Decolonial underground pedagogy: Decolonizing education in subcultural teaching and learning

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to deepen understanding of decolonial and decolonizing education, or approaches to teaching and learning which holds that social justice requires the dismantling of Eurocentric imperialism and its evolving forms. Literature on decolonizing education, informal learning, and subculture studies coalesce into a theory of *decolonial underground pedagogy*, a conceptual frame that enables observations of how minority-led subcultures foster critical consciousness and decolonial action by emphasizing informal learning, community engagement, and nonhierarchical relationships. Through a constellation of methodological considerations including decolonizing methodologies, autoethnography, close reading, and the suppositionless Philippine methodology of *pakapa-kapa*, I examine decolonizing experiences rooted in my sustained and active participation in three minority-led subcultures: punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling.

This thesis's analytical scope spans three continents and reflects two decades constructing a diasporic Philippine identity rooted in building horizontal alliances with racialized and Indigenous peoples instead of assimilating to the dominant culture. These considerations situate this thesis's approach to decolonization in an undertheorized vantage point - the Philippines and its diaspora. I argue that Philippine perspectives are valuable for understanding colonization, decolonization, and social justice because they require a consideration of the ongoing consequences of five hundred years of invasion as well as contemporary conditions marked by neocolonial exploitation.

With these conceptual and methodological considerations in mind, I examine the liberatory trajectories suggested by out-of-school learning environments in which minoritized people redefine learning and identity on their own terms. The research considers what punk, skateboarding, and unschooling communities offer historically minoritized members, how subcultural insiders try to cultivate a community ethos without reifying colonizing discourses, and how insights from subcultural learning enrich efforts to decolonize education in other contexts, including in schools. Over four

chapters devoted to interpretive meditations on the decolonial underground pedagogies suggested in punk rock, skate boarding, and unschooling, I explore how minority-led subcultural learning environments might help strengthen learners' links to their communities by fostering relationships founded on respect, reciprocity, and mutual accountability. These themes offer possible insights for ongoing efforts to decolonize education through informal, community-responsive, reciprocal, and healing approaches teaching and learning.

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Acknowledgements and Dedication

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The best view at 924 Gilman, a legendary punk venue in Berkeley, California, is next to the bathroom. It offers the coolest temperatures in the building and a clear view of the small, triangular stage. The wall also affords privacy, because few would voluntarily stand next to the rest room in a famously moribund punk club. On June 6, 2017, I put on my leather jacket and rode my bike through the acrid night to stand in that very spot and watch AninoKo, a San Francisco hardcore band comprised entirely of Filipino-American immigrants. At the time, California was on fire- the sky smelled like matches and the air felt possessed. The fire season reminded me of growing up in the Philippines, where my sisters and I lit fireworks in the middle of the street and drank RC Cola out of plastic bags.

AninoKo punched through their set with the destructive force of a hollow point bullet exploding on contact. Yet between songs, they greeted friends in the crowd, thanked us profusely for coming, and made good-natured jokes. They were, in this manner, no different from any group of Filipino uncles at a family party, with their songs replacing the familiar symphony of Budweiser cans popping open and playing cards slapping a PVC tabletop. The band members asked people in the audience not to push each other too hard and to remember that 'not everyone has good health insurance.' They told stories about 924 Gilman in the 1990s, when you could smoke cannabis in the building and the gentrification of the Gilman District- an industrial area near the municipal dump- was still twenty years away.

AninoKo's stage banter got more serious three songs and four minutes into the set, when lead singer Rupert Estanislao introduced a new composition called *Anak Diaspora* (*Child of the Diaspora*):

> The Philippines is in a state of diaspora. Many of our people work in various capacities of capitalism, in the service industry. Whether that's working on a cruise ship or working at McDonald's or in hotels.

> Many of our families had to do that. And we didn't grow up with our families. Our fathers and mothers had to work overseas, so we grew up without them, many of us in this band. So, I wrote a song about it.

While a pink-haired teenager screamed "*fuck that!*" the band launched into the song- a snarling dressing-down of Philippine politicians who raid municipal coffers while children in their districts come of age knowing their parents only as customer names on remittance receipts:

> *Ang mga tao at mga trapo* [All the people, all the corrupt politicians]
> *na nagnanakaw ng pera.* [that rob the people of money]
>
> *Sila'y kalaban* [They are the enemy]
> *na yumayaman* [getting rich]
> *mula sa ating dugo* [off the blood we shed]
>
> *Libo libo umaalis, nagiibang bansa* [Thousands leave, emigrating to other countries]
> *Mga anak lumalaki sa piling ng iba!* [Their children grow up in the care of others!] (AninoKo, 2017)

In seconds, *Anak Diaspora* had eighty people running in circles and shoving each other (though not too hard). For me, the novelty of seeing Filipino people playing punk songs in Tagalog allowed for new and exciting ways of expressing a Filipino identity. Schoolchildren in the Philippines are graded on their faith and nationalism. These metrics are designed to promote ethical behavior, but they also grant authority figures significant latitude to police many aspects of a student's life. At Gilman, we were free to push, shove, and scream obscenities at our oppressors. Speaking to other Filipino punks after the show, it became clear that all of us had stories like the one Rupert told- of kinship ties strained by impossible distance, be it physical or emotional. In the thirty minutes they stood on that angled stage, AninoKo vocalized the diffuse traumas associated with simply trying to exist in a Filipino body.

While the show prompted strangers to seek one another out in pursuit of commonality and reprieve, it also encouraged us to think critically about our circumstances. Instead of confining these conversations to Gilman's wheat-pasted walls, these dialogues inspired action, encouraging me and other attendees to participate in Filipino labor advocacy groups like Migrante, Bayan, Malaya, and the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines. AninoKo did not mandate this action, it flowed out

of a community of people they helped build, even if it only existed in that specific configuration for one night. AninoKo's performances involve critical analyses of historical oppression and its contemporary affects. They also invite all in attendance to engage in open discussions that catalyze movement building around what can be done to engender justice for targeted communities here and now. This show thus doubled as a site of decolonial and decolonizing pedagogy, as its attendees experienced it as an educational experience that enabled them to identify and contest the "the mutually reinforcing systems of colonial and capitalist domination and exploitation that have organized social relations" in nominally multicultural societies like the United States (Tejeda, Gutierrez, & Espinoza, 2003, p. 2). What I saw from that wall buttressed the foundational conceit of this thesis, which argues that enriching forms of decolonial and decolonizing education occur in places not often associated with teaching and learning, such as punk shows, skate parks, and family homes.

To conceptualize the emancipatory significance of the informal teaching and learning experiences potentiated in subculture, this thesis introduces an analytic called *decolonial underground pedagogy*, an articulation of the decolonial and decolonizing forms of teaching and learning that occur in minority led subcultures. Decolonial underground pedagogy is built on literature in decolonial and decolonizing education, informal learning, and subcultural studies. Decolonial underground pedagogy is important because it divorces the prospect of emancipatory education from the colonial technologies of schooling, unearthing insights about the informal, spontaneous, and community-embedded dimensions of teaching, learning, consciousness-raising, and community building. The decolonial pedagogies of subcultural insiders portend embodied understandings of the relational process of liberatory learning, helping us pursue educational justice in ways that resonate with the contemporary interests and aspirations of minoritized learners.

The use of *decolonial* (rather than decolonizing) in *decolonial underground pedagogy* is intentional. This is because the subcultural teaching and learning experiences examined in this thesis have more

to do with cognitive and intellectual growth rather than exigent political concerns like national sovereignty and the return of stolen land. This observation reflects Walsh & Mignolo's (2018) definition of decoloniality as "a perspective, stance, and proposition of thought, analysis, sensing, making, doing, feeling, and being that is actional…praxistical, and continuing" (p. 100). First introduced by Anibal Quijano in the 1990s, decoloniality inspires a broad range of reflective, discursive, philosophical activity that "disobeys, and delinks from [the colonial matrix of power], constructing paths and praxis toward an otherwise of thinking, sensing, believing, doing, and living" (Mignolo and Walsh, 2018, p. 4). Decoloniality accounts for the fact that while colonial forces may have left in some places, they typically leave behind social conditions rooted in coloniality, which refers to the colonial relations, systems, and epistemologies that continue to linger and order human social life everywhere on the planet (Dei, 2019; Maldonado-Torres, 2016; Quijano, 2007). Coloniality can be observed in the lingering colorism that privileges citizens of formerly colonized nation-states (like India and the Philippines) with light skin and European phenotypical features. Coloniality explains how newly liberated nations erect new racial hierarchies to maintain exploitative social relations based on ethnic, religious, cultural, or physical difference (Gleeck, 1976; Corañez Bolton, 2021). Coloniality also explains the internalized feelings of disdain and mistrust historically colonized people feel for themselves, resulting in generational traumas that psychological hinder our ability to define our own trajectories and experience liberation (Nadal, 2021). The hauntological facticity of coloniality demonstrates the importance of decoloniality- the cognitive, philosophical, epistemological, and oftentimes internal process of unsettling the colonial logics that provide rationalization for inequitable and exploitative social relations and material conditions.

My decision to use *decolonial* was born out of a desire to specify that the potentially consciousness-raising learning experiences that occur in minority-led subcultures have more to do with cognitive and experiential growth central to the lineage of decoloniality than decolonization's

customary definition as the physical removal of settlers and invaders from occupied lands. Decoloniality and decolonization, however, are not so easily separated in real life, as the liberation of Indigenous land is often regarded as a necessary precondition of liberating colonized minds, restoring ancestral knowledge, and revitalizing Indigenous languages (Waziyatawin & Yellow Bird, 2012). This slippage is evidenced in the term *decolonizing education* itself, which has been used to describe personal journeys toward the epistemological and philosophical unsettling of colonial logic (such as individualism, competition, racialized hierarchies, gender binaries, normative sexualities, Judeo-Christian moralizing, and compulsory schooling) in addition to immediate political project of educating for the rematriation of stolen land, the resurgence of Indigenous languages, and the restoration of Indigenous life upon those lands (Battiste, 2013). To avoid reproducing a simplistic and semiotic binary between decolonization and decoloniality, I categorized the literature defined by terms like decolonial pedagogy and decolonizing education as *decolonial/decolonizing education*. Both terms, and their attendant traditions, are necessary for theorizing forms of education that are concerned with the liberation of lands, minds, and bodies from Eurocentric imperialism. This decision itself is a move toward decoloniality in scholarship, as it is an exercise in disciplinary disobedience born out of this thesis's allegiance to the experiences and aspirations of historically colonized peoples over the regimes of regulation and reduction that Eurocentric epistemologies depend upon to reduce people, phenomena, land, and history to fungible and commodifiable products.

Chapter 3 further discusses how decolonization and decoloniality overlap, particularly when considering Philippine history, which has seen Philippine peoples reclaim their land and achieve the surface-level goal of decolonization. However, the Philippine state's dependence on one-sided trade agreements with western powers and its insistence on retaining Euro-American epistemologies within most aspects of institutional life (such as schooling, law, business, and mass media) help create new forms of coloniality and colonization that require undoing. Both decoloniality (the prospect of

liberating minds) and decolonization (the prospect of liberating lands) remain significant to Philippine peoples, as we grapple with the ways in which colonial logics and relations continue to influence dominant perspectives on personhood and society throughout the Philippines and its diaspora. But because this project locates *education* primarily within the consciousness-raising processes associated with individuals who participate in unschooling, punk, and skateboarding subcultures, it is important to underscore here that it is primarily concerned with decoloniality rather than decolonization. Still, decolonial underground pedagogy draws from scholarship on decoloniality, decolonization and subculture to facilitate examinations of how minoritized people encounter and enact pedagogies that reflect and advance broad liberatory aspirations subcultural environments. An appreciation for subcultural teahing and learning shows how decolonial and decolonizing forms of education occur in informal, collaborative, and unregulated spaces minoritized people attempt to build for themselves and for their own purposes.

This thesis examines the decolonial underground pedagogies that occur in three subcultures I participate in myself - punk rock, skateboarding, and the unschooling movement. These examinations aim to deepen our understanding of how decolonial and decolonizing education can be understood and practiced, which might then inform teaching and learning initiatives that attend to the historical contexts, contemporary experiences, and future aspirations of racialized and minoritized people. To do so, I briefly overview the concepts of decolonial/decolonizing education and some of the works that mark this thesis's points of departure.

Genealogies of Decolonial/Decolonizing Education

In defining decoloniality as a praxistical project, or one that is action-oriented but informed by critical reflection and analysis, Quijano, Mignolo, and Walsh delineate it from decolonization, which traditionally refers to a more legible proposition involving the transfer of territorial dominion and political power from colonizing force to their erstwhile subjects. But the realities of undoing the

diffuse legacies of colonialism cannot be relegated to simplistic categories which argue that some people are engaged in active politics of decolonization while others are constrained to the a reflective philosophizing of decoloniality. Indigenous mobilizations- like those that stop the terroristic threats posed by toxic pipelines and state-sponsored mining expeditions- are always already moored in a deep understanding of the contingent relationality of personhood, ethics, sustainability, and the agency of nonhuman others (such as animals, mountains, soil, and waterways). In other words, contemporary movement building for Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination contest the notion that decolonization and decoloniality are separable concerns. As such, this thesis aims to sit with the resonances between decolonizing, decolonial, Indigenous, and diasporic scholarship to define decolonial/decolonizing education as a practice and philosophy of teaching and learning that is oriented toward contesting Eurocentric imperialism, recentering Indigenous ways of knowing, rematriating stolen land, and abolishing all forms of slavery (Tejeda et. al., 2003; Battiste, 2013; Smith, Tuck, & Yang, 2019). Mignolo & Walsh (2018) themselves speaks to these resonances, as they frame the political imperatives of decolonization as universal concerns because contemporary social, political, and economic relations and processes have their root in European imperialism, which imposed western ideals like individualism, liberalism, capitalism, and white supremacy upon a global populace in ways that continue to influence the experiences of nondominant peoples.

To sustain the hierarchical relationship between the colonizer and colonized, colonial institutions perpetuate racial caste systems as a means of visually formalizing the unequal dynamic between the oppressor and oppressed (Quijano, 2007). Colonial relations then give way to systems and practices that regulate the performance of gender and sexuality in ways that consolidate the power of invader elites and propagate settler populations (Oyěwùmí, 1997; Lugones, 2007). Colonization is not only an external phenomenon associated with invasion and warfare- it is a sophisticated process that adapts to varying spatiotemporal conditions and is sustained by the consent of the colonized

(Quijano, 2007). As overt domination gives way to the imposition of colonial institutions like schooling, trade, and government, "the colonial subject's ways get positioned as inferior and the colonial aggressor's as superior" (Reyes, 2019, p. 2). Colonialism, in this manner is both "destructive and seductive" (Reyes, 2019, p. 1), as colonial invasion and occupation are reproduced through economic, religious, educational, and political institutions. Psychologically, colonialism redraws the internal terrain of the colonized subject in ways that make the inequitable relationship between the colonizer and colonized seem natural and inevitable (Fanon, 2004). This thesis draws upon these renderings of colonization, which are explored in greater depth in Chapter 3, as its examinations of decolonial underground pedagogy highlight the efforts of various communities attempting to undo the far-reaching and all-encompassing effects of colonial conquest.

For now, it is important to note that decolonial/decolonizing education is not analogous to pedagogies that equate social justice with nominal invocations of inclusion or multicultural understanding. Instead of seeking to integrate marginalized people into historically inequitable institutions (like schooling, industry, and media) decolonizing education is a deeply political project that involves orienting education toward the radical envisioning of new worlds altogether (Tejeda, Gutierrez, & Espinoza, 2003; Reyes, 2019). Prior examples of decolonial and decolonizing education include civics programs that emphasize bicultural governance between Indigenous people and settlers (Bishop, 2003), efforts to revitalize threatened languages and safeguard Indigenous lifeways by undoing the effects of colonial re-education (Battiste, 2013), and place-based programs that protect sacred lands using sustainable and ancestral modes of stewardship (Cajete, 2012).

James and Cherry Banks (2020) note that the act of educating for social justice can never be fully realized because "racism, sexism, and discrimination…will exist to some extent no matter how hard we work to eliminate these problems. When prejudice and discrimination are reduced toward one group, they are usually directed toward another group or take new forms" (Banks & Banks 2020,

p. 4). Advocates of decolonial/decolonizing education, in kind, strive to exercise constant vigilance and awareness of emergent forms of discrimination and prejudice, tailoring their efforts to meet the needs of communities as they arise in real time instead of advocating for discrete missions with definite end points (Tejeda et al., 2003; Battiste, 2013; Reyes, 2019). Because the analytical, theoretical, and methodological trajectories of this thesis are deeply entwined with my own experiences in subcultural learning environments, its own demand for responsive vigilance requires an explication of the specific historical, social, political, and colonial phenomena that this thesis responds to when it speaks of decolonization. As such, I use the next section to further articulate this thesis's particular orientation toward decolonization, which is influenced by the colonial history of the Philippines and its diaspora.

Considering the Philippines

This thesis's examinations of decolonial underground pedagogy emerge out of my own participation in minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures and thus reflect a highly personal orientation toward the pursuit and practice of decolonial and decolonizing education. My experience of decolonization spans three continents and reflects two decades constructing a Philippine identity rooted in horizontal alliances with racialized and Indigenous peoples in underground contexts rather than assimilating to dominant culture (Rodriguez, 2010; Strobel, 2013). During the introspective process of mapping out this thesis, I realized that writing it would only be possible if I consciously privileged Philippine histories, narratives, and research methods. Non-Philippine accounts of colonization and decolonization, while informative and inspirational, did not accurately reflect my understandings and experiences, making it so they could not fully account for the significance of subcultural teaching and learning in my life.

The Philippines' long and ongoing history of conquest by (and resistance to) multiple colonizers makes it so Philippine perspectives on decolonization necessarily enfold considerations of complex histories, discourses, phenomena, and affects (Enriquez, 1989; Strobel, 2001; Manalansan,

2006; Rodriguez, 2010; Tadiar, 2015). These include issues like religious conversion, racialized capitalism, labor exploitation, migration, assimilation, and a vexed neocolonialism in which western powers place significant limits on the exercise of Philippine national sovereignty. At the same time, contemporary Philippine accounts of decolonization recognize that the postcolonial Philippine state has arguably become a colonizing force (Bankoff & Weekley, 2007). The Philippine government continues to wage a constant campaign of state violence, land confiscation, and development aggression against its own Indigenous Peoples (Gabriel, 2017). Philippine perspectives on decolonization consider the ways colonialism has affected the historical and contemporary development of national and diasporic Philippine identities, thus offering "relevant observations and arguments attending to current theoretical debates about indigenous sovereignty, sexual freedom, diasporic identity, and national identity" (Corañez Bolton, 2021, p. 222).

These considerations act as a conceptual map that informs this thesis's engagements with texts, narratives, and autobiographic reflections associated with the minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. In these communities, minoritized people seek refuge from colonizing discourses, pursue decolonization, and redefine learning and identity on their own terms. This approach expands the scholarship on decolonial/decolonizing education by devoting sustained attention to how it can take place outside of schools and school settings. Such possibilities are entwined with the thesis's objective- to illuminate aspects of subcultural learning that might help envision new and less hegemonic ways of teaching, learning, knowing, doing, and relating. This objective is further informed by a view of decolonization that emerges out of the fact that Philippine peoples have contended with different forms of colonialism for 500 years and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

The perpetuity of decolonization as a political project makes it impossible to prescribe a declarative roadmap toward an objectively decolonized state of being through specific teaching and

learning interventions. Nor does it suggest that minority-led subcultures hold unknown secrets for implementing such strategies. Instead, I reflect upon a life spent navigating subcultural communities to consider how they can inspire thoughts, conversations, and actions that that might help those concerned with educational justice respond to the evolving needs of marginalized communities in innovative ways. For now, I draw attention to the questions that inform this foundational hunch and enable studies of the decolonial underground pedagogies suggested in punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures.

Research Questions

Like the rogue wave of Filipino-American activism borne out of the AninoKo show in 2017, the pedagogies and praxes birthed in subcultural spaces like 924 Gilman do not always remain *underground*. While underground activities and cultures also operate outside of the surveillant apparatus of institutions like schools, workplaces, and the state, subcultural politics often influence how insiders experience other contexts. This conceptualization of undergrounds as social formation that convene to subvert oppression owes much to the Underground Railroad- the network of abolitionists and safe houses that, in the 19th century, helped fugitive slaves escape the slave patrols that would eventually become modern-day police departments (Peterson, 2014). Introducing a discursive study on Black subculture in the United States, Peterson (2014) elaborates that Black undergrounds, like hip-hop, spoken word poetry, literature, and art spread "[their] root-like tentacles through the fabric of history, manifesting at continuous points in reality and in cultural production" (p. 1). Peterson theorizes the visual, material, and epistemological cultures of Black undergrounds as perpetual motion machines, ones that constantly respond and react to immediate and existential threats to Black existence with affirmations of sovereignty and vitality.

Decolonization, decoloniality, and undergrounds are deeply resonant concepts. As a political and pedagogical project, decoloniality and decolonization entail the imagination and enactment of

social conditions and relations that intentionally subvert dominant ways of being and knowing. Doing so invites scrutiny and carries risk, making it so that decolonization efforts are well-suited to underground environments where targeted individuals can practice alternative lifeways without justifying or explaining their activities to authorities or outsiders. Theorizing minority-led subculture as sites of decolonial/decolonizing education thus potentiates a deeper understanding of the liberatory possibilities of the informal teaching and learning experiences that occur in places like 924 Gilman, the skate park next door, and the alternative education movements minoritized people build in search of community. This thesis explores some of my own experiential understandings about these places: namely, that they are largely unexamined sites of decolonial and decolonizing education and that educational research might benefit from a more thorough appreciation for the teaching and learning experiences they make possible. I initiated this study using the following research questions:

- What do punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures offer members from historically minoritized communities or with racialized identities?
- How do subcultural members (or *insiders*) teach and learn in ways that complement the political, discursive, social and psychological dimensions of decoloniality and decolonization?
- How can insights from subcultural teaching and learning enrich efforts to enact decolonial pedagogies and decolonize education in other contexts, including in schools?

Punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures each offer different perspectives on how individuals and communities learn to identify, critique, and transform oppressive circumstances. They are also bound by distinct values, mores, beliefs, and ways of doing and relating that are not always translatable to other settings. My approach to grappling with these research questions is to contemplate these subcultural social worlds relative to the historical contexts and contemporary experiences of minoritized communities, particularly in multicultural societies like the United States,

Aotearoa[1], Australia, and the Philippines. This strategy involves reflecting on my day-to-day involvement in subculture while composing historicized and theoretical examinations of my own experiences. I also deepen and triangulate my own reflections by integrating interpretations of texts associated with punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling. These texts include songs, films, first person narratives, and scholarly works created by minoritized punks, skaters, and unschoolers themselves. I further contextualize these texts by examining them against analyses of the broader social and political contexts in which they were authored.

