana: Indeed, and we must ask: Is it possible to actually decolonize ethics in higher education? Colonization is not merely a historical occurrence aimed at erasing Indigenous people, but also "land-centered projects that are never fully complete" (Goodyear-Ka'opua, 2013, p. 23). The academy itself is an extension of this project, therefore we are in a position to work from within this project to reimagine ethics through anti-colonialism, a tool that "interrogates the power configurations embedded in ideas, cultures, and histories of knowledge production, validation, and use" (Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001, p. 300).

Eileen: This reminds me of what Tuck and Yang (2012) stated: "There is a long and bumbled history of non-Indigenous peoples making moves to alleviate the impacts of colonization" (p. 3). We both have the responsibility to also interrogate ourselves as non-Black and non-Indigenous Latinas with ancestors south of the colonial border; that is, we are also settler colonists. And it may be that anti-colonialism is an extension of imagining a decolonial future, one that moves centrality away from the settler system.

AN ANTI-COLONIAL MANIFESTO FOR ETHICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Much of research ethics today are enforced through regulations, such as university IRBs. The ethicality of how knowledge is extracted from marginalized communities through research is not explored or regulated on a regular basis. Scholars and researchers are often active participants in replicating colonialism, patriarchal notions, and white supremacy through scholarly traditions that

encourage collection of knowledge as a way of establishing "ownership" (Limes-Taylor Henderson & Esposito, 2019). Our research is approved and condoned by the research ethics of the academy. Researchers who do not utilize anti-colonial methodologies receive a stamp of approval that implicates research ethics in the colonial project that continues to harm Indigenous people and other colonized, marginalized, and oppressed communities seen as research subjects.

Even with marginalized identities, as students, scholars, and members of the academy, we are agents of the colonial project. As a result, we have the "constant opportunity and responsibility to identify and counter the genealogies of coloniality that continue to demand oppression" (Patel, 2016, p. 6). Through our duoethnography analysis, we complicate ethicality in research and student affairs practice by interrogating how the academy has allowed and encouraged harm of marginalized communities. In our dialogue and exchange of perspectives, we leave room for readers to explore their positions and practices of an anti-colonial ethics. We center theory in the flesh (our lived experiences, our critical consciousness), along with Indigenous knowledge when constructing anti-colonial notions of ethics. We end this article with our own anti-colonial ethics manifesto in response to the current codes and sets of ethics of the academy and student affairs practices that are reproductions of coloniality. Our manifesto is a way of offering insights to both scholars and practitioners and provides us a sense of healing and liberation:

Scholars and practitioners will ask themselves, "Why me? What is my relationship to a community I intend to study?" An anti-colonial research relationship will ensure that reciprocity exists and that all participants are given credit for the knowledge they are choosing to share.

Scholars and practitioners will consider the working relationships they have with students and ask whether they are based on reciprocity or on labor extraction. An anti-colonial ethic will encourage students to co-design expectations based on respect, acknowledgement of power differentials, and centering safety, needs, wants, and boundaries set by students and researchers. What kinds of structures can be (re)imagined to unpack reciprocity further with students?

Scholars and practitioners will interrogate the role they hold as representatives of institutions with histories of racism, white supremacy, and settler colonialism. Beyond acknowledging the violent histories of land acquisition, how can colleges and universities center Indigenous knowledge in institutional values, curriculum, and leadership?

Do No Harm. Scholars and practitioners will understand the historical roots of harm for the community that they plan to work with and for. It is critical to apply an anti-colonial and racialized lens to notions of ethics and harm. As Drabiak-Syed (2010) suggested, harm needs to be reimagined to "include group harm, cultural harm, and dignitary harm for research involving Native American populations" (p. 216). How are these communities (re)defining harm? Scholars and practitioners will center the needs of the communities they serve rather than the needs and protections of the institution. Furthermore, they will ask themselves and participants: "What do reparations look like when I cause harm?"

Scholars and practitioners will honor the trust and confidentiality of students when they share their lived experiences with them. They will not extract knowledge or labor from students for their own benefit, whether for research or presentations. How can students be honored for their assets, voice, and lived experiences without being exploited?

The academy will reimagine the role of IRBs to center the needs and desires of research participants. As it stands now, protocols are crafted by how research is defined by federal entities. This research relationship indicates that colleges and universities conduct research and practice based on the result of elections, politics, and ideology. If participants' autonomy is limited by protections for these institutions, then researchers commit harm by recruiting participants to a process in which their needs do not come first. How can Indigenous communities and anti-colonial perspectives be an integral component of IRB leadership and protocols?

Student affairs professionals will reimagine ethics as an opportunity to center marginalized people and their narratives and experiences. As it currently stands, ethics has a long-term relationship with colonialism. A renewed ethics of student affairs will not be led by general counsel, but will center the needs of all individuals in working relationships and in particular, marginalized students.

OUR THEORY IN THE FLESH

SUSANA: So, this is the first time for both of us using duoethnography and theory in the flesh. What have you learned for these two tools of inquiry within the context of ethics?

EILEEN: Great question! For me, thinking and writing about ethics in an anti-colonial form meant that we needed to do so methodologically as well. At first it was hard not to follow the prescribed scholarly format, because we are socialized to write and think in these ways. In a way, we did begin our duoethnography reproducing these dominant notions of scholarly writing. However, the process opened up the space to document the learning that often occurs in our personal discussions or in the classroom. On the other hand, theory in the flesh provided a framework to acknowledge

our lived experiences as Latinas. That lens allowed us to cocreate knowledge through our voice and vulnerability.

Susana: I really loved that you could see yourself reflected in theory in the flesh. I feel the same way! It was useful to understand how our pain and violence informs how we navigate institutions of higher education. It also gave me language to name how I straddle both the decolonized and colonized ethical stances, and I recognize the harm that I inflict on myself and on others when I subscribe to guidelines and practices that were formulated without me or other Communities of Color in mind. Theory in the flesh makes me feel seen. How can we fight back against the "Varsity Blues" incidents that used tools of colonization without consequences?

Eileen: I approach this from a place a hope. I think theory in the flesh allows us to be rooted in our critical consciousness in order to create more humane spaces. I look at my own scars from the academy. There's still pain associated with my trauma, but the strength in my community provided hope. I have to believe in a better reality, and that means reimagining how to be in relationship with others with an anti-colonial foundation of ethics.

Susana: Yes, I totally agree. We need to reimagine new possibilities for ethics in research and practice and this requires ALL facets of higher education to look closely at their legacy of exclusion and violence. By enacting theory in the flesh to reconstruct ethics in higher education,

we begin by providing repatriations to Indigenous communities, which calls on colleges and universities to acknowledge their institutional legacy of violence and return stolen lands and resources.

Eileen: Right?! I will end with voicing that neutrality will be the demise of higher education. Neutrality is rooted in whiteness, and if we are not interrogating our own selves, we are complicit in the act of violence, making neutrality unethical.

Susana: Yes! We have a responsibility, not just as members of the academy, but as people in community with others, to trouble supposedly "neutral" and "objective" takes on ethics; although, this also means leaving a lot of open questions. I believe that those answers lay within scholars and practitioners and the students, faculty, staff, and community members who are generous in their contributions to shared knowledge.

Eileen: I walk away from this experience having learned that an anti-colonial ethic can be a vehicle to a more humane relationship and not just a colonial transaction. Thank you for being in community with me.

Susana: It has been a pleasure. I would like to thank you and the many scholars whose work allowed us to see that ethics does not in fact have to just live in a set of codes. May the (re)imagination continue. We have lots of work to do!

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