On one hand, this approach compels this thesis to recognize the analytical richness of the testimonies and artifacts that subcultural insiders produce as a function of their membership. On the other, a question like *how do teaching and learning experiences in minority-led subcultures deepen our understanding of decolonial and decolonizing education?* requires specific methodological orientations that acknowledge the oftentimes inscrutable and obfuscated nature of subcultural discourse. If we think of this thesis as a traveler's tale and metaphorize subcultures as cities, this thesis functions as a critical reflection on my years spent in each locale, aided by the memories that come flooding back at the sight of the ripped ticket stubs, fading photographs, and scribbled notes transported from one place to the next in a coat pocket. After traversing various subcultural terrains, these bits of memory-laden detritus have become an integral part of who I understand myself to be and what I present to the world.

Engaging with these texts in ways that pay equal consideration to the revolutionary ambition of decolonial/decolonizing education, the agency of subcultural insiders, and the opacity of subcultural pedagogy thus requires a methodological embrace of ambiguity, an emphasis on context over content, and a willingness to accept the validity of multiple interpretations. To build such an

[1] This thesis refers to New Zealand as Aotearoa, its Māori name. I also acknowledge that several sovereign Indigenous nations are located on unceded land in occupied states like Australia, Canada, and the United States.

approach into the architecture of this thesis, I turn to several critical forms of qualitative inquiry centered around the suppositionless Filipino methodology of pakapa-kapa (or *feeling around in the dark*; Torres, 1982)

Methodological Considerations

Pakapa-kapa is an uncontrollable and non-experimental research procedure that is derived from ways of knowing and doing associated with Philippine peoples (Ho, 1999). Pakapa-kapa is characterized by "groping, searching, and probing into an unsystematized mass of social and cultural data…to obtain order, meaning and directions for research" (Torres, 1982, p. 171). As a research methodology, pakapa-kapa emerged out of Philippine psychologists' desire to apply Philippine ideas around personhood and ethics in their research activities with Philippine participants. Pakapa-kapa research understands that insights about the resistance, transformation, and survival of colonized communities do not only come from extracting information from informants. Such knowledge can also come out of everyday enmeshment in one's community and, by extension, its collective knowledge, values, and aspirations.

Pakapa-kapa, as such, should not be portrayed as a strategy one can use to ingratiate oneself into communities in hopes of extracting more authentic or novel insights. Its call for suppositionless inquiry instead offers an approach for reflecting upon one's experiences within one's own communities without bringing potentially irrelevant, invasive, or inappropriate research implements to bear on those communities. This approach to community-embedded and reflective inquiry resonates with the themes of this thesis because it mirrors the teaching and learning processes one often encounters in punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling. These tend to arise organically, informally, and out of everyday life. Subcultural knowledge and insight comes out of trying, failing, asking for help, and figuring things out. Most skateboarders, for example, do not learn their craft by following a structured program that advertises mastery. We learn to skate by *skating*. We learn even

more by talking about skateboarding with other skaters, by practicing tricks every chance we get, and by building a rapport with the board itself.

Suppositionless inquiry still requires thorough considerations of the ethical and political dimensions of research, as well as a strategy for interpreting data once one has begun the process of pondering variegated social and cultural information (Enriquez, 1981). Once pakapa-kapa researchers have finished feeling around in the dark, they benefit from a having a strategy for making sense of what they find (Torres, 1982; Ho, 1999). This thesis's effort to theorize the decolonizing potential of subcultural teaching and learning practices is therefore aided by community-responsive and decolonizing approaches to interpretive and text-based inquiry that complement the suppositionlessness of pakapa-kapa. To find order and meaning in the data I encounter in this thesis's unsystematized mass of texts, sounds, images, memories, and stories, I also refer to the decolonizing methodologies of *story telling*, *reading*, and *community research* (Smith, 2021), whose application and relevance to this thesis I explore in greater detail in Chapter 4. These projects combine with pakapa-kapa to facilitate this thesis's engagements with subcultural texts and my own recollections in open-ended ways that are also critical, historicized, and attuned to the objectives of decolonial/decolonizing education.

This approach allows this study to theorize the decolonizing potential of subcultural communities by reading textual attestations of subcultural teaching and learning experiences in terms of their relevance to decolonial struggles. At the same time, pakapa-kapa requires one to recognize an infinite world of possibilities instead of ensuring that one's data coheres with a pre-articulated agenda. For example, any claim that subcultural communities are sites of decolonial/decolonizing education must also account for who is absent or made to feel unwelcome in them, such as those who do not have the financial or temporal resources to partake in the consumptive aspects of subcultural participation, or to participate in them daily. Pakapa-kapa research's emphasis on accountability

forecloses the possibility of definitive answers, so what comes out of this thesis's examinations of the decolonial possibilities (and limitations) of subcultural learning cannot be classified as findings in a declarative sense. They are rather closer to what David Bowie (1977) refers to as *gift[s] of sound and vision*- fading linotypes and warbled communiques from decolonial underground formations inching upward from the depths. These messages might be real, or they might just be fever dreams. Regardless, they call us to attention.

Articulating a Decolonial Underground Pedagogy

While suppositionless research can open a rich analytic world full of possibilities, the decolonizing messages of subcultural pedagogy do not always make themselves known to all. Understanding the pedagogies interred in subcultural texts instead requires conceptual tools that help clarify these distorted signals from which we might derive suggestions for further courses of action and inquiry. Intuiting the broader significance of subcultural experiences and texts, therefore, cannot be a straightforward matter of observation and reporting. A suppositionless engagement with subcultural teaching and learning instead requires conceptual touchstones that illuminate how decolonial and decolonizing forms of education might occur in subcultural settings.

Such an understanding is crucial for this thesis because the inner workings of subcultural life are often inscrutable to outsiders and purposely hidden from view (Hebdige, 1979). Subcultural values and priorities tend to be communicated through unspoken rituals, particularized manners of dress, idiosyncratic slang, and the display of key artifacts that broadcast insider status. For punks, this might mean wearing a patch-covered motorcycle jacket smelling of (the right kind of) cheap beer. For skaters, insider status might be broadcasted by riding white wheels. Colorful wheels tend to be more expensive than white ones, so they are associated with overeager beginners or those yet to be initiated in skate culture's valorization of grittiness and street-hardened jadedness. For unschoolers, insider status might be communicated through self-identification claims supported by attendance at unschooling

conferences or membership in online communities that screen prospective members by asking questions about their unschooling philosophy. This thesis's suppositionless engagement with the pedagogies underpinning subcultural sounds and visions are thus informed by conceptual and practical literature that allows researchers to 1) identify teaching and learning practices within subcultural communities and 2) determine whether those practices are relevant to the social, political, ontological, and epistemological aspirations of decoloniality and decolonization. Decolonial underground pedagogy thus describe the various ways decolonial/decolonizing education, informal learning, and subculture coalesce to create liberatory teaching and learning experiences.

Because subcultures are closed spaces by design, the ability to observe and experience decolonial underground pedagogy is benefitted by researchers being subcultural insiders themselves (Abramson & Modzlewski, 2010). By examining the decolonial underground pedagogies of minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures, this thesis presents a critical and suppositionless analysis of the educational significance of subcultural formations where minoritized people pursue decolonization in underground communities that nonetheless have porous boundaries and whose tendrils extend in myriad geographic and ideological directions. The tenets of decolonial underground pedagogy underpin this thesis's exercises in *critical wondering* (Vakil & Vossoughi, 2018) – a process of radically imagining how educational initiatives might be reconfigured to critique colonizing logics and dismantle colonial systems.

Overview of the Thesis

This thesis comprises nine chapters, the first of which is this introduction, which has thus far introduced a conceptual and methodological mooring primarily informed by Philippine theories of decolonization and sociality. The remainder of this chapter will orient this thesis by introducing the chapters that follow. As some of these chapters were adapted from previously published journal articles, I also explain how they connect to and build upon one another to present a cohesive study of

decolonial underground pedagogy in minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. **Chapter 2** offers further discussion on this thesis's definitions of terms like *decolonial* and *underground* by outlining this thesis's conceptual influences and examining the linkages between the liberatory politics of decolonization and the resistant sociality of subculture. This discussion foregrounds this thesis in an understanding of the relationship between decolonization and subculture, establishing a discursive and analytical terrain that makes it possible to observe decolonial teaching and learning experiences in the activities, narratives, and productions of subcultural insiders. In other words, the conceptual touchstones discussed in Chapter 2 enable the proceeding theorizations of how minoritized people teach and learn in decolonizing ways within subcultural learning environments. Chapter 2 further explicates this thesis's specific understanding of colonization, coloniality, and decolonization, which is influenced by how these concepts are understood in the Philippines and throughout the Philippine diaspora. This chapter begins with a broad discussion of colonial histories and contemporary aspirations that underpin multiple strands of decolonial struggle before honing in on a particularized analysis of Philippine perspectives that reflects my own positionality as a researcher, educator, and subcultural insider. This discussion is necessary for understanding the analytical approach to this thesis's data chapters, which occur in Chapters 5 through 8.

Chapter 3 builds upon the conceptual groundwork laid in Chapter 2 to introduce *decolonial underground pedagogy*, an analytic framing developed specifically for this thesis which allows for observations of how decolonizing teaching and learning experiences occur in subcultural communities. It does so through a review of relevant literature that highlights existing studies of decolonizing education, informal learning, and subcultural teaching and learning. Decolonial underground pedagogy enables this thesis to identify how the teaching and learning experiences found in minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities might inform future efforts to practice and conceptualize decolonial/decolonizing education. I examine the parallels between

these literatures to propose decolonial underground pedagogy as a framework for understanding how subcultural teaching and learning experiences might enhance and otherwise figure into decolonial/decolonizing education initiatives. This thesis's contributions are vested in its ability to 1) draw attention to how studies in subcultural teaching and learning can be more explicitly linked to decolonization and 2) to contribute to scholarship on how decolonial/decolonizing education can take place outside of formal and purpose-built learning environments and school-based programs.

Chapter 4 explains this thesis's methodological touchstones, which prioritizes the study of texts, artifacts, and narratives and draws from literature on decolonizing methodologies and the suppositionless Philippine methodology of pakapa-kapa. These methodological influences orient this research toward open-ended conversations, ponderances, and meditations on the decolonizing potential of subcultural teaching and learning, even if these dialogues primarily take place internally and with various subcultural texts that make themselves seen, heard, and known through the process of self-reflection.

Chapters 5 through 8 present four research articles that contain data and analyses previously published in peer-reviewed academic journals and have been modified according to the objectives of this thesis. A list of these articles and their relevant citations appears at the beginning of the thesis. **Chapter 5** situates this thesis's understanding of decoloniality and subcultural education in my own experiences in unschooling, an approach to self-directed teaching and learning whose practitioners strive for critical consciousness and praxis in all aspects of their lives. *Of barangay, babaylan, and bayani: Postcolonial healing through unschooling* presents an autoethnographic reflection on my experiences as an unschooling parent and partner, critically examining how unschooling has informed my own pursuit of decolonial diaspora and healing from colonial mentality. It situates this analysis within a discussion Philippine history and the fraught process of attempting to cultivate a Filipino-American identity oriented toward a contestation of colonial race-making. *Postcolonial healing through unschooling* contributes

to the field of alternative education research by framing unschooling in terms of its ability to facilitate the construction of decolonial learning environments rooted in community-embedded pedagogy and reciprocal relationships. At the same time, it draws from first-hand experience to show that that unschooling can also reproduce oppressive discourses, particularly when practitioners prioritize their individual liberties over their responsibilities to their communities. Because navigating the tension between decolonial aspirations and neocolonial realities is an inherent feature of decolonial/decolonizing education, this chapter seeks to demonstrate how individuals, families, and communities mitigate these tensions. Finally, its inclusion in this thesis expands our understanding of both Philippine subjectivity and subculture, by showing how identities and communities can be emerge out healing and egalitarian relationships.

Chapter 6, *Diasporic Philippine becoming and punk rock pedagogy* draws from my travels to examine how Philippine punks in Australia and the United States materialize decolonial diasporas, resistive feminisms, community-responsive action, and Indigenous-immigrant solidarities. This analysis builds upon the previous chapter to focus on how decolonial underground pedagogies foster new ways of expressing diasporic Philippine identities, showing that a decolonial understanding of race, gender, and relationality contests colonial logics and impositions. This approach is applied and expanded in **Chapter 7**, *Punx up bros down: Defending free speech through punk rock pedagogy*, which considers how minority-led punk subcultures decolonize the concept of free speech, a legal instrument designed to safeguard the rights of oppressed peoples but is often interpreted in ways that maintain colonial hierarchies and inflame partisan violence. This chapter contrasts the free speech absolutism often espoused by university officials with the ways in which the right to expression is sensitively negotiated in Indigenous and immigrant punk scenes. It goes on to argue that efforts to pursue decolonization in higher education contexts might be informed by a similarly "punk" approach. **Chapter 8,** *You're Skating on Native Land: Queering and Decolonizing Skate Pedagogy*, turns this thesis's focus toward minority-

led skateboarding subcultures. It builds upon the political emphasis of the preceding chapters to show how decolonial underground pedagogies also encompass physical and place-based education. The chapter demonstrates the decolonizing implications of two minority-led subcultural communities: Sibling- a queer skate crew in London and Apache Skateboards, a skateboarding collective based in the San Carlos Apache Reservation in the Southwestern United States. This chapter is further grounded in an interpretive analysis of how skate pedagogy can unsettle dominant conceptions of race, gender, sexuality, and indigeneity in contrast to the normative discourses implied by skateboarding's official unveiling as an Olympic sport.

Chapter 9 concludes this thesis and draws together its differing studies of decolonial underground pedagogy to show how minority-led subcultural learning environments might inform ongoing efforts to practice critical and culturally relevant pedagogies, thus envisioning hopeful, joyful, and reciprocal futures in decolonial and decolonizing education.

Conclusion

While the possibilities of subcultural learning are often mediated by social phenomena (Omi & Winant, 2016) like gender, race, sexuality, and socioeconomic status, they also offer opportunities to critique the racial hierarchies, normative gender roles, and moralistic value judgments of mainstream Eurocentric culture. This thesis therefore aims to show how punks, skaters, and unschoolers from minoritized communities often engage in collective efforts to construct kinder social, epistemic, and interpersonal frameworks with which to conceptualize teaching and learning. It then theorizes how an understanding of these frameworks, hereafter referred to as *decolonial underground pedagogy*, might inform efforts to teach and learn in ways that seek to build relationships founded on respect, reciprocity, and resistance to an inequitable status quo. As such, these themes might be considered in ongoing efforts to decolonize education.

While skateboarding, punk rock, and unschooling differ in their aesthetic preoccupations, an understanding of the different ways they facilitate decolonial underground pedagogy might encourage other researchers, activists, and community members to interrogate the possibilities of liberatory learning in the communities of interest that are significant to them. This thesis acts upon this inclination by drawing attention to the ways Indigenous, racialized, and minoritized people attempt to develop decolonial ways of thinking and doing within these specific subcultures, primarily through informal and communal ways of constructing and transmitting knowledge. Following this line of argumentation and inquiry requires foregrounding in two fundamental concepts: *decolonization* and *subculture*. Like AninoKo's 2017 show at 924 Gilman, this thesis does not prescribe a specific course of action; instead, it seeks to provoke open and reflexive conversations about the possibilities of decolonial/decolonizing education. It does so by engaging with some of the texts, stories, works of art, and memories I have accumulated over three decades of involvement in minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures. The contributions of this thesis stem from my own embodied understanding of these subcultural learning environments, where I have built community with people who experience historical and persistent oppression but nonetheless exercise radical agency to envision new worlds and, furthermore, actualize and sustain them.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Considerations

Introduction

Eight months before the AninoKo show, I graduated with an MA in International and Multicultural Education from the University of San Francisco. There, I spent two years learning about decolonial and decolonizing approaches to education, or philosophies and practices of teaching and learning which aim to separate education from Eurocentric imperialism and its evolving political, socioeconomic, and epistemological forms (Tejeda, Gutierrez, & Espinoza, 2003). In my Masters thesis, I devised an idealistic effort to decolonize schooling through a music education program called *Four Chords to Freedom* (FCTF). FCTF was an arts-based curriculum that drew from international human rights law to help young people understand the oppressive histories, discourses, and practices that reproduce white supremacy, anti-blackness, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and misogyny. I conducted several FCTF workshops, mostly in classrooms at the University of California, Berkeley during my lunch break. While they were overarchingly positive experiences, I often left these workshops with a strained voice. I spent much of my allotted time talking- dispensing information about various human rights instruments and providing rote definitions of theoretical concepts like dialectical materialism and praxis. My instructional format left no time to reproduce the learning experiences that influenced FCTF and that I associated with places like 924 Gilman: the organic process of constructing new knowledge in community with others that inspires principled action.

As my research and teaching careers have progressed, I have noticed similar dynamics in learning spaces advertised by instructional leaders as restorative, transformative, or decolonizing. I was once invited to a public and non-academic panel on decolonizing education through arts- and community-based forms of teaching and learning. Instead of modelling these concepts, the event consisted of a two-hour lecture in which four academics summarized their research outputs to a bored audience that included young children. In the introductory workshop for a course on multicultural

education for pre-service teachers, I watched a lecturer speak passionately about the need for humanizing pedagogy before spending the next two hours unidirectionally explaining a suite of complicated instructions students were required to follow to complete and submit their assignments. The workshop was streamed online, and virtual attendees spent the session writing panicked screeds in the chat box begging instructors to answer their questions. After the initial workshop, I was directed to take twenty students into a classroom and review their assignments in even greater detail. Sensing their fatigue and fear, I engaged the students in a storying activity where they introduced themselves by sharing their names and a recent moment of pride. I then asked if they would like to join me at a nearby art museum. There, we more readily encountered one other as complex and complete human beings, appreciating art and the cultural assets of our community. I was also able to individually address their questions and concerns about the class. Despite taking corrective action in this case, each of these outwardly educational events each left me with impression that those in attendance learned little about humanizing pedagogy, community, or decolonization, save for some vocabulary words.

My intervention in the latter example was not innate or reflective of an ideology. It was instead informed by years of first-hand teaching experience in which I learned to practice and prioritize mindful communion with students and community members, inasmuch as possible given constraints like class size, time, and institutional regulations. These experiences helped consolidate my understanding that decolonial/decolonizing education is not a simple matter of declarations, content, or curriculum. It involves the more complicated work of creating learning environments where all community members are regarded equally as teachers and learners- always and already fully human regardless of what they know or have achieved (Cajete, 2012). These experiences helped me realize that sustained critique, reflection, and a willingness to do invite scrutiny and censure by doing things differently are needed if educators hope to "walk the talk" and create decolonized conditions and decolonial relationships in education (Nahanee Creative, 2022, n.p.).

AninoKo's performance of *Anak Diaspora* and the conversations that followed it underscore this thesis's contention that classrooms are not the only possible sites of decolonial/decolonizing education. Missing from the FCTF workshops was an acknowledgment that resistance to oppressive circumstances does not only come in the form interventionist attempts to change students' lives, manage their behavior, destroy oppressive systems, or mold their minds by introducing them to academic texts. Transformative pedagogies can just as well be observed in everyday, self-initiated acts of "deviation from the overwhelming logic of domination, a fissure in the monolithic space of oppression" (Cruz, 2014, p. 411). In Cruz's (2014) research with LGBTQ street youth, she observes how defiant hair flicks, subtle changes in voice tone, and conversations that occur *offstage* (or away from the scrutiny of teachers, police officers, security guards, physicians, and researchers) conceal a radical *infrapolitics*, or "dissident political cultures that manifest in daily conversations, folklore, jobs, songs, and other cultural practices" (Kelley, 1993, p. 77, as quoted in Cruz, 2014, p. 412). Infrapolitics are laden with strategies of continuous critique and change-making created by minoritized people attempting to "negotiate the continuous scrutiny and containment by the powerful" (p. 412). Cruz (2014) refuses to pathologize vulnerable communities, opting instead to prioritize their agency by arguing that infrapolitical practices show how "in the tight spaces of…resistance, we might witness the opening of new creative strategies for organizing life" (Cruz, 2014, p. 422). This understanding is echoed in this thesis's engagement with the decolonizing implications of subcultural teaching and learning, where pedagogy goes beyond the didactic and hierarchical learning environments that underpinned my early forays in instructional leadership.

Decoloniality and decolonizing education, for me, involved countless hours spent huddled over a secondhand stereo listening to burned CDs from artists like Alice Bag, Bad Brains, the Dicks, Los Crudos, Eskapo, and The Brat. These were people who sometimes looked like me and shared a familiar frustration with the unsettled and violent nature of American life on the margins. While punk

cultivated my knee-jerk opposition to all things 'mainstream,' skateboarding helped me develop a physical understanding of how people, land, matter, and the nonhuman world are mutually constituted in unexpected ways. I have carried these lessons into parenthood, my experiences of which have been partly defined by my family's ongoing decision to practice unschooling, a form of home education that emphasizes the informal learning that emerges out of community engagement (Woodford, 2020). Still, critical wondering requires conceptual articulation and this thesis's line of ponderance requires foregrounding in several key concepts. To understand how decolonial/decolonizing education might be deepened by an investigation of subcultural pedagogy, we must first understand what this thesis means by terms like decoloniality, decolonization, and subculture. These concepts subsequently frame this thesis's interpretive meditations on the decolonizing possibilities of subcultural teaching and learning, the methodological dimensions of which I explore more fully in Chapter 4.

Colonization and Decolonization

Decolonial underground pedagogy is anchored in definitions of decolonization that go beyond what Capino (2010) identifies as its *customary political significance*, or "the termination colonial rule and the removal of natives' subject legal status" (p. xxii). Acknowledging the diffuse character and contextual variance of both colonizing and decolonizing processes, Capino (2010) understands decolonization as a broad and intricate affair that plays out in the everyday" (p. xxii). Waziyatawin and Michael Yellow Bird (2012) support this assertion by defining decolonization as the "meaningful and active resistance to the forces of colonialism that perpetuate the subjugation and/or exploitation of our minds, bodies, and lands" (p. 3). Decolonization, for the purposes of this thesis, refers to a broad array of philosophical, political, artistic, and ontological efforts to create material realities in which Indigenous, colonized, and marginalized people are free to become the "master[s] of [their] political, economic, and cultural destiny" (Memmi, 2006, p. 3). In addition to calls for the wholesale reversal of colonization, decolonization encompasses the oftentimes obscure and internal work of identifying the

ongoing manifestations of coloniality, or the ways in which colonial prejudices and hierarchies continue to influence human societies, even in the absence of exogenous rule (Quijano, 2000; Lugones, 2007). While the native people of formerly colonized nations like the Philippines, India, and Tanzania have gained control over geographic terrains formerly occupied by foreign militaries, other states like Aotearoa, Canada, the US, and Australia remain *settler states* in which the descendants of colonizers might acknowledge treaty agreements with Indigenous nations but retain sweeping power and demographic majorities (Tuck et al., 2019). Such states emerged out of what theorists refer to *settler colonialism*, but the term settler itself risks evoking romantic notions of discovery and emigration brought on by hardship. Such evocations neglect that the 'discovery' and 'settlement' of Indigenous lands euphemize invasion and facilitate invaders' moves toward innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2012). This thesis accordingly uses the terms *invasion* and *invader colonialism* alongside settler colonialism and invaders as well as settlers (Hokowhitu, 2020). Invader colonialism facilitates theorizations of colonialism that include the Philippines whose history, like that of Aotearoa, Australia, Canada, Hawai'i, and the contiguous United States, is marked by military occupation, resource extraction, land confiscation, genocide, and the erasure of Indigenous knowledge through compulsory schooling (Gleeck, 1976; Rodriguez, 2010). Colonialism in the Philippines, however, was not accompanied by waves of foreign settlement that saw European civilians overtake the archipelago's original inhabitants (Paredes, 2005). This thesis's use of invader colonialism therefore allows for theorizations of Philippine colonialism to be situated alongside those of other colonial contexts typically analyzed through the lens of settler colonialism. As an analytic, invader colonialism prioritizes the self-determination of colonized peoples without differentiating them according to whether or not their lands were deemed desirable for European settlement. However, it is important to note and prioritize the agency, survival, and resistance of Indigenous and racialized people, who often accept that colonization processes have occurred but do not solely see themselves as colonized or oppressed.

More often, we engage in face-to-face relations with settlers, immigrants, and non-Indigenous peoples with aspirations toward reciprocity, balance, and self-determination (Hoskins, Tocker, & Jones, 2020).

Still, Gikuyu philosopher Ngugi wa Thiong'o (2005) notes that the eradicative scale of European colonialism has had far-reaching external, internal, and interpersonal consequences whose affects continue to reverberate even in the absence of occupying armies:

> The real aim of colonialism was to control the people's wealth: what they produced, how they produced it, and how it was distributed; to control, in other words, the entire realm of the language of real life…But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonised, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world. (p. 55)

Invader colonialism is sustained by efforts to both remove and assimilate Indigenous populations into the economic imperatives of the colonial project (Fanon, 1970/2014; Césaire, 1972; Cadena, 2015). Schooling proved to be an important technology in controlling the mental universe of the colonized and upholding the coloniality of power. The systematic denigration of Indigenous languages and knowledge systems was often implemented as a wartime strategy that complemented more overt campaigns of land confiscation and warfare (Gleeck, 1976). Because colonization sought total control of the mental and physical universes of the colonized, decolonization requires similarly broad aspirations and involves the radical transformation of individuals and societies.

Brayboy's (2005) writings on TribalCrit are an important touchstone for decolonization and decolonial/decolonizing education, as they attend to the contemporary aspirations of Indigenous peoples while recognizing the colonial origin of social, political, and economic inequity. The first four tenets of TribalCrit hold that 1) colonization is foundational to western and US society, 2) that the U.S. government's relationship with Indigenous peoples continues to reflect an imperialist compulsion to annex their lands, 3) that Indigenous peoples in the United States exist as both political and racialized subjects, and 4) that the aspirations of Indigenous peoples are tied to the pursuit of tribal sovereignty, autonomy, self-determination, and self-identification. These tenets inform Brayboy's

(2005) assertion that Indigenous ideas toward culture, power, and knowledge are collectivistic, relational, and oriented toward to sustainability and stewardship. Brayboy (2005) then critiques the history and contemporary condition of invader-Indigenous relations in the U.S, which continues to reflect the colonial policy of forcibly assimilating First Nations peoples to Eurocentric worldviews and erasing Indigenous lifeways. In response, Brayboy (2005) asserts that "Tribal philosophies, beliefs, customs, traditions, and visions for the future are central to understanding the lived realities of Indigenous peoples, but they also illustrate the differences and adaptability among individuals and groups" (p. 430). The final tenets of TribalCrit are concerned with reasserting the epistemological importance of Indigenous knowledge, with Brayboy noting that "stories are not separate from theory; they make up theory and are, therefore, real and legitimate sources of data and ways of being" (p. 429-430). Lastly, Brayboy (2005) argues against the separation of theory and practice, nothing that Indigenous epistemologies hold that our inner and outer lives are so deeply entangled that scholars and practitioners must not prioritize one over the other when working toward social change.

Indigenous theories of decolonization are important for this thesis's examinations of subculture because they orient them toward specific political goals that move beyond putative inclusion in oppressive, racist, and colonial social structures. Brayboy's (2005) indictments of assimilation and white supremacy specifically trouble normative calls for unity and understanding, especially when they elide critiques of colonial statecraft. TribalCrit differs from other offshoots of Critical Race Theory, which often theorize race in straightforward ways to secure legal restitution for targeted groups. Brayboy's (2005) clarification that Indigenous people represent a heterogenous population of cultures and nations rather than a fixed race thus functions to deconstruct the identity categories that order life in contemporary societies, while recognizing the disadvantaged realities produced by a widespread belief in the facticity of racial difference. Tall Bear (2021) notes the limited utility of identity-focused discourse in decolonizing initiatives:

> Identity as a concept in popular usage does not necessarily imply ongoing relating. It might imply discrete biological conjoinings within one's genetic ancestry and it can spur alliances, but it can also exist as a largely individualistic idea, as something considered to be held once and for all, unchanging within one's own body – whether through biological or social imprinting – as one's body's property. (p. 565).

This thesis frames race, gender, and nationality not only as social constructs but as colonial inventions used to justify invasion (Lugones, 2007). It is therefore helpful to define decolonization in ways that account for coloniality, invasion, and dispossession as diffuse, far-reaching, and lingering phenomena that affect a variety of people in ways that go beyond the imposition of oppositional relationships between warring clans with unidimensional identities, such as oppressors and the oppressed or colonizers and the colonized. It is important to understand colonialism as a condition- one that informs the development of contemporary Eurocentric and globalized societies, thus exerting palpable influence over the inner and outer lives of people minoritized and othered by prevailing identitarian norms. This understanding is important to this study because its examinations of decolonization are not limited to the political subversion of settler control. Decolonial underground pedagogy also facilitates a personal and communal transformation away from the colonizing logics of individualism, competition, property, and exploitation toward a relational conception of self that emanates out of one's responsibility to an interconnected and collective whole.

Coloniality and Decoloniality

A useful starting point for understanding colonialism as a condition and a phenomenon is to consider what Quijano (2000) terms the *coloniality of power*- a social, political, and economic milieu in which people, knowledge, and land are controlled through four interconnected loci of coercion. South African scholar Lesley LeGrange notes that the coloniality of power can be observed in contemporary multicultural states when ostensibly decolonized state apparatuses are still built upon a foundation of invader colonialism and/or when colonial descendants continue to control the following loci of repressive, normative power:

> control of economy [land appropriation, exploitation of labor, control of natural resources];
> control of authority [institutions, army];
> control of gender and sexuality [family, education] and
> control of subjectivity and knowledge [epistemology, education, and identity formation]. (Le Grange, 2020, p. 128)

This thesis's analyses of decolonial/decolonizing education center considerations of the coloniality of power because it compels studies of decolonial/decolonizing education to recognize that decolonized conditions cannot be reduced to the absence of foreign occupiers, the return of stolen land, the healing from colonial mentality, or disinvestment from colonial technologies and the exploitative economic systems borne out of them. Rather, this thesis understands that decolonization encompasses *all* these aspirations, along with any presently unknown and unforeseen objectives that emerge out of ongoing struggles for liberation.

wa Thiong'o (2005) further observes that "economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others" (p. 55). Within the overarching logic of colonial conquest, projects that sought the wholesale erasure of Indigenous life were deemed necessary for safeguarding extractive industry and thoroughgoing settlement (Césaire, 1972). Colonial powers often won broad domestic support for their endeavors by depicting Indigenous peoples as subhuman, ineducable, and in dire need of enlightenment via the sustained imposition of Christianity and western philosophy (Constantino, 1975, Smith, 2021). Such portrayals of Indigenous peoples were further buttressed by invasive anthropological research projects which portrayed Indigenous peoples as incapable of comprehending concepts like personhood and civilization (Smith, 2021). Citing projects in which the intellectual capacity of Indigenous peoples was 'measured' by filling the skulls of departed ancestors with millet seeds, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2021) asserts that the "ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world's colonized peoples. It is a history that still offends the deepest sense of our humanity" (p.

1). Colonial research, policymaking, and discourse accordingly informed policies that sought to render Indigenous peoples less than human and their ancestral domains *terra nullius*- empty lands ready for the taking (Watson, 2014).

Noting the all-encompassing character of colonization, Indigenous scholars often describe decolonization as a continuous campaign of political, philosophical, and protest action dedicated to the foreclosure of invader epistemologies and invader colonialism- modern systems of knowing and governance which originate in the invasion and occupation of sovereign lands by foreign colonists claiming those lands as their own (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2019). Recognizing that such an objective is might not be achieved in this lifetime or the next, Yellow Bird's (2012) conceptual model of decolonization further elucidates that decolonization is both an event and a process:

> As an event, decolonization, concerns reaching a level of critical consciousness, an active understanding that you are (or have been) colonized and are thus responding to life circumstances in ways that are limited, destructive, and externally controlled.
>
> As a process, decolonization means engaging in the activities of creating, restoring, and birthing. It means creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate oneself, adapt to or survive oppressive conditions; it means restoring cultural practices, thinking, beliefs, and values that were taken away or abandoned but are still relevant and necessary to survival; and it means the birthing of new ideas, thinking, technologies, and lifestyles that contribute to the advancement of and empowerment of Indigenous Peoples. (p. 3)

Tewa scholar Gregory Cajete (2012) similarly attests to the importance of subverting colonialism in all its metamorphic forms, be they political, economic, ecological, epistemic, social, and psychological. As I will explore more deeply in Chapter 3, this focus on undoing colonial epistemicide and uplifting the subjugated knowledge of colonized peoples is a foundational mission of decolonial and decolonizing approaches to education.

The invasive violence of European (and later, American) imperialism continues to structure contemporary world systems, as globe-spanning trade routes birthed out of colonial exploits eventually evolved into the interconnected webs of world capitalism, which has in turn seeded precarious global conditions marked by economic inequity and rapidly accelerating environmental

degradation (Cadena, 2015). Scholars of postcolonial and decolonial studies therefore assert that decolonization should be a pressing political, economic, and ecological concern for all people and is "fueled by our political commitment to construct together the knowledge, structures, institutions, and relationships necessary to forging culturally democratic and economically just futures" (Darder, 2018, p. 103). Ushering in such democratic and economically just futures, however, requires us to heed the warnings of Yellow Bird, Waziyatawin, and wa Thiong'o (2005) and develop a critical understanding of how the invader epistemologies underpinning European and American imperialism continue to transfigure dominant perceptions of reality itself. Scholars of decolonial feminism argue that an important strategy for doing so is to consider the colonial provenance of discourses that define and regulate our understanding of gender and gender roles (Oyěwùmí, 1997; Lugones, 2007).

The Colonial Invention of Gender

Decolonization partly involves the theoretical labor of identifying the ways in which social hierarchies and exploitative practices and ideas introduced by colonizers persist, even in their absence (Quijano, 2000). This thesis's examinations of decolonial underground pedagogy thus require grounding in the diffuse and overlapping ways essentialized identity categories like race, gender, and sexuality are influenced by power relations rooted in colonialism and the colonizing logics that provided ideological justification for imperial projects. In order to show how skateboarding, punk music, and self-directed education have decolonizing potential, it is necessary to understand how subcultural activities allow participants to contest dominant understandings of personhood while embodying decolonial enactments of agency and subjectivity.

Feminist philosopher Maria Lugones (2007) draws from historical accounts of gynecratic (or matriarchal) precolonial Yórùba and Cherokee society to argue that dominant understandings of race, gender, and sexuality are colonial inventions- fabricated ideas designed to categorize and exploit people in ways that served the economic needs of European imperialism and the transatlantic slave

trade. This dynamic informed the treatment of female slaves in the American South, where enslaved African women were expected to do the exact same kind of labor as enslaved men (Oyěwùmí, 1997). Black women were even forced to work while pregnant and immediately after giving birth, as enslaved women were observed working in the fields with infants strapped to their backs. Lugones juxtaposes this reality with prevailing characterizations of Anglo-European women as fragile and passive. This framing then opposed them to nonwhite, colonized women, including Black female slaves, who were characterized along a gamut of sexual aggression and perversion, and as strong enough to do any sort of labor.

Per Lugones (2007) and Oyěwùmí (1997), the differential ways white and nonwhite women were gendered in colonial societies suggests that there is no fundamental teleological truth behind colonial constructions of femininity beyond the roles imposed upon women by invading forces. This idea is more deeply explored in Chapters 5 and 7, which examine how the decolonial underground pedagogies of minority-led punk rock and skateboarding subcultures serve as a conduit for decolonized understandings of gender and sexuality. For now, I note that an understanding of gender as a colonial invention helps ground this thesis's contention that decolonization entails an intentional divestment from discourses, practices, and logics that reinforce social categories created to sustain gendered and colonial hierarchies. Theorizing gender as a colonial technology is particularly important to Chapters 6, 7, and 8, which deal with the different ways decolonial underground pedagogies allow subcultural insiders space and time to understand themselves in ways that extend past gendered limitations imposed by dominant legal, political, and educational apparatuses. As with gender, decolonial scholars argue that racial hierarchies predicated on the dehumanization of Black and Indigenous peoples are similarly colonial inventions that have been reinforced in such violent and institutionalized ways that they have come to be regarded as objective realities (Wilderson, 2020).

Decolonization, decoloniality, and decolonial/decolonizing education therefore necessitate a critical interrogation of the concept of race, along with its contemporary affects.

The Colonial Invention of Race: White Supremacy, Indigenous Erasure, and Antiblackness

Sensoy & DiAngelo (2017) identify white supremacy as an organizing principle in white majority states like the United States and Canada and subsequently define racism as "white racial and cultural prejudice and discrimination, supported intentionally or unintentionally by institutional power and authority, used to the advantage of whites and the disadvantage of peoples of Color" (p. 398). Racism is a unidirectional phenomenon in which structural power is deployed to consolidate white domination over people racialized as nonwhite (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). They further argue that the structural dimension of racism distinguishes it from simple prejudice. In contemporary nation-states like the U.S., Canada, Aotearoa, and Australia, it is indeed possible for nonwhite peoples to harbor negative feelings against white people for no reason other than the visible signifiers of their racial and ethnic identity. These prejudices, however, are not supported by institutional power, demographic majorities, or vast economic capital, making it so that "from a critical social justice perspective, the term *racism* refers to this system of collective social and institutional White power and privilege" (p. 435, emphasis added).

Scholars of multicultural education (Banks & Banks, 2020) and social justice education (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017) argue that while race is a discursive construct with no biological basis (as human beings have not existed for long enough for different species of human to have evolved), race and racism are nonetheless powerful *social realities* that influence the lives of minoritized people (Omi & Winant, 2016). Scholars of decolonization and decolonizing education advance this contention by drawing attention to how the contemporary constructions of race and racism originate in colonial efforts to consolidate imperial power in occupied territories. The deliberate construction of race as an organizing category can be traced in legal instruments, as the term *white* first appeared in US in 1600s

and by 1790 people were required to claim their race on the US census. By the early 1800s, blood quantum measurements were introduced to whether one was 'Indian.' The fiction of whiteness and white supremacy became further consolidated throughout the 20th century as the US implemented several racializing policies to administer and restrict ensuing waves of immigration (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017).

Scholars of Black experiences of empire argue that the colonial invention of race, racism, and white supremacy were predicated on the genocidal contact between European empires and the continent of Africa, which saw millions of Africans stolen and enslaved. Antiblackness refers to the violent forms of dehumanizing racialization that are brought to bear on people of African descent in particularized ways that are not applicable to other minoritized peoples (Sharpe, 2016). Scholars of antiblackness trace a historical continuity between the enslavement of African people and the invention and violent enforcement of racial hierarchies predicated on the assumption of African people as inveterately criminal and perverse (Oyěwùmí, 1997; Fanon, 2005). These discursive and ideological attempts to legitimize Black dehumanization served to justify slavery by equating personhood with whiteness and diametrically opposing humanity and Blackness. European bodies and knowledge systems were portrayed as unconditionally rational, enlightened, civilized, and human. Scholars of Afropessimism argue that the enslavement of African peoples and the subsequent rendering of Black subjects as inherently inhuman, sinful, landless, and immoral formed the political and discursive foundations of colonial (and subsequently, modern) society. Decolonization efforts in many contexts therefore require an understanding of the colonial project's foundational antiblackness and a willingness to subvert it in all its forms. Advancing a definition of decolonization that is inextricable from, rather than parallel to, Black liberation, this thesis echoes Costley White's (2021) analysis that an appreciation for Black freedom dreaming "functions to reveal the racial fictions and boundaries of freedom in settler-colonial societies" (p. 4188).

Antiblackness continues to pervade all facets of institutional life in the US (Wilderson, 2020). This includes schooling, as schools in Black communities are perpetually underfunded and overpoliced (Stovall, 2018). Theorists argue that systemic disinvestment and criminalization of Black life in the US has, in turn, created school-to-prison pipelines (Mallet, 2016), thus giving schooling a reproductive role in "the ongoing problem of Black exclusion from social, political, and cultural belonging; our abjection from the realm of the human" (Sharpe, 2016, p. 18). Tuck et al. (2019) note that decolonization in invader states must therefore involve the abolition of all forms of antiblackness and slavery, in addition to the rematriation of stolen Indigenous land and the revalidation of Indigenous knowledge systems. It is for this reason that decolonization efforts must remain attuned to the complex inequities of contemporary life in putatively multicultural societies whose institutions primarily render Blackness as the antithesis of humanity. Wilderson (2014) argues that U.S. society and its institutions are predicated on the 'social death' of Black people via perpetual and unyielding exclusion. Wilderson (2014) draws attention to the futility of a decolonizing project that neglects the enduring harms of antiblack chattel racism in favor of securing liberal recognition or putative inclusion for non-Black people of color:

> [W]hat are they trying to do? They're trying to build a better world. What are we trying to do? We're trying to destroy the world. Two irreconcilable projects. (p. 20)

The pervasiveness of antiblackness in invader societies makes it so decolonization cannot be regarded as a simple reversal or colonial power relations, a return to precolonial social forms, or an internalized process of healing a colonized self. Decolonization also necessitates that we *destroy the world* by agitating for the wholesale restructuring of internal, interpersonal, and institutional life so that it no longer requires the perpetuation of debilitating and dehumanizing hierarchies to function (Tuck et al., 2019). The preceding theorizations show that decolonization cannot be reduced to a strictly philosophical or psychological exercise: because colonization never ended "decolonization is very much an ongoing process" (Zembylas, 2018, p. 2).

Despite their grounding in an analysis of genocidal histories, studies of decolonial/decolonizing education also acknowledge the agency of Black, Indigenous, and historically minoritized peoples who have established their own educational institutions and learning communities in the face of ongoing structural violence and inequity (Abdi, 2012; Battiste, 2013; Tuck et al., 2019; Wane, Todorova, & Todd, 2020). Still, efforts to decolonize education often risk everything from scrutiny to state violence, as Bouvier's (2013) calls to challenge "racist ideology" and "rethink and re-imagine ourselves in relationship with one another" often run counter to the neocolonial objectives of modern states. As such, efforts to decolonize education are enhanced by a deepened appreciation for how minoritized people create autonomous, self-sustaining enclaves and the knowledge they cultivate therein. To further ground this thesis in a theory of decolonization that reflects these imperatives while contextualizing my own efforts to pursue a decolonial/decolonizing education through subculture, I examine a colonial context that is often undertheorized in decolonization scholarship: the Philippines and its diaspora (Bolton, 2021).

Decolonial Diasporas: Philippine Perspectives on Decoloniality and Decolonization

As an *anak diaspora*, my own pursuit of decolonial/decolonizing education spans three continents and two decades spent trying to construct a diasporic Philippine knowledge-of-self that is committed to building alliances with people from other marginalized communities. Philippine theories of decolonization involve attending to the ongoing sociopolitical and psychological effects of five hundred years of occupation by multiple invaders (Agoncillo, 1974). Though the Philippines achieved its independence in 1948, its decolonization did not end with the retreat of US soldiers after World War II. Capulong (2012) describes the modern Philippine Republic as a neocolonial state that remains beholden to its former colonizer, where invader epistemologies inculcated in colonial schools continue to form the foundation of the social life and governance.

The Philippines was colonized by Spain, the United States (twice), the Empire of Japan, and briefly, Britain. From 1565 until 1848, the Philippine islands were part of the Spanish empire, which imposed a racialized hierarchy in the Philippines which placed Spaniards at the top, Indigenous peoples at the bottom, and mixed-race people in varying places in the middle depending on the amount Spanish ancestry they could document. Access to power, resources, and opportunities in the Philippines under Spanish rule was a corollary of Spanish 'blood' (Blair & Robertson, 1915). This colonial hierarchy, dubbed the Spanish-Filipino caste system, was enforced with warfare, land confiscation, forced conversion to Catholicism, and efforts to eradicate Indigenous cultures through miscegenation. The ongoing influence of Hispano-Catholic coloniality in contemporary Philippine society can be found in the pervasive and institutionalized discrimination against dark-skinned Filipinos, gender nonconforming individuals, tribal nations, religious minorities, the poor, and those who question the hegemony of the state, such as journalists and activists (Razon & Hensman, 1976; Brewer, 1999; Paredes, 2015).

One of the most enduring legacies of colonialism in the Philippines was the American imposition of formal schooling, which was purposefully introduced as an assimilatory technology used to naturalize American rule over the archipelago. Official cables attest to the pressing role schooling would play in US initiatives to help Philippine peoples evolve from *savages* and *monkeys* into the US's *little brown brothers* (Constantino, 1975). Gleeck (1976) notes that US colonial education in the Philippines was underwritten by a doctrine of 'character building.' Colonial schooling in the Philippines mirrored the US government's Indian boarding school system and its vocational school system for Black children in the American South, both of which sought to erase Black and Indigenous life where possible while conscripting survivors to destitution and menial labor (Coloma, 2013). American educators sought to instill a 'character' in their Philippine pupils that centered six values thought to be wholly foreign to the Philippine psyche: democracy, honesty, industry, thrift,

sportsmanship, and patriotism (Gleeck 1976) and worked to convince Americans and Filipinos alike of the supremacy of metropolitan American governance. US administrations were also grounded in the belief that Philippine, Black, and Indian peoples alike were intellectually, morally, and temperamentally unfit for self-governance. In the following chapters, Philippine histories and perspectives inform theorizations of decolonization and decolonizing education that trouble various geographic, racial, national, and identitarian fictions that underpin social life in contemporary postcolonial societies.

Nearly five centuries of colonial rule in the Philippines helped make colonization an enduring aspect of Philippine life. For Philippine peoples, a key component of decolonization thus entails wrestling with colonial mentality, a form of inherited trauma which involves the following:

> (a) characterizing Filipino culture as inferior to western culture,
> (b) emulating western culture to distance oneself from being Filipino,
> and (c) believing that colonization was imperative for the Philippines to become a civilized nation. (Eisen, 2018, p. 4)

By measuring Filipinos' implicit negative attitudes towards their own culture, psychologists David and Okazaki (2010) provide evidence in support of the *automaticity* of colonial mentality among Filipino-Americans, which they define as the "automatic association of pleasantness, superiority, and desirability to American culture, and an automatic association of unpleasantness, inferiority, and undesirability to Filipino culture" (p. 855). David and Okazaki (2010) go on to argue that colonial mentality is the central agency that defines what it means to be a person from the Philippines. This assertion is not meant to indict or assail the personal character of individual Filipinos. Rather, it is an effort to account for the ongoing psychological consequences of colonization in the Philippines.

David and Okazaki (2010) blame both historical colonialism and ongoing discrimination against Philippine peoples as key factors in perpetuating colonial mentality. The prevalence of colonial mentality suggests that, from a Philippine perspective, decolonization remains an unfinished project that requires simultaneous reckoning with the nation's colonial history as well as a neocolonial status

quo in which many Philippine people have internalized the discourses of colonial subjugation. Filipino-American scholars like Kevin Nadal (2021) and Leny Strobel (2001) advocate for forms of decolonization that are sensitive to the historical contexts of Filipinos and Filipino-Americans, where healing from internalized colonialism entails a process of naming, reflecting, and acting:

> The *naming* stage occurs when Filipino American individuals are able to recognize the colonial oppression and understand its impact on their identity.
>
> The *reflection* stage is when Filipino Americans are able to think critically about how colonialism has impacted their lives as well as those of others.
>
> Finally, the *acting* stage is where Filipino Americans are able to "give back" to the Filipino American community by becoming leaders and role models and encouraging others to decolonize themselves. (Nadal, 2011, p. 71)

While self-reflection and personal identity work are important for addressing the psychological tolls of colonial mentality, it is also important to note that the political imperatives of decolonization have not yet been realized through the Philippines' activities as a sovereign nation-state. The consequences of Philippine neocolonialism are particularly stark for the Philippines' Indigenous Peoples (IPs), the label applied to ethnic and cultural minority groups who are historically differentiated from mainstream Filipinos by their perceived refusal to fully incorporate Eurocentric knowledge, religions, and the extraction-centered economic goals of the Philippine state (Gabriel, 2017). IPs are routinely scapegoated and targeted by Philippine administrations, leading to state violence, development aggression, and illegal settlement on their protected ancestral lands (Abayao, 2006). Decolonization, from a Philippine perspective, should therefore involve all Philippine peoples taking responsibility for defending Indigenous sovereignty and ending the settlement and confiscation of Indigenous lands (Razon & Hensman, 1976; Paredes, 2019). As an ongoing political, social, and educational project decolonization thus entails navigating tensional imperatives associated cultivating a healthy sense of cultural and racial self-esteem while recognizing that the Philippine state has, in some ways, become a colonizer itself (Aquino, 2019).

The colonial statecraft that underpins the invention of Philippine national identity inspires the work of Filipina-Hawaiian poets Darlene Rodrigues and reyna aiko leah lani ramolete. Specifically, their writings on *decolonial diaspora* describe how "the unfinished struggle for sovereignty in the Philippines informs our understanding of sovereignty or self-determination for the Indigenous nations on whose lands we have settled" (Compoc, 2021, p. 275). For Rodrigues and ramolete, decolonization, or the healing of the colonized Philippine subject, does not end with native governance over the archipelago or when diasporic Filipinos can secure a guarantee of equal opportunity from invader governments when they migrate overseas. Decolonial diaspora instead involves aligning with Indigenous and oppressed peoples, both in the Philippines and in the settled territories in which they find themselves. Or, as Filipino-American rapper Bambu notes on the song *Samoan Cricket Bat*:

> 7,000 fuckin' islands bruh, quadruple the tribes
> Just to illustrate that there ain't been control from the jump
> But since we're fighting let's unite and turn that million to one. (Bambu, 2020, n.p.)

Here, Bambu acknowledges the heterogeneity of Philippine society but calls for solidarity because Philippine peoples share common oppressors in imperialism and white supremacy. These alliances are born out of a shared desire to interrupt the coloniality of power and entail participating in liberatory struggles accordingly. In a decolonial diaspora, the contestation of colonization is as all-consuming as colonization itself. This understanding is central to this thesis, as a diasporic decolonial consciousness informed by the history of colonization in the Philippines informs my experience in both subculture and education, thus forming the epistemological foundation of the studies that follow.

The possibility of materializing decolonial diasporas and healing colonial mentalities, however, requires new coalitions that are built upon the recognition of one's responsibilities to diffuse networks of communities. The next section expands upon the preceding literature to propose a theory of decolonial underground pedagogy, which facilitates an understanding of the decolonizing potential of

minority-led subcultures, where such coalitions are often built. Decolonial underground pedagogy allows this thesis to examine the subaltern learning spaces of punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling, where minoritized people elude surveillance to reclaim subjugated and ancestral forms of learning, thus illuminating unexamined instantiations of decolonial and decolonizing education. Studies of decolonial underground pedagogy further advocate for an understanding of decolonization as a lifelong and multiscalar undertaking that is perpetually responsive to the shifting nature of colonization and coloniality.

As a project that emerges out of oppression and broadcasts oppositional critiques against institutions that wield immense and far-reaching power, decolonization also requires an appreciation for the agency Black, Indigenous, racialized, and marginalized people exercise in the face of colonization, surveillance, containment, and carcerality. Because it exists in perpetual relation with the demands of a colonizing state, it is helpful to view decolonization as an expression of Neferti Tadiar's (2015) concept of *remaindered life under empire*, or "forms and practices of personhood and sociality that, despite being pushed into permanent outmodedness and illegibility by the discursive and practical mandates of imperial reproduction, persist in creative, transformed ways as practices of living" (p. 151). Decolonial/decolonizing education can, in turn, be understood as a comprehensive project that is not limited to the physical liberation of occupied territories and is engaged in the overturning of colonial structures in all their evolving social, political, ideological, epistemological, and axiological forms (Quijano, 2000; Lugones, 2007). The ideas of decolonizing education and educating for decoloniality are not matters of curriculum but praxis, a sustained process of reflection and action upon the world to transform it (Freire, 1976). But to understand how minority-led punk rock, skate boarding, and unschooling communities might deepen our understanding of decolonial/decolonizing education, it is first essential to understand what minority-led subcultures are, how they work, and how their members learn (and teach) about the multi-faceted imperatives of decolonization by

participating in them. Philippine perspectives on decolonization are specifically important to this thesis as it centers my own experiential frame of reference, which influences how I interpret and practice decolonial/decolonizing education more generally. In this thesis, decolonization is an active and engaged learning process that cannot be confined to a singular political objective (such as the rematriation of land) or a metaphorical healing process (such as the decolonization of the mind). But instead of seeing such as objectives as incommensurable, Philippine understandings of colonization and decolonization equally engage varying strands of decolonial agency. This perspective, which is not exclusive to Philippine peoples, informs this thesis's open and suppositionless engagement with the decolonial underground pedagogy of punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures. A multi-faceted understanding of decolonial struggle, informed by the long and particular history of colonialism in the Philippines, allows this thesis to understand that while decolonial/decolonizing education can occur in the intentional restoration of ancestral knowledge or in the specifically designed curriculum devoted to Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination, it can also occur in informal and everyday acts of inquiry and communion.

Subculture

The term subculture refers to distinct social worlds constructed by people who share common interests, such as music, art, athletics, and lifestyle choices (Dowd & Dowd, 2003). Subcultural membership is voluntary, which differentiates it from identity categories like ethnicity, gender, race, sexuality, or religion (Abramson & Modzlewski, 2010). Typically, one cannot be born into or forced to join a subculture. Instead, subcultural membership requires an "agentic moment of association and subsequent identity management by subculture members" (Abramson & Modzlewski, 2010, p. 147). Unlike rotary clubs or fraternities, subcultural interests are often deemed "frivolous at best and threatening at worst" (Dimou & Ilan, 2018, p. 2) by large swathes of mainstream society. Some of the frivolous or threatening practices associated with punk rock, for example, include an affinity for loud

and fast music, the espousal of anarchist politics, the use of paper clips and safety pins as bodily or facial piercings, and unnaturally dyed hair held in spiky formations with egg whites, rubber cement, or glue. While skateboarding culture has recently been afforded some mainstream acceptance as an Olympic and professional sport, skateboarders on public streets are often regarded as nuisances who present a risk to public safety and private property. Unschoolers, through their perceived rejection of formal schooling and its foundational role in mainstream culture, ascribe to perhaps the most stigmatized interest of all the subcultures profiled in this thesis (Riley, 2020). Chapters 8 and 9 explore how unschooling subcultures can be contained within families themselves, as unschooling narratives emphasize how unschooling adults and children work together, endeavoring to critique familial hierarchies and embody ideals like reciprocity and consultation (see Richards, 2020). In examining the decolonizing teaching and learning experiences associated with minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures, this thesis theorizes subcultures as sites of decolonial and decolonizing education, thus expanding our understanding of what subcultures can be and what they make possible for their participants.

In western liberal contexts, mainstream values are often associated with capitalism, consumerism, wealth, racial hierarchies, organized religion, heterosexual marriage, and surveillant institutions like the police, schooling, and governance (Hebdige, 1979). Interpretations of which values are considered dominant and 'mainstream,' however, are often contested and open to interpretation. For example, White Power skinheads associate mainstream culture with political correctness and forced multiculturalism, thus perceiving themselves to be persecuted minorities (Botsch, 2012). In response, they create communities of interest that are devoted to maintaining (or, in their minds, protecting) the power of white, heterosexual men (Cotter, 1999). I clarify here that this thesis is concerned with examining the liberatory implications of minority-led subcultural learning environments, or subcultures whose members largely consist of people whose ethnicities, gender

identities, and/or sexual orientations are positioned as divergent to invisibilized identitarian norms like whiteness, heteronormativity, and masculinity (Tadiar, 2015). The reflection that introduces this thesis provides a basis for defining some of the terms it uses: *Filipino-American* is an identity, *punk* is a subculture, the *Filipino-American punk scene* is a minority-led subculture.

While subculture members signal their belonging by maintaining identifiable patterns of dress, behavior, and consumption that position themselves as different to the mainstream, the significance of subcultural sociality cannot be intuited from aesthetic signifiers or overt political sloganeering alone (Raby, 2005). Ekers and Loftus (2008) understand the political affectivity of subculture through a Foucauldian formulation of power- they contend that any meaning to be inferred from studies of subculture are facilitated by an understanding that power is a multi-directional flow of affective acts and utterances that take place within social relations, rather than a unidirectional and decontextualized exertion of repressive force. In other words, power is everywhere- it is diffused through state actors, private institutions, media, and the everyday activities of common people. These constant interactions between individuals, groups, and institutions consequently influence what people perceive to be real, as well their understanding of what is possible within the perceptible boundaries of that experienced reality. The power of subcultures is that they enable the exercise of deviant affectivity, expanding the gamut of perceptible reality through social, political, ontological, and epistemological experiences that differ from those offered by mainstream institutions. Subcultural scholars look to Foucauldian power relations to understand that concepts like agency and resistance are "fragmented, fluid, contradictory and constructed within local and individual activities" (Dimou & Ilan, 2018, p. 5). Understanding subcultural power, through Foucault, enables literature that recognizes the complexity of subcultural participation and understands that subcultural activities cannot be simplistically portrayed as virtuous acts of resistance against evil and authoritarian figures.

Applying this diffuse understanding of power to the study of subculture fosters examinations of how subcultural activities might help or hinder articulable initiatives for ontological, epistemological, political, psychological, and philosophical revolution (like decolonization), even in temporary, fleeting, and concessionary ways. Researchers must instead consider how insiders intersubjectively negotiate the terms of their membership through engaged conversation and the affective "politics of everyday life" (Williams, 2011, p. 183). As I will explore further in the sections that follow, this thesis is devoted specifically to how insiders teach and learn in ways that potentiate decolonized social, political, and psychological conditions through their participation in minority-led subcultures. Efforts to raise critical consciousness, inspire community-responsive action, and eradicate (neo)colonial oppression through teaching and learning might therefore benefit from understanding the liberatory pedagogies insiders encounter in subcultural settings and through everyday actions and conversations that occur within voluntary networks of social relations.

But as communities that emerge parallel to dominant culture, subcultures remain apt to reproduce the inequities and injustices of their broader environs. Subcultures might therefore be conceptualized as contested spaces in which social, political, and decolonial/decolonizing education is liable to occur as a function of sustained engagement and daily participation instead of an inevitable result of insiders' adherence to a specific ideology (Blackman, 2005). This framing signals that richer analyses and findings can come from decentering a subculture's publicized political stances and privileging the everyday and affective dimensions of subcultural life. As such, subcultural research is benefited by subcultural membership, which grants researchers ample opportunities to intuit the social, political, and pedagogical significance of subcultural learning, however impermanent, fleeting, or incidental that significance may be (Martin, 1999; Dimou & Ilan, 2018). The following section illustrates how researchers might accordingly consider *style* and the identity management strategies of subcultural insiders to compose generative theorizations of subcultural life and its decolonizing

implications. An understanding of subcultural style and identity management process enables this thesis to sketch the parameters of decolonial underground pedagogy and elucidate how decolonial/decolonizing education occurs in the various communities celebrated in this thesis. In minority-led punk subcultures, decolonial underground pedagogy occurs in the collaborative creation of art, communities, and physical spaces that are restorative and mutually accountable. In Queer and minority-led skate scenes, decolonial underground pedagogies can be observed in the act of skateboarding itself, where human and non-human relatives come together to celebrate their contingent relationality and, in so doing, develop an understanding that our communities are held together by sacred relationships that cannot be contained by colonial strictures and hierarchies. In minoritized unschooling families, decolonial and decolonizing forms of education occur in the lived commitment to autonomy and responsibility, regardless of age or status.

Style

*Styl*e refers to the symbolic, linguistic, and relational practices that broadcast the subculture's overarching resistance to the dominant culture in which it exists. Hebdige (1979) asserts that developing style is a process:

> [It] begins with a crime against the natural order, though in this case the deviation may seem slight indeed – the cultivation of a quiff, the acquisition of a scooter or a record or a certain type of suit. But it ends in the construction of a style, in a gesture of defiance or contempt, in a smile or a sneer. It signals a Refusal (p. 3).

Style is also embedded in the oppositional practices that can be observed in subcultural communities. Sebald (1975) identifies these as 1) the espousal of values that diverge from those of the dominant culture, 2) specialized jargon that is shared only among subcultural insiders 3) group-specific rituals and fashion, 4) a sense of solidarity among group members, 5) carefully guarded criteria for determining membership, 6) the capacity of individual members to contribute to the collective's sense of identity, 7) charismatic leaders, and 8) a belief that the subcultural group provides for specific needs that the institutions of dominant culture cannot accommodate. Abramson & Modzlewski (2010) also

define subcultures as bounded moral worlds that maintain their own rules. Insiders decide what is right and wrong based on shared assumptions about the world that differ from what is considered 'normal' by wider society. While subcultural mores are adaptive and change over the time, they are nonetheless meaningful to members "who espouse a level of difference…to those 'outside' the group" (Abramson & Modzlewski, 2010, p. 147). Insiders then perform these outsider virtues through everyday interactions, in which affective exertions of power, defiance, and communion can be observed in the interactions between the members of a given subculture (Williams, 2011). In the chapters that follow, this thesis will explore this diffuse and immanent conception of power by demonstrating how subcultural insiders define and practice their own forms of self-determination through decolonial underground pedagogy. This thesis's analytical chapters do so by showing how Philippine, Māori, and feminist punks redefine discourses related to social justice and free speech in real time, how minoritized unschooling families practice and pursue liberation through informal learning, and how queer and Indigenous skaters deepen understandings of land, matter, and motion in ways that underscore their inextricable and interconnected relationality.

Subcultural Identity Management and Minority-led Subcultures

Within subcultures, insider status tends to be governed through self-regulation and internal social control (Hodkinson, 2011; Sinclair & Dolan, 2015). Heavy metal enthusiasts, for example, ostracize those who throw punches and act antagonistically in the mosh pit, an area near a stage where concert goers will push and shove one another in a manner that is aggressive but nonviolent (Sinclair & Dolan, 2015; Ulusoy & Schembri, 2018). Moshing, as it is constructed in heavy metal communities, is meant to release aggression and signal common affinity among self-identified *metalheads*. Those who violate these norms by throwing strikes and pulling unwilling audience members into the pit are swiftly ejected. Repeat offenders are labeled 'jocks' - unwelcome infiltrators from mainstream culture.

'Jocks' have subcultures too. Practitioners of mixed martial arts (MMA) maintain a cage-fighting subculture, where the tolls of constant fighting are outweighed by the "affective, corporeal, and social pleasures that [subcultural] participation entails" (Abramson & Modzelewski, 2010, p. 153). Membership in cage-fighting subculture is conditional upon one's presence at training sessions and fights. It is also managed by observing cultural rules of conduct that combine an obsession with toughness and ideas about sportsmanship that are common in traditional martial arts. It is important to note that subcultures cannot be portrayed as universally positive or negative environments. Identity categories like race, gender, sexuality, and disability often mediate and constrain peoples' experiences of subcultures, including those at the center of this thesis (see Nguyen, 2011; Fields-Smith, 2020). The cage fighters in Abramson & Modzelewski's (2010) study, for example, often developed self-destructive views of toughness and masculinity, as intimated in the widespread belief that 'real fighters finish fights' by incapacitating their opponents. 'Fake' or cowardly fighters, in contrast, are those who prefer to win fights by demonstrating sound technique, avoiding damage, and accumulating points on the judges' scorecards.

Ethnographies of the infamous Norwegian black metal scene contain numerous accounts of arson, robbery, murder, and other crimes undertaken to prove members' authenticity and adherence to the subculture's violent and white supremacist ideology (Moynihan & Söderlind, 2017). Punk rock and skateboarding subcultures are similarly dominated by the perspectives of white, middle class, heterosexual, and cisgender men who are thought to comprise most of the participants and stakeholders associated with punk and skateboarding (Nguyen, 2011). Mimi Thi Nguyen (2011) goes so far as to argue that "whitestraightboy hegemony organizes punk" (p. 267). Women, queer punks, and punks of color often find themselves explaining and justifying their presence in the punk scene (Leigh-Douglas, 2017). These critiques are important for contextualizing the relational politics of subcultural learning but it also important to balance them with an appreciation for Black, Indigenous,

person-of-color, queer, and feminist contributions to subcultural formations. Historians and cultural theorists have observed such contributions in punk, skateboarding, and alternative education at every stage of their development (see Bag, 2011). These sections demonstrate that subcultures come into being through iterations of style, fueled by the agentic actions of subcultural insiders. Moreover, minoritized and racialized people have represented some of the pioneering figures in the punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures examined in this thesis. As such, it is necessary to explicate this thesis's approach to representing and researching the decolonizing teaching and learning practices often found in minority-led subcultures.

Like the mass of Filipino punks careening into one another at 924 Gilman, minority-led subcultures are small communities with values and interests that are often interpreted as disagreeable to mainstream culture and whose objectives are mostly determined by people with minoritized racial, ethnic, and/or gender identities. It should be noted that minority-led subcultures can and do include members from a wide array of cultural, ethnic, economic, backgrounds including white heterosexual men from privileged backgrounds. In minority-led subcultures, these members do not wield inordinate levels of influence or take control over the groups without first seeking wider consultation. This dynamic is evident in the work of Luke Winders, a white man and bass player of Eskapo- a seminal Filipino-American punk band from Vallejo, California. Explaining his involvement in Filipino-American punk, Winders expresses concern over the lack of public knowledge about the ongoing effects of American imperialism in the Philippines. At the height of the Iraq War, Winders noted that "Filipinos were subjected to the same thing as the Iraqis…a war in the name of democracy and bettering the people but really it was a form of imperialism" (Hilario & Ison, 2006, n.p.).

Collective struggles against oppressive discourses and practices often inspire minoritized people and their allies to form their own scenes within punk culture, skateboarding, and unschooling (see Richards, 2020). Yochim (2010) notes that in the early 2000s, skateboarding's visual culture was

primarily predicated on a form of fragile and hegemonic masculinity that centered whiteness, homophobia, and the "valorization of stupidity" (p. 330). But minority-led initiatives like Apache Skateboards, Unity Skateboarding, the Queer Skate Alliance, the Girls Skate network, and the Pushing Boarders collective have emerged alongside skateboarding's mainstream to subvert these puerile characterizations to show how people with multiple marginal identities make space for themselves within skateboarding. While the possibilities of subcultural learning are often impacted by individual experiences of sexism, racism, and discrimination they also offer opportunities to critique the racial hierarchies, normative gender roles, and moralistic value judgments associated with dominant culture, particularly when they can build self-sustaining enclaves with relative freedom from institutional scrutiny or surveillance, as this thesis will explore in its examinations of minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures.

Conclusion

This study's theorizations of the liberatory trajectories suggested by minority-led subcultural learning contexts requires foregrounding in two literatures that are rarely brought into conversation. The first is an analysis of the historic and metastasizing forms of Euro-American imperialism and the different ways it has fueled the rise of contemporary material conditions marked by colonizing logics like racism, misogyny, Indigenous erasure, and antiblacknesss (Césaire, 1972; Fanon, 2014). The next is an understanding of subculture, or subversive forms of sociality whose political significance can be located in the diffuse flows of affectivity that occur in everyday interactions (Dimou & Ilan, 2018**).** The above theories of decolonization and subculture facilitate this thesis's theorization of decolonial underground pedagogy and its examinations of how subcultural environments encourage minoritized people to teach and learn on their own terms and in social formations they join and create voluntarily.

While subcultures are not immune to the discursive influence of colonial discourses, logics, and practices (Nguyen, 2011), this thesis embraces the possibility that minority-led subcultural

teaching and learning communities might offer insights into the possibility of decolonial futures in education. To conduct such an investigation, this thesis builds upon these theories of decolonization to examine how they are manifested in the approaches to teaching and learning found in minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. The next chapter offers a review of literature that introduces a theory of *decolonial underground pedagogy*, which informs this thesis's efforts to observe and theorize the decolonizing potential of subcultural teaching and learning. Decolonial underground pedagogy synthesizes three distinct approaches to teaching and learning: decolonial/decolonizing education, informal learning, and subcultural pedagogy. I conclude the literature review with a transitional discussion on the subculture-specific forms of decolonial underground pedagogy that undergird this thesis's analytical chapters: punk rock pedagogy, skate pedagogy, and unschooling. These chapters are composed of open-ended examinations of the broader pedagogical significance of minority-led subcultures, where decolonization is not a metaphor or a strategic goal but a condition of entry.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Toward a Decolonial Underground Pedagogy: Placing Decolonial/Decolonizing Education, Informal Learning, and Subcultural Pedagogies in Conversation

Introduction

Decolonial underground pedagogy refers to approaches and practices to teaching and learning that take place in subcultural settings and foster critical consciousness, inspire decolonial praxis, and contribute to the liberation of minds, bodies, and lands from colonial influence. Decolonial underground pedagogy is derived from three conceptual foundations: decolonial/decolonizing education (Tejeda et al., 2003; Battiste, 2013; Tuck, Yang, & Smith, 2019, informal learning (Mills & Kraftl, 2014), and subculture studies (Hebdige, 1979; Dimou & Ilan, 2018; Barrière, 2021). As an analytic and conceptual framework, decolonial underground pedagogy enables this thesis to engage in critical and suppositionless wondering about the decolonial possibilities (and limitations) of the distinct teaching and learning experiences encountered in punk rock, skate boarding, and unschooling subcultures.

Decolonial underground pedagogies are primarily informal, and this thesis pays specific attention to those that occur in subcultural communities led by minoritized people who cultivate undergrounds in search of community, belonging, and growth. The 'education' that happens underground accordingly differs from formal learning in that it is most often spontaneous, entangled with everyday life, and not assessed for mastery or competence. Instead, subcultural insiders primarily learn things to mitigate subcultural belonging, to facilitate their participation in subculture, to make subcultural sociality more enjoyable, and because they want to (Dimou & Ilan, 2018). In this thesis, examples of everyday subcultural activities laden with pedagogical significance include playing music, making art, engaging in informal conversations, attending concerts, skateboarding with friends, and navigating one's local community.

Studying decolonial underground pedagogy requires granting analytical purchase to the interactions and reflections of subcultural insiders rather than the uncommon occurrences in which they encounter formal curriculum in subcultural environments. Such instances might include invited lectures at music festivals or online workshops for unschooling parents. While formal learning opportunities and subcultural sociality can sometimes be compatible, decolonial underground pedagogy prioritizes informal learning because spontaneous interactions are pivotal for acclimatizing individuals to the collectively constructed worlds of their chosen subcultures (Abramson & Modzlewski, 2010). This understanding is important for the aims of the thesis because it situates decolonial underground pedagogy in everyday acts of subcultural participation. Prioritizing informal learning makes it so this thesis can identify decolonial acts of teaching and learning in events, productions, engagements, dialogues, and utterances that occur within subcultural contexts. Informal learning grounds this thesis in an understanding that teaching and learning experiences are interred in all aspects of everyday life, making it so that pedagogical insights can be found in the close reading and appreciation of subcultural life.

The primarily informal nature of subcultural teaching and learning makes it more difficult to observe than classroom education. Identifying and theorizing the decolonial underground pedagogies of different communities thus requires a specific orientation toward the nuances of subcultural life and the ways in which they resonate with the aims of decolonizing education. This literature review maps the concept of decolonial underground pedagogy by theorizing the ways decolonizing education, informal learning, and subcultural pedagogy intertwine and enrich each other in minority-led subcultures. The aim of this thesis is to examine decolonial underground pedagogy's implications for decolonial and decolonizing forms approaches to education, which Dei (2016) notes involves revisiting entrenched orthodoxies in curriculum, pedagogy, policy, and administration so that every

aspect of any educational enterprise is inclusive of all cultures, uplifts the knowledge of Indigenous and colonized peoples, and serves the aspirations of historically and persistently marginalized groups.

While Dei (2016) offers practical suggestions for decolonizing education that include prioritizing Indigenous scholarship, unequivocally supporting teachers of color, and modelling community-responsive and egalitarian pedagogies, he notes that we must continue to "subvert any form of conventional education that leads our youth along the path of cultural, spiritual, emotional, physical and mental destruction. The need to resist the colonization of minds begins by thinking outside the dominant norms and values of society" (p. 54). Taking Dei's (2016) urging as a provocation and point of departure, decolonial underground pedagogy offers an avenue for theorizing and appreciating the ways minoritized people exercise agency and autonomy by constructing educative undergrounds. The following sections critically review literature on decolonizing education, informal learning, and subcultural pedagogies to provide historical and pedagogical mooring for illuminating the ways punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities foster decolonial learning experiences in ways that have yet to be accounted for in existing literature. Decolonial underground pedagogy's contributions to educational research emanate from the emphasis it places on the informal, autonomous, and community-embedded dimensions of decolonial and decolonizing education. These insights, in turn, encourage educators who espouse commitments to decolonization (and related concepts like social justice, human rights, peace, and multiculturalism) to appreciate the agency and autonomy of all learners while divesting from hierarchical and surveillant conceptualizations of teaching and learning.

Decolonial and Decolonizing Education

Decolonization has been an ongoing concern in educational research, particularly among Indigenous peoples in occupied states and the citizens of newly liberated nations seeking new ways to govern themselves independently of colonial influence (Nyerere, 1968; Abdi, 2012). A key concern of

decolonizing education involves developing curricula and teaching methods that dislodge the Eurocentric forms of knowledge that are considered universal in schools (LeGrange, 2016; Dei, 2016; Reyes, 2019). Moreover, decolonizing education refers to the implementation of curricular and pedagogical practices that aim to dislodge Eurocentric value systems in pursuit of justice, healing, and restitution (Battiste, 2015). In the foreword to Marie Battiste's *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*, Métis poet and educator Rita Bouvier frames decolonizing education as a project of universal concern:

> [Decolonizing education] is an invitation for all of us to work together — as Indigenists, to offer our unique gifts to the important work of decolonization, moving beyond cultural awareness and inclusion — challenging racist ideology as we rethink and re-imagine ourselves in relationship with one another sharing place — one earth (p. 12).

While Bouvier embraces the transformative possibilities of educating for social justice, she also asserts that cultural awareness and putative multiculturalism are not analogous to decolonization. This reflects the fact that in nation-states like the U.S. and Canada, efforts to decolonize education always exist in relation to colonial histories and their contemporary manifestations, like racialized capitalism, heteropatriarchy, and white supremacy (Sabzalian, 2019). Decolonizing education, as such, does not call for the inclusion of Indigenous and non-western knowledge in Eurocentric schooling. It calls for a new understanding of the purpose and practice of education altogether. Such an endeavor might take the form of curricular initiatives that honor the subjugated knowledge of oppressed and Indigenous peoples while recentering students' relationships with land (Tuck, McKenzie, & McCoy, 2014).

Other forms of decolonizing education include efforts to integrate teaching, learning, community engagement, and activism in ways that strengthen students' links to their communities (Battiste, 2013; Styres, 2017). Studies of decolonizing education in the US, Canada, Australia, Aotearoa, and South Africa also focus on school-based interventions that seek positive educational outcomes for working class Black, Indigenous, and person-of-color students (Tejeda et al., 2003;

Battiste, 2013; Reyes, 2019). A philosophy of education that uplifts subjugated knowledge and envisions new social relations defined by Indigenous and historically colonized people, decolonizing education interrogates "the multiplicity of ways racism, capitalism, homophobia, privilege, and sexism are made manifest" (Tejeda & Espinoza, 2003). Wane & Todd (2018) also use the term to describe the act of identifying the various ways education and schooling have been deployed to advance colonial motives throughout history and at present.

Scholarship related to decolonizing education often references the pedagogical and political philosophy of Brazilian scholar Paolo Freire (1970/2018) and his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Tejeda & Espinoza, 2003; Reyes, 2019*).* Freire argues that decolonization requires praxis, a metacognitive process in which concrete action follows deep reflection on the lived experiences, historical contexts, and material conditions of oppressed peoples. Praxis develops *critical consciousness*, or a historically situated understanding of how oppressive circumstances are created and reproduced. Freirean scholars of education often devote their attention to how schooling and curriculum can stimulate praxis and develop critical consciousness by following teaching strategies informed by the lived experiences of oppressed peoples. Strategies for doing so include rejecting Eurocentric biases in education, teaching history and social studies from the vantage point of colonized communities and racialized peoples, and centering marginalized perspectives when developing curricula, teaching methods, and administrative practices (Tejeda & Espinoza, 2003; Smith, 2015; Reyes, 2019). Freire himself taught reading and writing skills to illiterate farmers by encouraging them to learn to read and write words associated with their livelihoods, as opposed to decontextualized words that reflected bourgeois conceptions of learnedness and sophistication.

Reyes's (2019) call for a pedagogy of and towards decoloniality "works to recenter indigeneity while also calling for the abolition of white supremacy and world capitalism" (p. 2). Reyes argues that this mission can be pursued in classrooms by transforming them into places where students can

explore non-western and Indigenous ways of knowing, thus affirming the inherent sovereignty of minoritized and dehumanized peoples. Pedagogies of and toward decoloniality also draw attention to colonial processes that reproduce inequitable power relations and cause trauma in school settings. Decolonial educators are those who recognize oppression as a systemic production rather than an individual failing. Reyes (2019) further argues that under conditions of coloniality, students and teachers are both rendered workers who must produce according to explicit and implicit expectations. The products of educational labor include the attainment of test scores, grades, and manners of dress, speech, and thinking that reflect a positive perception of whiteness, heteronormativity, ablebodiedness, capitalism, and Eurocentrism. Decolonial pedagogues, Reyes (2019) argues, must continually interrogate these biases and refrain from punishing students who do not embody them. A pedagogy of and toward decoloniality requires instructional leaders to "problematize situations and conditions, not pathologize people" (Reyes, 2019, p. 7). Reyes' (2019) pedagogy of and toward decoloniality is important for this thesis, because its suggestions for teachers reflect many of the decolonial teaching and learning strategies subcultural insiders already practice, albeit informally. Understanding decolonial underground pedagogy might therefore inform the efforts of instructional leaders to decolonize education by embodying the roles of learner and knowledge bearer simultaneously, in addition to interrogating the colonial provenance of hierarchical teacher-student dynamics.

In a hypothetical idealization, Reyes (2019) argues that a decolonial educator ought not engage with disengaged students through deficit lenses and dismiss them as failures. Instead, Reyes (2019) encourages decolonial pedagogues to work with students to understand that social, economic, interpersonal causes can negatively affect schooling experiences. From there, teachers and students can collaborate to devise strategies to ensure that both parties experience the classroom as a beneficial and positive environment. This illustration of a pedagogy of and toward decoloniality in practice

demonstrates how decolonizing education "is not a thing, but a relation – it is the learning that happens in the moment of interaction between people, and between people and their environments" (Pirbhai-Illich & Martin, 2019, p. 4). Battiste (2015) goes on to argue that the transformative capacity of decolonizing education makes it so that its practice should not be exclusive to Indigenous and historically minoritized peoples. The critiques and examinations of hegemonic systems that create contemporary conditions marked by multiscalar forms of oppression makes decolonizing education a universal concern.

Such work, however, is difficult and complex, as decolonial/decolonizing education risks alienating students who do not identify as minoritized, racialized, or otherwise disadvantaged: "When such conditions are questioned, then beneficiaries of coloniality, particularly those from Eurocentered, privileged backgrounds, tend to react in avoidant, defensive, hurtful, and sometimes aggressive behaviors" (Reyes, 2019, p. 5). Reyes (2019) accordingly argues that decolonizing education, and decolonial educators, are obligated to embrace this discomfort and guide all learners in comprehensive, mindful, intimate, and ongoing critiques of how coloniality functions and reproduces systemically and personally. Decolonizing education "questions the construction of one's entire being: Why am I who I am? Why do I think what I think? Why do I do what I do?" (p. 5). When framed in this manner, decolonizing education can be conceptualized as an open invitation to imagine a world where colonizing processes are replaced with pedagogies that foster healing and bonding based on abiding commitments to respect and reciprocity, irrespective of the identities one holds (Battiste, 2013).

Decolonizing education is often a stated objective of social justice-oriented charter schools and community education programs. In Oakland, California, the Roses in Concrete School (RIC) was established in 2014 to "develop youth committed to lives characterized by self-discipline, integrity, love, and hope in the pursuit of justice and equity for all communities" (RIC, n.p., 2021). RIC's K-8 social justice-based curriculum emphasizes ethnic studies, the visual and performing arts, and offers

dual immersion in English and Spanish. Until its closure in 2021, RIC sought to provide free before-school care and subsidized after-school programs, all with the goal of "growing warrior scholars in Oakland and serving our students and families" (RIC, n.p., 2021). In Aotearoa, efforts to decolonize education have directly contributed to the resurgence of the Māori language and culture. Te Kohanga Reo is a network of Māori immersion schools for pre-Kindergarten children and their families (Rona & Maclachlan, 2018). Te Kura Kaupapa Māori, established in 1985, offers primary and secondary schooling options dedicated to fostering Māori language, culture, and self-determination (Tocker, 2015). At the university level, Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiārangi offers degrees grounded in Māori epistemology and ontology, including PhDs in Māori Studies, Indigenous Studies, Environment Studies, and Education (Smith, 2015). According to Smith (2015), Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi centers the decolonizing objectives of conscientization, resistance, and transformation:

> Conscientization: Coming to understand the stark realities of the neoliberal economic changes in New Zealand and its overt and inequitable impact on Māori and therefore the subsequent conscientizing of Māori to the fact that our struggle was not just about our culture, but also over structural elements such as economics, power, and ideology, that is, a need to simultaneously struggle for structuralist and culturalist change

Smith (2015) notes that Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi was established because Māori "argued for the recognition and validity of their own cultural frame of reference as well as increased economic and resource parity in their own right alongside the dominant Pākehā (non- Māori population) in NZ" (p. 57). Resonant echoes of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi's mission can be located in other Indigenous and resistive schooling initiatives worldwide and in a variety of colonial contexts.

In the United States, institutions like Diné College and Haskell Indian Nations University were established out of a similar need to protect Indigenous students and preserve and revitalize Native American cultures. Tribal universities were also established out of the recognition that predominantly white institutions are often ill-equipped to serve the needs of Indigenous students and seldom offered degree pathways that were responsive to their backgrounds and needs (Haskie, 2013). In Guatemala,

Ki'iche Maya scholar Giovanni Batz (2019) writes that the Ixil University was similarly established to protect Ixil culture and territory. Ixil University was also founded to contest the notion that economic progress and social mobility were contingent upon abandoning one's Indigenous identity and community, an idea that Maya students and elders reported was heavily promoted in mainstream Guatemalan schools (Batz, 2019). In San Francisco, Pin@y Educational Partnerships (PEP) runs after-school and extracurricular programs that immerse Filipino youth in Philippine languages, Philippine and Filipino-American history, community activism, and culturally accountable pedagogy. PEP's mission statement was also developed to serve as a conceptual model for decolonizing education for Philippine peoples in diaspora:

> In PEP, we:
>
> CULTIVATE empathy, community actualization, cultural perpetuity, self- worth, self-determination, and the holistic well-being of all participants, especially Native peoples and people of color.
>
> CELEBRATE and honor Native peoples of the land and communities of color by providing a space to share their stories of struggle and resistance, along with their cultural wealth.
>
> CENTER and place high value on pre-colonial, ancestral, indigenous, diasporic, familial, and marginalized knowledge.
>
> CRITIQUE empire and its relationship to white supremacy, racism, patriarchy, and cisheteropatriarchy.
>
> CHALLENGE imperialist/colonial hegemonic beliefs and practices on the ideological, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized levels.
>
> CONNECT ourselves to past and contemporary resistance movements that struggle for social justice on the global and local levels.
>
> CONCEPTUALIZE, imagine, and build new possibilities for post-imperial life that promote transformative resistance, critical hope, and radical healing. (PEP, n.p., 2021)

The intentionality and specificity of PEP's mission statement suggests a need for educational programs that explicitly center values like cultivating empathy, community actualization, and cultural perpetuity. The fact that Filipino-American students do not consistently encounter culturally sustaining

pedagogies in formal schools justifies the necessity of out-of-school decolonizing education programs like PEP. These examples show that while their ideological aims and pedagogic strategies shift according to historic and geographic contexts, efforts to decolonize education tend to share two overlapping aims: 1) to resist Eurocentrism while acknowledging the inherent sovereignty of Indigenous, oppressed, and colonized peoples and 2) to pursue social justice, or the righting of historical wrongs and the equitable redistribution of resources and opportunities, especially for minoritized communities (Zembylas, 2018). Decolonial underground pedagogy deepens these understandings of decolonizing education by emphasizing the degree to which the aforementioned peoples envision and actualize liberatory modes of teaching and learning for themselves.

This objective coalesces with the calls of scholars of Indigenous and decolonizing education who have identified an ongoing need to examine forms of decolonizing education that are not tied to schooling, such as Ormiston's (2019) reflections on the inherently pedagogical nature of a canoe journey throughout his ancestral lands and waters:

> The Canoe Journey teaches me that, as Indigenous peoples, our life histories are disparate and not homogenous. For transformation to be possible, we must nurture a collaborative journey among each other, while being attuned to the specificities and variances of life narratives. (p. 39)

This thesis seeks to contribute to the understanding that decolonizing education is heterogeneous and emerges out of the disparate particularities of peoples' lives by highlighting how it occurs outside of formal settings. To understand the *pedagogy* of decolonial underground pedagogy, it is important to divorce the concepts of teaching and learning from the instructional and cognitive processes associated with formal schooling. In other words, an understanding of decolonial underground pedagogy requires an expanded definition of pedagogy itself- one that can identify teaching and learning practices in circumstances where they are not readily recognizable as such. It is therefore helpful to consider the concept of *informal learning* (Mills & Kraftl, 2014), which facilitates analyses of how decolonizing education can be practiced and observed in the mundanities of daily existence.

Informal Learning

Informal learning refers to unplanned educational experiences that occur in everyday life (Rogers, 2014). Mills & Kraftl (2014) identify three features of informal learning that are applicable in most contemporary settings, including in subcultures. The first is that informal learning stems from the *everyday* concerns of learners. Informal learning is differentiated from the education that occurs in contexts specifically constructed to teach, like organized lectures and sermons. While accidental or incidental knowledge construction certainly does take place in schools and religious institutions, informal learning refers specifically to knowledge and experience attained through leisure, play, spontaneous discussions, and moving from one place to another. Griffith (1998) illustrates how informal learning works in an unschooling environment through her example of a child baking bread. By baking bread, either independently or as part of a team, a child might learn several things related to reading, following directions, measuring ingredients, and the basic chemical reactions involved in baking. They might also learn about *mise en place*, or how to organize a kitchen so that it is functional and safe. They might learn that making an edible loaf of bread requires both a high degree of sensitivity toward gradual changes in how the dough looks, smells, feels, and even sounds. The learning that happens in Griffith's bread baking example is informal because the goal of this activity is to bake (and eat) bread. It is not to learn how to bake and then be evaluated on the result, with no contextual consideration for the necessity of eating. Though the learning people do when living their lives or attempting to feed themselves cannot always be measured or articulated, Griffith (1998) argues that this "does not make the knowledge and skills gained any less real" (p. 15).

The second facet of informal learning is its reliance on dialogue, conversation, and direct interaction. Mills & Kraftl (2014) argue that informal learning tends to occur in social contexts that build up "trust, affinity, respect, and even affection between educators and learners" (p. 4). Informal learning therefore cannot occur when information is conveyed through explicit and hierarchical

teaching, where one person is recognized as an authority figure and where the appropriate knowledge to be attained from the interaction is determined in advance. Informal learning instead occurs in environments where participants engage directly with one another, where their differences can be settled through the build-up of mutual understanding. Mills & Kraftl (2014) argue that the dialogic nature of informal learning allows for the type of reflection needed to engage with challenges to one's pre-existing knowledge. The emphasis Mills & Kraftl (2014) place on reflection suggests that conversation and dialogue need not be restricted to human beings. Because informal learning is a product of dialogue followed by reflection, an informal education can also emerge out of observations of one's surroundings and the conversations of others. Informal learning can therefore occur in our engagements with others, our environments, and ourselves.

Lastly, Mills & Kraftl (2014) argue that informal education often involves some measure of consciousness-raising or political awakening. What is learned informally often augments the learner's understanding of how the world works and their role in it. Mills & Kraftl (2014) take care to note that the 'political edge' of informal learning does not correspond to a specific political ideology. The dialogic, conversational, and reflective dimensions of informal learning do, however, often allow participants to ponder the broader implications of their everyday interactions more deeply. This is because the political lessons learned informally tend to have real effects on learners' lives. Mills & Kraftl (2014) use the term 'upscaling' to refer to this cognitive and embodied learning process, by which informal learners find links between their individual interests and wider local and global concerns. The study of informal teaching and learning practices in subcultural environments therefore opens up the possibility of decolonized and decolonial relationalities emanating from behind the seemingly superficial oppositionality of subcultural sociality. Recognizing specific instances in which such possibilities manifest themselves, however, requires further understanding of how informal teaching and learning experiences specifically occur in subcultural environments.

Subcultural Education

Because subcultures often combine a shared desire to defy the norms of mainstream culture with an inclusive understanding of how collective knowledge can be transmitted and understood, Ulusoy & Schembri (2018) portray them as liberatory pedagogic contexts that "facilitate learning by offering a language of awakening, an informational channel, and a journey of experiences" (p. 253). In subcultural communities, pedagogical experiences (in which insiders transmit, acquire, or construct knowledge) tend to occur as insiders iteratively manage their identities in relation to the community's norms and values. In so doing, they develop understandings about how to adhere to and defy the orthodoxies of their chosen communities (Ulusoy & Schembri, 2018). This process, which Ulusoy & Schembri call 'subcultural learning,' occurs as subcultural outsiders become insiders by doing: they observe and interact with one another, integrate the subculture's aesthetic signifiers into their own sense of style, and maintain an active presence in the places where the subculture convenes (such as festivals, concert halls, record stores, house parties, gyms, garages, skate spots, and online discussion fora). These informal processes can also be used to describe how *teaching* occurs in subcultures, as more seasoned insiders help novice members navigate subcultural milieu and make informed decisions about pursuing continued membership. The process of navigating a subculture's spatial and relational terrain is a responsive process in which prospective insiders allow the community's values to shape their understanding of the world while the individual's unique perspectives are allowed to expand the reservoirs of epistemology and practice that comprise the group's collective knowledge (Ulusoy, 2015).

Recounting her initial forays into German feminist punk subcultures that emphasized DJing and zine-making, Barrière (2021) notes that more seasoned members assured her that learning these crafts was a process: "trying was not mandatory and succeeding even less so. Knowing that we were not going to be evaluated based on our skills might have helped us feel more comfortable in the space" (p. 12). Observing and theorizing the decolonizing implications of subcultural learning therefore

requires an integrative understanding of how both subcultural learning and decolonizing education work. Barrière (2021) models such an approach by interpreting her reflections on feminist punk subcultures through bell hooks' (2003) *pedagogy of hope*, a philosophy of teaching that calls for educators to "teach with love, combining care, commitment, knowledge, responsibility, respect, and trust" in ways that do not "reinforce systems of domination, of imperialism, racism, sexism or class elitism" (xiv). Following the example set by Barrière's (2021) theorization of feminist punk subculture as a social context laden with pedagogies of hope, decolonial underground pedagogy calls for observations of the experiential, informal, and embodied teaching and learning practices that occur in subculture that are also attentive to how these practices might help subvert colonialism to help "create new social relations and systems of activity that move toward a fundamentally different instantiation of social justice—one that is defined by historically colonized peoples" (Tejeda et al., 2003, p. 9).

Driver (2011) notes that subcultural learning is embodied and experiential rather than cognitive or discursive. In his ethnographic studies of hardcore punk subcultures in Australia, Driver (2011) notes that the ability to mosh- the brash yet largely benign form of dance synonymous with heavy music subcultures - is "acquired internally through experience of the objective structures of the scene and then subjectively manifested" (p. 983). One does not learn to mosh through instruction, "it is rather knowledge internalized in the realization of sensory experience" (p. 983). Punks learn their subculture's canonical forms of bodily expression by watching others do it, hearing others talk about, and once they feel prepared, by doing it themselves. Provided a punk does not act out of malice, there is no objectively correct way to mosh. Every punk will mosh slightly differently, and the subjective particularities each punk introduces to the mosh pit will expand the observable canon of examples that other punks can learn from to develop their own moshing style.

Graffiti artist and geographer Stefano Bloch's (2021) examinations of Covid-related messaging in graffiti subculture concedes that the while the messages conveyed through graffiti range from

conspiratorial to preoccupied with public health, "much graffiti is produced by unaffiliated individuals for whom writing on a wall is a one-off event or last-ditch effort to be heard regarding a political statement, declaration of love, an inane comment" (p. 28). When applied to the Covid-19 pandemic, Bloch argues that graffiti artists use walls, paints, and artistic discernment regarding the placement and composition of their works to affirm the messages of public health officials, to advance the claims of conspiracy theorists, or to draw attention to perspectives they feel are ignored, such as the disparate rate of Covid infection in low-income communities of color. Despite the heterogeneity of messaging, the graffiti writers in Bloch's (2021) study still followed observable conventions in composition, technique, and claims of authorship. As such, Bloch (2021) reads the illegal Covid-related graffiti of individual artists as an effort to use subcultural forms of expression and signification to influence public discourse. A graffiti artist might do so with the full understanding that their efforts can be rapidly nullified by a police officer, a clean-up crew, or a concerned neighbor with a bucket of paint. Like the artist, each of these parties has a different objective to justify their own exertions of power.

Despite the novelty of Barrière (2021), Driver's (2011), and Bloch's (2021) subjects, their studies reveal deeper insights into how subcultures work: beyond the aesthetic signifiers and ideological posturing, punk, graffiti, and zine-making cultures allow new experiences, discourses, and realities to emerge out of the tensions, compromises, and interactions between conversant people and parties. The broader significance of subculture is evinced in examinations and theorizations of these new possibilities, rather than the articulated ideologies, discrete aesthetic signifiers, or representational politics that preceded them. While the literature on subcultural learning attends to the political upscaling of informal learning, it typically relies upon liberal notions of multiculturalism and ethnic diversity, often collapsing race-based specificities into a general resistance against authoritarianism and capitalism. By bringing subcultural learning in conversation with decolonizing education, this thesis aims to address the ways in which subcultural scholarship undertheorizes the colonial origins of the

oppressive circumstances under which subcultural insiders ostensibly chafe. Decolonial underground pedagogy helps bridge this gap by examining subcultural learning from an explicitly decolonial perspective.

The sections that follow show how this thesis applies decolonial underground pedagogy to its specific concentration on skateboarding, punk rock, and unschooling subcultures. Previous studies of these subcultures have examined their influence on the lives of individual participants (Le Blanc, 2008; Gray & Riley, 2013; Ray, 2015). Others have theorized their macropolitical significance, often based on researchers' interpretations of their politics and ideologies (Yochim, 2010). No research has combined and expanded upon these two approaches to investigate the decolonial underground pedagogies that potentiate minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures as sites of decolonial and decolonizing education. This thesis's analytical sections conceptualize minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures as *communities of interest* that form around insiders' self-defined "priorities and particularities; [with] their own language or codes [and] their own analysis of self-determination" (Smith, 2021, p. 148). Theorizing the decolonial underground pedagogy of minority led subcultures might therefore expand the established definition of subculture by acknowledging their dual purpose as an environment where the everyday pursuit of a common interest facilitates informal and embodied forms of decolonial and decolonizing pedagogy. With this objective in mind, I introduce the following discussion of how teaching and learning can be theorized in the three subcultures that comprise this thesis's analytical foci and are the key sites of decolonial education in my own life: punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling.

Punk Rock Pedagogy

Educational literature is rife with theorizations of punk as a public, community-responsive, and decolonizing pedagogy (Cordova, 2017). Popularly associated with profane music and confrontational fashion choices, punk culture is also understood as the social practice of developing

oppositional orientations toward oppressive circumstances (Dunn, 2016). Efforts to theorize punk culture's relevance to educational processes often begin with attempts to define punk itself, a slippery task given punk culture's resistance to inauthentic and external representation (Smith et al., 2017). Seth Kahn-Egan's (1998) pentagonal definition of punk, which was derived from his own experiences in punk communities and is endorsed by other self-identified punks, has proven helpful for theorizing punk's relevance in justice-minded educational pursuits. For Kahn-Egan (1998) punk consists of the following:

> 1) The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) ethic, which demands that we do our own work because anybody who would do our work for us is only trying to jerk us around;
>
> 2) A sense of anger and passion that finally drives a writer to say what's really on his or her mind;
>
> 3) A sense of destructiveness that calls for attacking institutions when those institutions are oppressive, or even dislikable;
>
> 4) A willingness to endure or even pursue pain to make oneself heard or noticed;
>
> 5) A pursuit of the "pleasure principle," a reveling in some kind of Nietzchean chasm. (p. 100)

In tracing the ideological genealogy of punk rock subculture, Smith, Dines, & Parkinson (2017) observe that "punk has…more often than not channeled its disruptive tendencies in tandem with emancipatory aspirations for marginalized or silenced voices, towards a social justice agenda" (p. 1). Through the collaborative composition and performance of subcultural art and music, punks often engage in a community-embedded praxis of decolonization that allows them to learn about injustice and inequality, mostly through conversation.

These conversations, along with the regular consumption of punk music, gradually encourage punks to shift the responsibility for transforming oppressive conditions away from the state and onto themselves. As Dunn (2016) writes:

> Instead of passively accepting the world as it is, punk inspires people to do something

> about it on a *personal* level. Don't wait for someone else to fix what bothers you- do it yourself. Or, as the oft-quoted punk slogan goes *do it yourself or do it with friends*". (p. 38)

Participation in the public pedagogy of punk rock sometimes engenders what Cordova (2017) terms *educative healing*, a process of knowledge creation that allows learners to resist, interrogate, and ultimately unlearn oppressive discourses and behaviors. Leigh-Douglas (2017) notes that for Indigenous and immigrant punks in Aotearoa, "punk is a cultural forum housing abilities to include politicized emphases that can encourage indigenous expression and identity" (p. 87). Informed by these first-person attestations of the liberatory possibilities suggested in punk rock subculture, I have elsewhere conceptualized of punk rock pedagogy (PRP) to describe how becoming *punk* is an educative process that consists of three pillars: 1) historically and community-responsive analyses of the material conditions of oppression, 2) the use of punk music as a historical and theoretical framework for contextualizing this historical inquiry, and 3) actions undertaken in solidarity with marginalized people, with particular emphasis on black, indigenous, and person-of-color (BIPOC) communities, the LGBTQ community, and the working class (Romero, 2016; 2018; 2021). While this thesis's analytical chapters go into further detail about how punk rock subcultures are laden with tensions and are not decolonizing by default, this particular understanding of punk rock pedagogy is integral to the ability to theorize and observe decolonial underground pedagogies in minority-led punk rock subcultures. An important theoretical consideration for understanding punk rock pedagogy is the concept of anarchy. On one hand, anarchy refers to a philosophy of sociality in which mutual aid, autonomy, creativity, and self-determination are privileged over hierarchies and authoritarianism. Per Starr (2000), anarchism "stands for the liberation of the human mind from the dominion of religion, the liberation of the human body from the dominion of property; liberation from the shackles and restraint of government" (p. 1911). But punk rock pedagogy evinces other forms of anarchy, particularly Emmanuel Levinas's use of the term *an-archy*, to assert that there is no *arche* (foundation) that precedes one's responsibility to *the Other*.

Instead of centering the liberation of the self, Levinasian an-archy locates the onus of existence in the self's duty to care for the Other (or the person who is *not-I*). For Levinas, ethics equates to an asymmetrical obsession with one's responsibilities to the Other and is not an exhortation to fight for the absolute right to do as one pleases. Concepts which are considered foundational in other philosophical traditions, such as ego, existence, being, consciousness, liberty, and meaning are, per Levinas, understood to emerge out of ethics, not the other way around. The self's an-archic responsibility to the Other is made evident during the *face-to-face* encounter, broadly conceived as the first time an individual comes into the presence of another human being (Morgan, 2011). The face-to-face encounter introduces the self to the Other and its infinite vulnerability. This revelation begets a recognition of one's anarchic responsibility and gives existence its meaning.

The primacy of the an-archic responsibility departs from the Cartesian assumption that meaning is derived from the self's ability to think or the Heidegerrian view that meaningful Being is reserved for those who can express concern for self-preservation (Bourgeois, 1999). For Levinas, an-archic responsibility is *primordial* and *preontological.* Levinasian an-archy binds the self to duty, while the anarchy of Starr (2000), as well as anarchist philosophers like Peter Kropotkin and Emma Goldman, frees the self from bondage in all its forms. While this thesis is not theoretically rooted in anarchism or an-archy, both are key concepts for understanding the priorities and preoccupations of punk rock pedagogy and decolonial underground pedagogy alike. This is because in the minority-led subcultures examined herein, the acts of liberating the self and honoring one's primordial responsibility to the Other are interconnected and contingent.

Skate Pedagogy

The anti-authoritarian instincts of punks and skateboarders are closely related, as punks and skaters alike overarchingly believe that people should be free to express themselves in their chosen medium without undue scrutiny or abuse (Kassel, 2016; Lombard, 2010). As such, I apply many of

the key tenets of punk rock pedagogy to my examinations of skate culture to conceptualize *skate pedagogy* as an embodied form of informal teaching and learning. On one hand, skate pedagogy entails a political education as skaters tend to develop orientations toward opposition and rebellion due to their constant interactions with what they perceive to be the repressive apparatus of dominant culture, as exemplified by anti-skateboarding policies and the police officers, security guards, and private citizens who enforce them. Other perceived enemies of skate culture are those who appropriate the aesthetics of skate culture without skateboarding themselves, and architectural features specifically designed to prevent skateboarding, like metal deterrent devices affixed to public benches and ledges.

Skate pedagogy encompasses a physical education that emerges out of a learner's interactions with skate culture, built and natural environments, and skateboards themselves. Learning to skate requires a high level of discipline and the ability to persevere through hardship (Adi, Aditya, & Citrawati, 2010). Skaters often work on the same maneuvers for years, sustaining a high level of effort and attention even into adulthood and middle age (Willing, 2019). In addition to the self-directed way one learns to skate, skate pedagogy instills the community's "most cherished values" (Kassel, 2016, p. 4). These include orientations toward resistance, rebelliousness, repurposing public space, support for other skaters, and an appreciation for consent and bodily autonomy (Beal, 1995; Chiu, 2009; Lombard, 2010).

Though mainstream skateboard culture is associated with Jackass and juvenilia (Yochim, 2010), skate pedagogies have been shown to unsettle dominant and Eurocentric constructions of gender. Hellman (2016) conceives of skateboarding as a site in which participants construct more supportive and sensitive conceptions of masculinity in opposition to mainstream portrayals of men as emotionally stunted and aggressive. Mackay and Dallaire (2014) similarly observe how women who participate in skate-centered learning challenge dominant messages that objectify women and assume that they are hypercompetitive with one another. Skate culture also allows participants to trouble

internal and external denigrations of racial and ethnic identities, as exemplified by skaters with racialized identities who challenge misconceptions of black and brown youth (Neumann, 2017; Rockett & Fine, 2019). The literature demonstrates that skate pedagogy is a context in which dominant narratives can be denounced and dismantled. In these learning contexts, the skateboard itself unlocks possibilities, as riding it encourages a skater to envision novel ways of engaging with discourses, people, and environments (Pyyry & Tani, 2017; Willing, et al., 2019). Diverse forms of learning occur within skate culture, which positions skate pedagogy as a rich field of educational inquiry.

Still, skate pedagogy is not immune to the influence of exploitative ideologies founded upon the hegemonic discourses it ostensibly rails against (Beal, 1995; Brayton, 2005; Lombard, 2010). Beal's (1995) and Lombard's (2010) accounts of corporate incursions into skate culture demonstrate how skateboarding's marketable rebelliousness has piqued the interest of shoe companies, television networks, and the film industry for decades. Lombard (2010) notes, however, that skaters engage with money and power relationally and assuredly. Though skaters profess allegiance to skater-owned or *core* companies, they do not reject corporate partnership by rote and welcome resources so long as sponsors do not exploit or disparage skateboarding (Dinces, 2011). This cautious openness has led to multinational corporations like Nike, Converse, and Adidas engaging with the skateboarding industry, where they enjoy strong reputations largely due to their support of women, queer, and minority skaters (Harrison-Caldwell, 2019).

Despite its antiauthoritarian foundation, skate pedagogy is complex and emerges out of the disparate discourses of rebellion, corporatization, conformity, and nonconformity. But as Brayton's (2005) and Lombard's (2010) analyses of skate texts demonstrate, theorizations of skateboarding which portray it solely as a rebellious act overlook the fact that, for many, the purpose of skateboarding is simply to *have fun*. If nothing else, affording analytical consideration to skate pedagogy allows for

examinations of a particularly underdeveloped notion of decolonizing education: that it too can be fun.

Unschooling

Though naturalistic approaches to learning can be traced back to the earliest human civilizations (Riley, 2020), the contemporary unschooling movement began with the writings of John Holt in the 1960s. Holt was a former teacher whose disillusionment with school-based instruction moved him to encourage and support parents who decided to educate their children at home. In works like *How Children Learn*, *How Children Fail*, *Teach Your Own*, and the monthly newsletter *Growing Without Schooling*, Holt promoted the idea that children thrive in unstructured learning environments where they are free to pursue their own interests. Holt (2017) used the term *unschooling* to describe his philosophy of a home-based education without formal curricula, teacher-centered instruction, assessment, assignments, and the compartmentalization of knowledge into disciplines. Unschoolers also contend that optimal learning occurs informally and emerges out of one's everyday life, interests, and interactions with their community and surroundings (Holt, 1995; 2017; English, 2019; 2020). Unschooling subculture is comprised of individuals and families who self-identify as unschoolers and ascribe to educational and child-rearing practices informed by Holt and his pedagogical antecedents, the most influential of whom include John Taylor Gatto, Pat Farenga, and Sandra Dodd (Gray & Riley, 2013).

Unschooling, as practiced by self-identified unschoolers, can be conceptualized as a philosophy of education which holds that learning occurs best when it is informal, self-directed, and responsive to one's community (Griffith, 1998). The community-focused dimension of unschooling's underlying philosophy makes it so that it is not analogous to *free range parenting*, or dogmatic childrearing approaches which exhort children to self-soothe, 'cry it out,' and otherwise roam directionless and unsupervised (Larrichia, 2016). Unschooling instead "is about creating an environment that is

conducive to real learning- not just for your children, but for everyone in the family, because learning is a lifelong activity" (Larrichia, 2016, p. 12). Alternative education scholars and practitioners have critiqued the term unschooling itself, as its practice is not simply an oppositional response to school. Terms like self-directed education, liberated learning, willed learning, and 'raising free people' all aim to describe unschooling as its practitioners experience it: a non-hierarchical, open, engaged, and holistic way of living that does not view life and learning as separate, or even *separable*, things.

Irrespective of the label one prefers, adult participants are considered vital to all forms of autonomous, out-of-school learning. In this thesis, I refer to adult unschoolers as *mentors* and *guides*, in recognition of the fact that their roles often revolve around ensuring that the young people in their care are safe and have access to learning opportunities. An unschooling mentor or guide is oftentimes a parent, but can also be a trusted friend, relative, or subject-matter expert (such as a field guide at an outdoor education camp). It should also be noted that unschooling children can be mentors and guides, depending on the context and activity. This thesis uses these terms to describe adult unschoolers because it is specifically concerned with how their experiences contribute to culturally revalidating change.

The practice of unschooling involves a perceived rejection of school and a negation of widely accepted social contracts that assume participation in the institution of schooling. In the US, for example, unschoolers might arouse suspicion or invite ostracization for rejecting what media, culture, and schools themselves portray as totemic facets of American life, like school dances, sports, standardized tests, and even bullying (Gray, 2013; Riley, 2020; 2021). This perceived withdrawal makes it so that unschooling communities can be as small as unschooling families themselves, as there are often few organized support mechanisms for practicing unschoolers. This thesis's examinations of unschooling accordingly show how the tenets of subculture and decolonizing education can be

observed in the relational dynamics of racialized and minoritized unschooling families, illuminating expanded possibilities for research in liberatory education and subcultural pedagogy alike.

Conclusion

This thesis's focus on punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling reflects how these subcultures are integral to my own understanding of decolonizing education. I have, by and large, experienced that various skateboarding, punk rock, and unschooling environments are suffused with reflexive, affirming, and restorative pedagogical processes. While the tendrils of colonialism and heteropatriarchal white supremacy are omnipresent, subcultural learning, for me, has affirmed that there is no reason for such discourses to form the ideological foundations of a punk scene, a skate crew, an unschooling family, a music festival, an education system, or a society.

I conceptualize punk as my entryway into decolonial thinking and action. Punk circles connected me with Black, Indigenous, Hispanic, queer, femme, Asian, and Filipino punks all over the world. I gravitated to places like 924 Gilman, Auckland's Whammy Bar, Austin's Beerland, and Las Vegas's Double Down Saloon because I felt unwelcome in legibly Filipino spaces, like church groups and the Filipino culture clubs at university. I mostly felt uncomfortable with what these places told me about my own Filipino-ness: that being recognizably Filipino meant reducing our culture to egg rolls and Baby Jesus. They told me I would have to pay an exorbitant fee to dance at a Philippine Culture Night and ignore the arrogance displayed by organizers as they performed Indigenous dances without considering their context, meaning, or appropriateness. As a Pinoy Punk, I learned that there is no 'correct' way to be Filipino. Moreover, I did not have to feel bad about failing or refusing to be anyone's little brown brother (except, of course, my actual older brother's). Punk's oppositional posturing further catalyzed my own interrogation of Philippine national identity and its roots in colonialist Eurocentric norms.

Skateboarding and its values have helped me develop a grateful and responsive philosophy of life. It has also made me learn to see in 360-degrees. I can now recognize infinitesimal geographic ticks and the ways they might help or hinder my goals. This includes identifying a patch of uneven concrete from two blocks away because rolling over it could slow my momentum. I race toward gradual slopes if I determine they can accelerate my board, and skirt around nigh-invisible pebbles that could jam my wheels and stop my movement instantly, sending me crashing face first into the pavement. I can tell, without any conscious thought, how fast I should be moving to land an ollie or outpace an unleashed dog. I have learned to persist through any amount of pain and hardship if it means landing a new trick. Skateboarding, in short, proved that what colonial schooling taught me about myself was wrong. Skateboarding also helped me understand the agency of land and the infinite ways I am entangled with the nonhuman world. Spending whole afternoons riding a toy primarily made of laminated wood revealed new understandings about myself, my capabilities, and the ways I could interact with my environment. I now find it difficult to think of myself as debilitated, colonized, or Other. Skateboarding reminds that no matter my station, the land is always prepared to journey with me.

Finally, I understand unschooling as a perpetual process pedagogy in which I enact and embody the decolonizing lessons of punk and skateboarding in every other aspect everyday life. Through unschooling, my partner, children, and I construct responsive and reciprocal relationships where we complement our strengths, support one another's endeavors, and build knowledge in constant collaboration. Several generations of colonial schooling have removed me from these processes, which coincidentally resonate with the traditional knowledge transmission practices of my ancestors.

A life spent in diaspora has made physical return to those ancestral lands and lifeways unfeasible and unlikely, so subcultural learning, punk rock pedagogy, skate pedagogy, and unschooling *are* my decolonizing education. It is my hope that this thesis will make that experience legible and

benefit other autonomous and community-accountable journeys toward the reclamation of stolen or suppressed land, lives, and lifeways. Such experiences of subcultural learning are not unique to me. As such, this thesis examines how minoritized people do not only participate in subcultural learning to rebel or because they are outcasted from their other communities. Rather, minority-led subcultures show how novel practices of decolonizing education emerge out of the embrace of shared responsibility, the reclamation of subjugated knowledge, and the communal striving toward equitable futures. The next chapter introduces this thesis's strategy for observing the decolonial underground pedagogies of minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures, which then makes theorizing their relevance to broader efforts to decolonize education possible.

As mentioned in the introductory chapter, this thesis's concomitant emphases on openness, reflexivity, historicity, decolonization, and critique require methodological strategies that allow these values to co-constitute and inform one another. To provisionally construct such a methodology, this thesis's augments the suppositionless and ancestral Philippine research method of *pakapa-kapa* with Linda Tuhiwai Smith's (2021) writings on community research, reading, and story telling. I further contextualize these methodological influences with a selection of resonant methods like close reading (Nash, 2014), and autoethnography (Chang, 2008; Reed-Danahay, 2019). I deploy this loose constellation of methodological provocations to maximize the analytical possibilities of this thesis's efforts to theorize and observe the decolonial underground pedagogies suggested in subcultural texts and in my own experiences in punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling. This reflective, interpretive, and text-based strategy, in turn, orients this thesis away from extracting information from subcultural insiders and compels it to locate decolonial underground pedagogies in the artifacts, cultural productions, and narratives produced by subcultural insiders themselves. These interpretations of subcultural text combine with my own reflections to put forth a lived-in and embodied understanding

of decolonial underground pedagogy from which to theorize its possible applications in other teaching and learning environments, including schools and universities.

Chapter 4: Methodological Considerations

Introduction

Through its conceptual and methodological apparatus, this thesis aims to deepen understanding of decolonizing education by theorizing its subcultural, informal, community-embedded, and spontaneous dimensions. To do so, I initially organized my thinking around minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures with a suppositionless orientation indebted to the Philippine methodology of pakapa-kapa, which translates to *feeling around in the dark* (Ho, 1999). In pragmatic terms, using a pakapa-kapa methodology meant that writing this thesis required that I simply continue participating in punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling. Encounters with meaningful texts, artifacts, and stories would occur over the course of that participation.

When those meaningful encounters did occur, I further consulted decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 2021) to read subcultural texts, artifacts, cultural productions, and reflections closely and critically. I paid specific attention to what these texts suggested about how decolonization, decolonizing education, and informal learning occur in minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. I also considered the social and political contexts in which they were authored. Finally, I connected those historicized and reflective readings through the conceptual lens of decolonial underground pedagogy to offer glimpses into the decolonizing potential of subcultural teaching and learning. As intimated in the account of the AninoKo show that opens this thesis, this methodological approach allows for researchers to connect subcultural teaching and learning experiences to the critical reflections and community-responsive actions that emerge from them. These realizations all emerge out of an embodied understanding of how minority-led subcultures function, what they value, and the decolonial goals they aspire toward. In that reflection, stylistic acts like putting on a leather jacket and attending a punk show led to spontaneous conversations that inspired further involvement in grassroots organizing designed to interrupt the coloniality of power,

especially in the Philippines and throughout the Philippine diaspora. As this study involves reflexive readings of my own subcultural learning experiences, it requires me to remain critical while exercising respect and humility. After all, even my own recollections are reflections of my community, thus vesting in me a responsibility to portray my interpretations in a nuanced fashion that considers divergent contexts, counterpoints, and perspectives. These methodological considerations compel this thesis to emphasize openness, responsiveness, reflection, and accountability in social, cultural, educational, and autobiographic research.

Pakapa-kapa and Infrapolitics

Pakapa-kapa methodology is drawn from literature on Philippine virtue ethics and describes a suppositionless approach to social research (Torres, 1982). Suppositionless research exhorts those seeking to understand the experiences of Philippine peoples to immerse themselves in the narratives, conversations, and creative works of their research participants by directly participating in community life, thus prioritizing the insights derived from researchers who are *members* of communities rather than detached observers. A *pakapa-kapa* approach holds that the researcher's intimate connection to and familiarity with the data will inform the appropriate means of analysis and organization. To this effect, *pakapa-kapa* research shares an affinity with how teaching and learning are conceptualized and experienced in subcultural environments. In both settings, the process of constructing and cultivating knowledge is thought to be messy and relational- as the transmission and acquisition of knowledge is inextricable from everyday life and our engagement with others.

Two key strategies in pakapa-kapa are *pagtatanong-tanong* (asking questions) and *kuwentuhan* (informal discussion). Jocson (2008) further develops the methodology of *kuwentuhan*, clarifying that goes beyond the simple retelling of stories to encompass abstractions of history in which key events in the storytellers life are "retold and reconstructed in the presence of others" (p. 243). The specific plot points of a kuwento might be exaggerated, but its purpose is not to provide an objective retelling.

Rather, *kuwentos* and *kuwentuhan* sessions are designed to help us learn through communion and relation, thereby allowing the experiences, voices, and worldviews of others to deepen our own. The notion that interpretive inquiry and storytelling hold deep truths are similarly reflected in Lightfoot-Lawrence's (2005) methodology of *portraiture*, which combines ethnographic observation with interpretive sketches reflective of a researcher's own positionality. Per Lightfoot-Lawrence, portraits are not meant to reproduce a pure and essential facsimile of an individual, community, or institution. They contain much deeper reservoirs of information about the relationships between artists and subjects, observers and participants, places and times. Lightfoot-Lawrence (2005) came to this realization by sitting for actual portraits with artists:

> I learned, for example, that these portraits did not capture me as I saw myself, that they were not like looking in the mirror at my reflection. Instead, they seemed to capture my "essence"; qualities of character and history, some of which I was unaware, some of which I resisted mightily, some of which felt deeply familiar. But the translation of image was anything but literal. It was probing, layered, and interpretive. (p. 6)

This understanding of the contested nature of interpretation has decolonial consequences. Debo's (1976) biography of the Bendonkohe leader, hero, and medicine man Geronimo, for examples, contains a passage which describes Apache as "inveterate gamblers" (p. 19) due to their propensity for wagering on hoop-and-pole games played by children. The author's Eurocentric worldview applies western moralizing to Apache traditions as Debo equivocates gambling with destitution, addiction, and moral failure. She was unable to consider a non-western worldview in which material wealth is held in community, making it so that the act of wagering might have had more to do with recreation, leisure, and bonding in precolonial Apache communities than it did with ideas like temperance and piety associated with western middle-class values and Judeo-Christian morality.

Kuwentuhan and portraiture are decolonial modes of inquiry because they eschew the notion that researchers can be wholly removed observers of objective phenomena and, by extension, arbiters of judgment and moral certitude. A researcher's interpretations can instead be understood on one

hand as useful and generative while allowing for the possibility of other interpretations. These techniques are especially important as culturally appropriate methods for engaging with Philippine communities, who tend to value open, playful, interpretive, and informal conversation as a foundational part of everyday life (Torres, 1982; Ho, 1998). By committing to a methodological approach rooted in story telling, question-asking, self-reflection and suppositionless dialogue, the *pakapa-kapa* researcher demonstrates their own *kapwa*, or a sense of shared identity rooted in a concern for the collective that supersedes their individual aspirations. Such an undertaking is important because colonial research projects informed dominant western conceptions of Filipino people that pathologized them as infantile, primitive, and servile (see Nadal, 2021). These conceptions, in turn, gave supposedly empirical justification for the colonization of the Philippines and the continued exploitation of Philippine peoples in a globalized economy (Rodriguez, 2010).

Pakapa-kapa research does not discount the undeniable traumas Filipino people have experienced due to colonization, war, genocide, displacement, poverty, and violence. It does, however, refuse to reduce Philippine subjectivity to those traumas, instead prioritizing the vibrancy and warmth commonly found in Filipino households and neighborhoods but missing from western theorizations of Philippine society (Constantino, 1975). Pakapa-kapa also challenges the belief that an in-born sense of internalized oppression must afflict and indenture all Filipinos. Instead, pakapa-kapa privileges the agency, conviviality, and joy that Filipino people experience as a result of striving toward *kapwa*- the sense of shared identity that Philippine psychologists and philosophers theorize as the universal value that unites Filipinos regardless of cultural, linguistic, and social differences. A searching, questioning, and suppositionless approach allows for the pursuit of research with Philippine-identified individuals and communities that treat them as real living people rather than symbols or abstractions. In this research, these aspects *of pakapa-kapa* are born out of critical re-readings of autoethnographic reflections and subcultural texts that offer insights into how Indigenous, colonized, and dispossessed

people build communities of interest and exercise decolonial subjectivity in the tight spaces they build for themselves.

Pakapa-kapa and *pagtatanong*, on the surface, are similar to ethnographic methods like participant observation and collecting field notes based on informal conversations. Enriquez (1989) notes that the purpose of Philippine psychology is not to cast out useful techniques simply because they are presumed to be of western origin. An integral part of *pakapa-kapa* methodology is the provision that all methods, theories, viewpoints, and data are valuable if they help the researcher understand community life among and advocate for healing and liberation (Enriquez, 1989). In this thesis's analytical chapters, this approach allows for considerations of decolonial underground pedagogy to be inspired by agencies like a Maya Angelou poem, a Bessie Smith song, and an old human rights text book. While these and several other artifacts first seemed inconspicuous, they eventually contextualized my subcultural learning experiences in ways that surfaced insights that I may not have observed if those combinations of texts and reflections did not come into relation.

Pakapa-kapa research echoes Cruz's (2014) and Kelley's (1993) contention that *infrapolitics*, or the anti-authoritarian ideologies and aspirations intimated in the aesthetic trappings of subcultural *style*, contain rich insights into the lived experience of decolonial resistance. Theorizing the pedagogical and epistemological significance of subcultural infrapolitics requires researchers to "take the stance that [minoritized people] are not victims but are often witnesses and survivors of great trauma and oppression" (Cruz, 2014, p. 416). Rather than compelling trained ethnographers to infiltrate communities to extract privileged information, infrapolitical research requires that scholars recognize the authority of stories that minoritized people tell in their own words and of their own volition. Cruz's (2014) writings on infrapolitics are influenced by María Lugones' (1987) concept of "world"-travelling, which holds that minoritized people, particularly queer youth and women of color, navigate multiple "worlds" throughout the course of their everyday lives. These "worlds," like schools,

workplaces, healthcare providers, and carceral facilities- are often hostile and dominated by individuals and institutions who seldom recognize their inherent value. Much of the "world"-travelling minoritized people do is therefore undertaken unwillingly, which suggests further that the "self" is malleable and constantly changes as one moves through multiple worlds with varying levels of habitability. As such, "the researcher's role becomes vital in this negotiation of multiple frames, selves, and worlds. To create different interpretations of experience, and to create new knowledges that are outside of the usual frames of public performances of power, is a risking together. It often means challenging both subject and researcher to see what meaning can be made" (Cruz, 2014, p. 418). This understanding motivates this thesis's treatment of data, as it regards autoethnographic reflections, documentary footage, personal communications, songs, paintings, and art installations as stories that hold profound truths and which minoritized subcultural insiders communicate to the world.

Torres (1982) & Ho (1998) both caution that *pakapa-kapa* invites scrutiny based on classical scientific standards, such as reliability (the degree to which observations can be replicated under similar conditions) and validity (or the truth and accuracy of these observations). The early (academically recognized) practitioners of Philippine research methods oftentimes operated under explicitly clinical and scientific frameworks than the present study and argued that reliability and validity can be assured if studies use multiple investigators and repeat observations several times under similar conditions. Such studies may include two or more researchers engaging with the same topics or groups of people. In practice, this might mean holding several informal talking circles (*kuwentuhan*) around the same topics or with the same participants.

Torres (1982) notes that another way to ensure reliability and validity in a suppositionless inquiry is for investigators to thoroughly experience the language, culture, and values of their participants. The *pakapa-kapa* autoethnographer is aided by a deep understanding of (and appreciation for) their own historical context. While this thesis centers *pakapa-kapa* as its overarching methodology,

this need to ensure historicity and analytical reflexivity beyond the initial phase of suppositionless engagement required that I consult other methodological traditions to inform the process in which subcultural data is collected and interpreted. I identified the decolonizing methodologies (Smith, 2021) of *community research*, *reading*, and *story telling* as complementary to *pakapa-kapa*. These methodologies helped further clarify this thesis's analytical trajectory after its initial period of suppositionless community engagement and reflection. These methodologies further contribute to the ongoing development of *pakapa-kapa* research by showing how it can serve as the foundation of an analytic process that yields generative and actionable insights that can help advance community goals while inviting iteration and making no claims toward conclusiveness or finality. As a reflective and text-based study, this thesis does not make objective claims of validity. However, its analytical sections show how connecting critical interpretations of subcultural text to broader social, political, cultural, and historical phenomena facilitates a lived-in appreciation for how minoritized peoples communally construct their own forms of decolonial and decolonizing education, yielding important insights for educational research and practice that is concerned with advancing equity goals for minoritized people.

Community Research

Like proponents of *pakapa-kapa*, Tuck, Yang, & Smith (2019) clarify that decolonizing methodologies are not inherently distinct from or opposed to 'traditional' and 'western' social research methods. Researchers who utilize decolonizing methodologies often use techniques like focus group discussions (Battiste, 2013), participatory action research (Tuck, 2008), narrative inquiry (Harrison & Clarke, 2020), and even quantitative methods (Eglash, Lachney, Babbitt, Bennett, Reinhardt, & Davis, 2019). What makes methodologies decolonizing, then, is their commitment to research experiences that are responsive and accountable to the traditions, wishes, aspirations, and input of Indigenous and historically colonized communities. Decolonizing methodologies contest mischaracterizations of Indigenous knowledge as subjective and politically motivated, as well as the idea that research aimed

at safeguarding Indigenous futures is 'bad science.' Goenpul scholar Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2014) shows how oral histories and informal conversations contain cultural and contextual knowledge developed and transmitted since time immemorial. Decolonizing methodologies also expose how western invocations of objectivity, impartiality, and universal truth can themselves be understood as subjective, cultural, and biased, as they are "rooted in specific, binary ontological and epistemological commitments, assuming radical oppositions between mind/body, objectivity/morality, man/nature and nature (or materiality)/spirituality that are rejected by many Indigenous peoples, among others" (Coburn, 2014, p. 55).

Smith (2021) conceptualizes community research as a complex process in which research activities are evaluated based on the accountability they demonstrate toward the people and places implicated in them. Smith (2021) differentiates community research from fieldwork and asserts that "community conveys a much more intimate, human and self-defined space, whereas 'field' assumes a space 'out there' where people may or may not be present" (p. 148). This distinction allows Smith (2021) to assert that communities are evolving entities whose parameters, membership criteria, and the degree to which they will participate in research efforts are defined by community members themselves. Community researchers are responsible for maintaining positive relationships with their communities and are expected to reflect upon the ways their research activities might affect the community's goals, whether positively or negatively. Ultimately, community research projects are "expected to lead one small step further towards self-determination" (Smith, 2021, p. 149). Community research thus departs from traditional research paradigms designed to extract knowledge from Indigenous communities and are often imposed onto them by investigators from outside.

While this thesis is primarily devoted to analysis of public texts, creative works, and personal reflections, there are distinct and identifiable communities involved and implicated in its production. Conducting textual analysis through the lens of community research thus orients me toward the

potential shortfalls, consequences, and implications of my analyses. This means that I continually attend to the ethicality of my research through open dialogue with other subculture members, punk archivists, underground historians, skaters, and members of my unschooling family. Conducting community research through text means that if I hear a lyric that seems to reveal something about decolonization, I must listen to it again and again, with different headphones and from different devices. This approach not only ensures that I heard correctly, but that I do not prevent myself from hearing something else. Instead of insisting on the authority of my analyses, community research insists that I allow these conversations to influence my conclusions, change my mind, and trouble any preconceived notions. Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021) note that the act of conducting decolonizing research under the purview and auspices of the western academy is contradictory and limiting. Academics who make space for non-western viewpoints, constantly interrogate their own privilege, and pursue transformative research projects in marginalized communities must also balance these commitments with the market-driven metrics that govern their ability to keep their jobs. In other words, community service leaves the decolonial researcher with less time to teach, win grants, and produce peer-reviewed publications. In recognizing these tensions, they show how decolonizing research methods poses further questions: what would be beneficial is to listen to those who have experienced colonial oppression and ask for their input around strategies to rebuild an anti-colonial academia. What needs to change in academia? What does academia need to unlearn?" (p. 6).

To this end, decolonizing projects that center text and reflection can contribute to the process of unlearning and change in academia by showing that community-embedded research can be introspective and rigorously conducted using readily available data sources (such as public texts, works of art, and one's own memories) without imposing on communities in hopes of extracting their knowledge. Such an endeavor is possible if the significance of these texts is read against a deep understanding of the historical contexts, contemporary realities, and emerging aspirations of

minoritized communities that can be cultivated through one's direct and sustained participation in those very communities. To illustrate how this process occurs in this thesis, I offer further grounding discussion on the decolonizing methodologies of reading and story telling. These strategies emerge out of suppositionless engagement and community participation to enable the critical interpretation of text, history, and one's own experiences in ways that counter colonial research paradigms and celebrate the agency of Indigenous and racialized peoples.

Reading

As an interpretive study, this thesis benefitted from an understanding of Smith's (2021) concept of *reading*, which she defines as a methodology of "critical[ly] rereading of western history and the Indigenous presence in the making of that history" (p. 170). As a decolonizing methodology, reading eschews the savior narratives of dominant western myth-making, and questions essentialized knowledge that argues that Indigenous peoples invited invasion by virtue of their inability to develop their lands and cultures according to the demands of global marketplaces or Judeo-Christian moralizing. A critical re-reading instead engaging with historical texts from the vantage point of inherently sovereign peoples with distinct views on science, spirituality, and social life that were accountable to land, community, and ancestors. Critical rereading is driven "by a need to understand what has informed both internal colonialism and new forms of colonization" (p. 171).

Smith's (2021) concept of reading informs how I conduct analyses, as each of this thesis's interpretive engagements are rooted in an intentional consideration of the historical conditions that lead racialized and minoritized people to subcultural learning environments and mediate their experiences therein. Reading parallels Nash's (2014) use of *close reading* to examine Black female representation in pornographic films. Instead of reactively responding to sexually explicit texts and images, Nash interprets them in relation to historical narratives of Black womens' agency. This approach ultimately enables her to find affirmations of Black female agency and autonomy embedded

in pornographic representations. Nash uses close reading to complicate one-dimensional theorizations of Black female portrayals in pornography solely as representations of gender-based and racial injury. In doing so, Nash (2014) questions the essentialization of white patriarchal oppression and shifts the locus of analysis to the self-determined actions and self-defined aspirations of Black women.

Close readings are textual engagements that combine deep consideration of the social contexts in which texts are produced with a willingness to honor multiple and possible contradictory interpretations. For Nash (2014), they allow for "analyses [to] move back and forth between text and context, between representation and the multitude of possible spectator responses" (p. 22). Smith's (2021) concept of reading and Nash's (2014) description of close reading enable this thesis to similarly consider the sociopolitical, historical, cultural, and relational concerns that lead to the establishment of minority-led subcultures. These analyses inform this thesis's theorizations of how insiders use decolonial underground pedagogy to respond to specific historical and political circumstances that affect their lives, thus inviting novel meditations on the possibilities of decolonizing education.

Story telling

In addition to subcultural texts, this thesis draws from my own insights into minority-led subcultural learning and my experiences in punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. I draw from Smith's (2021) writings on *story telling* to engage with my own reflections in a manner that is critical, reflexive, adaptable, and accountable to the numerous communities that are implicated in this research. Smith (2021) notes that story telling is a reciprocal process that is vital for safeguarding Indigenous knowledge, as "story and the story teller both serve to connect the past with the future, one generation with the other, the land with the people and the people with the story" (p. 166). While my narratives originate from me, they implicate and represent the experiences of other people, thereby necessitating a community-accountable approach to the writing and interpretation of first-hand knowledge and introspective stories.

Story telling resonates with the methodology of autoethnography- a research paradigm that draws from a researcher's personal experiences to consider broader sociocultural themes, combining key aspects of autobiography and ethnography (Stanley, 2020; Iosefo, Jones, & Harris, 2021). Autoethnographies center a researcher's personal experiences, then engage in intense reflection upon the ways those experiences are informed by social, historical, and cultural phenomena. The aim of autoethnography is for readers and researchers alike to gain a deeper understanding of how cultural norms are manufactured and reproduced, in addition to the ways individuals exercise agency within their membership groups while negotiating constraints. Autoethnographies are socioculturally informed in their interpretation and autobiographical in their primary content (Chang, 2008; Reed-Danahay, 2019). The critical, interpretive, and historically situated analysis required of an autoethnographic study distinguishes it from an autobiography, which is most often a straightforward chronological retelling of key events in the life of a distinguished person (Reed-Danahay, 2019).

Reed-Danahay (2019) notes that autoethnographies which center the everyday lives and cultural productions of people from non-dominant communities can "represent, reproduce, and resist forms of domination" (p. 8). One on hand, they can demonstrate how people transform their social locations while simultaneously training an ethnographer's lens on the implications, effects, trade-offs and exclusions associated with personal transformation. On the other, self-reflections can be laden with inaccurate or simplistic judgments, owing to the inherently biased nature of own's experiences. Reflexivity, critique, and self-awareness are therefore paramount in autoethnographic analysis. The critical and culturally rooted inquisitiveness required of an autoethnographic study also allows the researcher to remain attuned to the ways by which social injustice manifests itself in their lives, oftentimes in unexpected ways, thus elaborating the interlocking regimes of regulation that produce socioeconomic and racial hierarchies. Michelle Bishop & Dakota Jericho Smith (2019) argue that autoethnography is an avenue in which they, as Indigenous Australian academics, have been able to

represent themselves and make their perspectives visible in the academy by manifesting a discursive "space where connectedness, healing, growth and purpose are woven together" (p. 38). The aim of autoethnographic inquiry is for readers and researchers alike to gain a deeper understanding of how cultural norms are manufactured and reproduced. Autoethnographies show how individuals exercise agency within their varying membership groups in some instances and unconsciously reify the group's predominant norms at others.

The methods of autoethnography are similar to those used in ethnographic studies, which traditionally focus on small-scale and non-western societies (Reed-Danahay, 2019). Like traditional ethnography and anthropology, autoethnography relies on the systematic collection of data followed by attempts to analyze and interpret said data in pursuit of deeper cultural understanding (Chang, 2008). Autoethnographers are also expected to compose written reports of their observations and analyses, thereby treating "their personal experiences as primary data" (Chang, 2008, p. 48). Primary data can then be substantiated and strengthened through interviews with family members, participatory meaning-making exercises, observation, and the review of pertinent documents, such as journal entries, correspondence, and creative works.

Autoethnographers theorize the deeper cultural meaning of self- and community-derived data by treating it in a manner that is critical and interpretive (Chang, 2008). An autoethnography should therefore be ethnographic, or systematic and selective in its collection of data and socioculturally informed in its interpretation, despite being autobiographical in its primary content (Chang, 2008; Reed-Danahay, 2019). In other words, the *ethnography* is more important than the *auto*. The benefits, strengths, and possibilities of autoethnography lay in the possibility that culturally situated personal accounts can demonstrate how individuals assert agency within the social formations and environments they navigate daily. Purcell (2019) and Mendez (2013), however, acknowledge the limitations of autoethnography as method, namely with regard to the method's ethical dimensions and

its ability to lead researchers to conclusive findings. In response, autoethnographers must reflect constantly, considering the wider implications of the act of representing and analyzing their own experiences and prioritizing their broader sociocultural, rather than personal, meaning (Chang, 2008). At the same time, autoethnographers argue that these limitations can also be framed as strengths, for “"if culture circulates through all of us, how can autoethnography be free of connection to a world beyond the self?" (Bochner & Ellis, 1996, p. 24).

Proponents of autoethnography recognize that the innate subjectivity of first-person accounts can be balanced and enriched when they also consider context, history, and theory (Reed-Danahay, 2019). Mendez (2013) writes, “the richness of autoethnography is in those realities that emerge from the interaction between the self and its own experiences that reflect the cultural and social context in which those events took place” (p. 284). This thesis might, for example, inform future autoethnographies of unschoolers, punks, skaters and other subcultural insiders who hold other minoritized identities. Comprehensive autoethnographic accounts of decolonial underground pedagogy, as such, offer deeper insight into the everyday lives of subcultural insiders, the unexpected and unplanned ways in which they learn, and the broader significance of subcultural learning. Having access to carefully managed and interpreted accounts pertaining to lived experiences within minority-led subcultures would also contribute to a growing base of qualitative data on alternative, autonomous, and collaborative approaches to decolonizing education.

Echoing Purcell’s (2019) aspiration that an anthology of unschooling authoethnographies be compiled so as to inform the work of educational administrators, teachers, policymakers, and health professionals, this thesis hopes to contribute to a growing repertoire of subcultural narratives from which researchers can locate resonant frequencies that could benefit a diverse array of learners. This thesis might also inform future autoethnographies of unschoolers, skateboarders, and punks from nondominant groups, as well as those of people with an embodied understanding of how decolonizing

education can occur outside of formal settings. I draw from the methodological influences mentioned above to conduct research that encourages open participation in subcultural life, critical thinking about the teaching and learning experiences found in minority-led subcultures, a sense of humility that allows reflective thought to originate from unexpected and mundane places, and reflective praxis devoted to how these disparate attestations of decolonial underground pedagogy might benefit communities who are historically, newly, or persistently marginalized.

Conclusion

By examining the decolonial underground pedagogies suggested in texts, cultural productions, and reflections associated with subcultural learning environments, this thesis aims to contribute to the long view of decolonizing education by demonstrating how self-directed and subcultural approaches to teaching and learning are important considerations in educating for social change, justice, healing, and transformation. Drawing from *pakapa-kapa* and decolonizing methodologies, this thesis seeks to balance openness, engagement, critique, contestation, and historicized consideration explicitly and equally. I look to advance more nuanced and lived-in understandings of minority-led unschooling, skateboarding, and punk rock communities which can then inform the common sense that inspires future scholarship, discourse, and policy related to multicultural, international, social justice-oriented, and decolonizing approaches to education. This hope particularly fuels my research interest in unschooling, whose adherents disengage from formal schooling and oftentimes reject most forms of hierarchical and curriculum-based learning. In so doing, they suggest an understanding of how children learn and how people are meant to relate to one another that runs counter to much of institutional life is governed in contemporary society, particularly in liberal western nation-states. These considerations underpin the next chapter, *Of Barangay, Babaylan, and Bayani– Postcolonial Healing through Unschooling,* which draws from an autoethnographic account of my own experiences as a Filipino-American unschooler to consider the decolonizing implications of self-directed education.

The next chapter seeks to advance our understanding of both subculture and decolonizing education by showing how coloniality and colonization can, at times, be interrupted by individual families committed to fostering responsive and reciprocal relationships with one another, regardless of age.

While later chapters delve more deeply into the highly visible and aesthetically distinct subcultures of skateboarding and punk rock, I hope to build relationality with the reader by foreground my analysis a smaller and more personal story. As such, this thesis's first data chapter is dedicated to theorizing the decolonial underground pedagogy of the minority-led subculture that holds the most immediate significance in my own journey in decolonial and decolonizing education: my own unschooling family.

Chapter 5: Of *Barangay, Babaylan,* and *Bayani*– Decolonial Healing through Unschooling

Introduction

The original inhabitants of the Pacific archipelago that Spanish invaders would rechristen 'the Philippines' were some of the first peoples in Southeast Asia to build seafaring boats, called *balangay*. *Balangay* were so important in Indigenous Philippine societies that the word was adapted to denote the basic unit of society- villages comprised of extended family networks called *barangay* (the same name used for neighborhoods and municipalities in the Philippines to this day*). Barangay* were led by the what historian Leny Strobel (2001) called the four pillars of human society in the precolonial Philippines: *datu* (chiefs), *panday* (farmers), *babaylan* (healers or shamans), and *bayani*, or warriors. People in precolonial Philippine societies moreover viewed land and waterways as both living contemporaries and venerated ancestors to which human beings were always accountable. Native Philippine views on the relationships between individuals, society, and the environment therefore prioritized peacemaking, reciprocity, consensus-building, and cohesion. They were further united by a belief in the social and psychological centrality of *kapwa*, the notion that one's identity was shared with all other beings, both human and non-human (Enriquez, 1971).

In this chapter, I draw upon reflections of my diasporic Philippine upbringing and my contemporary participation in the unschooling movement to metaphorize 'healing' as a process of navigating the narrow passage of coloniality toward the wider expanse of ocean, land, and possibility promised in *kapwa*, or the Indigenous Philippine concept of "self-in-the-other" (Reyes, 2015, p. 149). This process involves my personal reckoning with a childhood psyche rife with colonial mentality and my efforts, as an adult, parent, and partner, to construct a less hierarchical and pathologizing way of understanding myself, others, and the world. In tandem with my partner, Amanda, I recognize my evolving responsibilities as a *bayani*, or warrior, tasked with both protecting and nurturing my community. I frame unschooling, a philosophy of education and childrearing that centers informal

learning, self-direction, and community-responsive pedagogy, as the *balangay*, or vessel, that has made this crossing possible. Using autoethnographic methods derived from reflections of my sustained and active participation in my family's unschooling practice, this chapter reflects the *pakapa-kapa* principle of *pakikilahok*, "participation as one with the others" (Enriquez, 1989, p. 77).

I foreground this chapter with an account of my own upbringing, situated in a discussion of diasporic Philippine identity and how it is entangled with the history of colonialism in the Philippines. I then examine my experiences as a parent of two unschooling children (Leo and Rosie, ages 6 and 4 at the time of this writing) through the lenses of Philippine psychology (or *sikolohiyang Pilipino*/SP) and Philippine shamanism (or *babaylan* studies)- both of which are fields of Philippine social science that center reciprocal and relational conceptions of identity, ethics, and responsibility (Enriquez, 1971; Pe-Pua, & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Mendoza & Strobel, 2013). The aim of this theoretical and autoethnographic encounter between unschooling, Philippine history, and Indigenous Philippine philosophy is to frame unschooling as a decolonial underground pedagogy marked not by political sloganeering or oppositional posturing but by the joyful pursuit of accountability to one's family, community, and self.

The Historical and Contemporary Development of Philippine Identity

Growing up in a Filipino-American household often felt like living in a never-ending costume party. At home, I was a person from the Philippines. My family spoke Tagalog, ate *sinigang*[2] twice a week, watched The Filipino Channel, hosted family from the Philippines nearly every weekend, and lived in a multi-generational household with aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Life at home was a constant stream of Philippine culture reified through language, food, humor, entertainment, and conversation. But this warm home life also revolved around a cold, distant center, as the Hispano-

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[2] A soup comprised of vegetables and proteins in a sour tamarind broth. *Sinigang* is native to the Philippines and is staple of Philippine cuisine.

Catholic values of hierarchy, control, shame, and judgement often radiated outward. Young people in our family were cared for but not viewed as equal to adults- the main expectations of children were to respect our elders, look presentable, keep to ourselves, and pray faithfully to a Nordic Jesus. Issues like mental illness, depression, poor health, and even acne were equated with moral failure and met with derision. This tension between familial warmth and adherence to hierarchical structures persists today. When I visit my family, I often continue to sit at the 'kids table' with my cousins and siblings, one of whom is an emergency room doctor and another who is 45 years old. But these hierarchical trappings were not strictly oppressive. We treated the kids table as a place to plot, scheme, and banter away from our parents' scrutiny and judgment. We shared life advice and told jokes about our elders. These interactions reinforced the fact that I loved my family more than anything. Growing up, I thought of them as *home* and everything outside of home as *America*.

In America, there were few avenues for expressing a Filipino identity. My favorite comedians, like Dolphy and Yoyoy Villame, were nobodies. My favorite jokes were not funny in English. In school, I was defined by what I was *not*- not White, not Black, not Chinese, not Hispanic. I was simply *Other*, at least according to the enrollment forms. Teachers knew little about the Philippines or Philippine culture. The one Filipino-American elementary school teacher I met did not understand Tagalog or any other Philippine language. When he brought a Philippine flag to class for a lesson on Asian cultures, my mother informed him that it was hanging upside down.

I first learned the extent of my difference at 7 years old. Ogling toys at Kmart, my sisters and I were loudly noting the items we wanted for Christmas. I was clutching a Stretch Armstrong- an elastic doll filled with corn syrup and shaped like a muscle-bound blonde man. I was pulling the doll's arm as far as it could go when a middle-aged white woman pushing a cart full of red licorice came barreling down the aisle. She boomed, "Be quiet! Move out of the way! You don't own the store. I am a real American. I'm White and you're dark." I wanted Stretch Armstrong to come to life and defend

me. Instead, I squeezed the doll's gelatinous flesh until its innards exploded in my hand. My sisters and I ran away and told our mom. Normally boisterous and outspoken, my mother grew quiet, put back her items, and held us closely as we left the store.

This was the first time I felt that being from the Philippines was a burden. I stopped telling teachers I was from the Philippines, I stopped talking about my family, and I stopped seeking out friendships with other Filipino children, pretending to be repulsed by their packed lunches of pork *adobo* and garlic rice. When asked about my ethnicity, I claimed to be a combination of Chinese, Japanese, Spanish, and (always lastly) Filipino, as if breaking my identity down into percentage points would help my chances of being accepted or recognized. Over the years, I met dozens of Filipino kids who did the same thing. Even Filipino-American celebrities (like actress Tia Carrere, singer Jasmine Trias, baseball player Benny Agbayani, and professional dancer Dominic Sandoval) have publicly claimed to be Chinese, Spanish, Portuguese, or Hawaiian instead of Filipino. This phenomenon is referred to as IMSCF ("I Am Spanish-Chinese-Filipino") syndrome in the Filipino-American community (Nadal, 2021, p. 69).

It is important to note the heterogeneity of Philippine society and that many Philippine peoples descend from diverse ancestral networks. The Philippines are home to over 130 distinct ethnolinguistic communities, as well as mixed-race people and immigrants. But the phenotypical features like skin color and blood quantum associated with the colonial fiction of *race* did not determine one's affiliation or identity in the precolonial Philippines. Group identity instead was a function of one's residence, relationships, ancestry, and service to the community (Canlas, n.d.; Francia, 2013). The idea that identity could be reduced to a fixed category like race, along with the belief that there could be a hierarchy of races, did however inform how colonial authorities categorized, segregated, exploited, and later, educated their Philippine subjects (Rodriguez, 2006). Nadal and David (2013) note that feelings of racialized alienation and otherness are common features in psychological profiles

of Filipino-American individuals and families. Diasporic Filipinos, who experience alienation from both Philippine culture and the dominant cultures of their adoptive homes, are further likely to harbor feelings of shame about their ethnic identity and exhibit preferences toward western values and beauty standards. These internalized feelings of inferiority have further been linked to social and psychological issues among diasporic Filipinos, such as suicide, suicidal ideation, poor health, high-risk sexual behavior, criminal activity, depression, and drug use (Nadal, 2021).

The socioeconomic realities of many diasporic Filipinos make healing ancillary to survival. Assimilation, or tailoring one's identity to better suit the dominant social order, is understandably viewed among diasporic Filipinos as a pathway to security (Espiritu & Wolf, 2001). But as I found out when I was 7, the *Other* does not get to determine the criteria for assimilation. A group of Filipino children, like my siblings and myself, can be born in the US, speak American English, stay indoors during the Summer to maintain a pallid complexion, and still be deemed unworthy to stand in a Kmart aisle with a *real* American. Throughout my childhood, I often thought that I needed to assimilate *better* by renouncing my culture more convincingly. This desire led me to skateboarding and punk rock- two subcultures that are predominantly associated with young white men. While punk and skateboarding helped me appreciate the complexity of Philippine identity later in life, I was initially drawn to these communities because there were few other brown kids within them. My participation was driven by the idea that identifying as a *punk* or a *skater* would make it so that I no longer had to identify as Filipino first.

This need to reconfigure oneself to the demands of a foreign culture was a hallmark of Philippine life in the colonial centuries. Reeducation in formal schools was particularly central to US efforts to whitewash Indigenous Philippine culture (Razon & Hensman, 1976; Gleeck, 1976). US education in the Philippines was conducted in English and focused on introducing Philippine pupils to American history, institutions, and values. The purpose of formal education during this period was

to 'civilize' Filipinos using the same playbook the US government used to 'pacify' Native Americans, African slaves, and indentured Chinese workers. US policies on the Philippines were heavily influenced by the work of anthropologist Dean Worcester, who created a scale that ranked the mental aptitude of Philippine natives based on a similar table he produced about birds (San Juan, 2007). Worcester served as the Secretary Interior of the Philippine Islands from 1889 until 1913, and throughout his tenure authored policies that displaced Philippine peoples from urban and rural areas to make way for industrial development and gold mining. Worcester's policies were further founded upon his publicized opinion that Philippine peoples were:

> …a very peculiar mass, a heterogeneous compound of inefficient humanity, a 'jumble of savage tribes' that cried for order and pacification. Like the Negro, Chinaman, and Indian, Filipinos were alien races...incapable of civilized self-government. (Doty, 1996, pp. 37)

American education sought to inculcate Philippine youth with Worcester's beliefs, thereby bringing enlightenment to the US's 'little brown brother' (Cano, 2008). This submersion in American culture and institutions, however, did not prove advantageous for Filipinos who migrated to the United States in the early 20th century. Immigration quotas limited the number of Filipinos who could relocate to the US mainland to a small cadre of male farmworkers (often referred to as *manongs*, meaning older male relative in Ilokano). The *manongs* were often unaware of their rights as US nationals and were paid poorly in relation to other laborers. Their perceived willingness to work in harsh conditions for low wages encouraged farm operators to portray Philippine migrant workers as model minorities, pitting them against white and Hispanic laborers who were agitating for fair pay and treatment (Gutierez & Tiongson, 2006).

Restrictions on family migration and female immigrants spurred relationships between *manongs* and non-Philippine women, further stoking racial tension (Nadal, 2021). These tensions were granted institutional validity through anti-miscegenation laws rulings that prohibited interracial marriage. One such ruling was Roldan vs. Los Angeles County, which in 1933 specifically forbid marriage between a

Filipino and a white person in the State of California. Anti-miscegenation laws remained in force until all such laws were repealed in 1967. My own marriage, and the existence of my mixed-race children, would have been illegal only 53 years ago. In 1930, escalating racial tension led to the Watsonville riots, where a predominantly white mob of 500 surrounded a Filipino dance club, dragged Philippine farmworkers from their homes, beat them, threw them off bridges, burned down their employers' businesses, and shot indiscriminately into the bunkhouses where they lived. Fermin Tobera, a 22-year old farmworker, died from a bullet wound to the heart. An explosion of anti-Filipino terror attacks spread to cities like San Francisco and San José, and Filipinos left the country *en masse*. The Tydings-McDuffie act of 1934 subsequently restricted Filipino migration to 50 per year, despite the Philippines' status as occupied US territory. One legacy of the Watsonville riots and its fallout was to consolidate and naturalize the notion that Filipinos could never be *real* Americans.

Contemporary Philippine culture retains aspects of its colonial history, even though the Philippines are no longer ruled by external forces. The Philippine condition, as such, has progressed from colonialism (overt occupation by a foreign military force) to coloniality (social, economic, and political conditions which remain rooted in colonial ways of thinking and doing despite the absence of literal colonizers) (Le Grange, 2020). The architects of contemporary Philippine identity, the *illustrados* (or enlightened ones) were mostly western-educated statesmen who modelled the Philippine Constitution after the liberal democratic ideals of the French Revolution (Bankoff & Weekley, 2007). *Illustrado*-inspired conceptions of Philippine identity are based on western notions of development through capitalism and representative democracy and not on the social structures of pre-colonial Philippine societies. Hispano-Catholic doctrine (and associated beliefs like white supremacy, homophobia, heterosexism, and patriarchy) are assumed to be an inextricable part of Philippine culture (Bankoff & Weekley, 2007). In recent decades, Philippine scholars have sought to recenter precolonial Philippine ways of knowing to critique and combat such portrayals.

Philippine Psychology – From Coloniality to Kapwa

In the 1960s, Philippine scholars began theorizing Philippine identity and value systems beyond (and without) Hispano-Catholic doctrine (Enriquez, 1971; San Juan, 2006). Philippine psychologists sought to understand the meaning of Philippine identity without relying on colonial stereotypes and the incomplete accounts of western anthropologists (Torres, 1982). Philippine psychologists instead sought native perspectives on ontology (ways of understanding existence and becoming) and epistemology (ways of understanding knowledge). Proponents of *sikolohiyang Pilipino* derived their findings from unstructured conversations with communities throughout the Philippine archipelago. Philippine psychologists developed the *pakapa-kapa* research framework, which calls upon the researcher to observe and participate in community life before drawing conclusions (or even asking questions) about that community.

The main concern of Philippine psychology is to formulate a theorization of Philippine personhood that contests colonial portrayals of Philippine peoples as docile, immoral, and as primarily motivated by a fear of shame (Enriquez, 1971; Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000). Through historical analysis and ethnographic fieldwork rooted in *pakapa-kapa*, Philippine psychologists found that native values and philosophies differ markedly from Hispano-Catholic assumptions of the Philippine psyche. Colonial authorities and western psychologists, for example, promoted the idea that the key personality trait of Philippine peoples was *hiya*, or shame. The framing of *hiya* as the key tenet of Philippine identity lent credence to the assumption that Filipinos felt a pathological indebtedness to those in power. Positioning *hiya* as a central trait of Philippine identity subsequently spread the stereotype that Filipinos were fit- and even grateful- for serfdom (Enriquez, 1971).

Philippine psychologists critiqued the assumed centrality of *hiya* and promoted *kapwa* as a key trait of Philippine peoples and barangay. *Kapwa* refers to the idea that one's identity is shared with all others, both human and non-human. *Kapwa* can be described as a deep and abiding feeling of

interconnectedness with the human, animal, and ecological life of one's community, along with a sense obligation for its continued prosperity (Enriquez, 1971; Desai, 2016). The idea that one's identity is shared with others makes the individual accountable to and responsible for those others, making it so that one's actions are undertaken in consultation with all members of one's community. Those who recognize *kapwa* do not merely do as they are told, nor do they seek to impose their will unilaterally. Rather, individual and collective decisions are carved out of compromise and a commitment to mutually beneficial outcomes. As such, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* suggests that the proclivities Philippine people show toward serving others do not emanate from shame but from a sense of solidarity owing to the interconnectedness of all beings. Enriquez (1971) conducts a sociolinguistic analysis to illustrate the importance of *kapwa* in Philippine cultures:

> If one is *walang utang na loob* [without gratitude] others might advise 'avoid him'. But if one is *walang kapwa tao* [a person with no sense of self-in-the-other], people say he must have reached rock bottom. *Napakasama na niya*. He is the worst. (p. 51)

Enriquez (1971) further notes that "without kapwa one ceases to be a Filipino and a human" (p. 51). Philippine psychology is therefore concerned with a central question: what reason is there to exist if we cannot safeguard our relationships, lands, and futures? One who is unconcerned with this question, by definition, is *walang kapwa tao*.

One comes to recognize *kapwa* through active efforts to engage with and uplift others. Two pivotal aspects involved in cultivating a sense of shared inner identity are *pakikiramdam*, or "identify[ing] with another's being" through "heightened awareness and sensitivity" (Enriquez, 1971, p. 51) and *pakikibaka*, or "fusion in a common struggle…in the face of injustice or exploitation" (Enriquez, 1971, p. 63). As such, the underlying concern of Philippine approaches to psychology and ethics is the notion that a healthy sense of self comes into being through active efforts to protect, preserve, and beautify the lives of others.

Kapwa, *pakikiramdam*, and *pakikibaka* undergirded the People Power Revolution, which overthrew the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos through peaceful mass mobilization. These values might also be observed in the efforts of Indigenous Philippine peoples to both assert their sovereignty and live in relative peace with low-land settlers (see Rosaldo, 1987; Paredes, 2013; 2015). *Lumad* communities in Mindanao, for example, prioritize negotiating with the Philippine government to ensure that their rights are upheld under the provisions of the Philippine constitution and international law. *Lumad* nations favor this peaceful and relational approach even in the face of overt state aggression (Paredes, 2015). Yet *kapwa* calls for defensive action, as seen when the *Bontoc* of Northern Luzon took up arms to defend their lands against violent incursions from a state-backed mining corporation (Razon & Hensman, 1974). *Bontoc* culture, knowledge, and practices emerge in tandem with the hills, paddocks, and waterways on which their lives depend, so an attack on the land is no different from an attack on its stewards. These same values can even be observed in Manila's prisons, where overcrowding and under-resourcing have compelled corrections officers, gang leaders, and inmates to work in tandem to develop systems of shared governance over conflict resolution, public safety, social and educational programs, and the everyday administration of correctional affairs (Narag & Jones, 2016).

The act of striving for an ethical life in community with both human and nonhuman others is fundamental to *kapwa*, so actions that intentionally render people and planet lifeless can be interpreted as the dominion of *walang-kapwa tao* (those with no sense of self-in-the-other). I begin the next section with an overview of the unschooling movement, followed by a discussion on the roles of unschooling parents and adults. This analysis foregrounds a subsequent exploration of how autonomous education enabled me to discover the ancestral wisdom of *kapwa* and draw parallels between the experiences of unschooling adults and the traditional responsibilities of the *babaylan* (shaman or healer) and the *bayani* (warrior).

Decolonial Healing through Unschooling

To impose their beliefs on Philippines peoples, Spanish invaders were said to have murdered *babaylan* (animist healers and chieftains who were arguably the most important pillars of Indigenous Philippine societies- see Strobel, 2013) and feed their remains to crocodiles. While there is no archival evidence that suggest that these murders actually took place, these stories reflected what Philippine peoples understood about colonial bloodlust and have been interpreted as reactions to colonial efforts to replace Indigenous epistemology with Hispano-Catholic doctrine (Mendoza & Strobel, p. 418). Reality contests the crocodile stories, as the *babaylan* and their healing knowledge were never truly erased. *Babaylan* themselves often went into hiding or adapted their practices to suit the surveilling gaze of Christian missionaries. Yet despite the ultimate resilience of Philippine healers and healing traditions, the sheer cruelty of colonial conquest instilled in many Filipinos a disdain for and fear of ancestral traditions that lingers to this day (Strobel, 2001).

Feelings of irreconcilable difference color my earliest memories, as I was a child whose foremost priority was to win approval from my peers, parents, and authority figures. On the first day of fifth grade, I was asked to share what I did over Summer vacation. Instead of telling the truth- that I mostly stayed home and played video games- I told a meandering story about going to Ireland, a place I had only seen on television (and mistook for Scotland). These mutated epics were a regular first day-of-school occurrence. I began eighth grade with a fictional account about a trip to New York City to meet Patrick Ewing, my favorite basketball player (who by then was playing for the Orlando Magic). I did not, however, share any stories about my only real international adventure- a three-month visit to the Philippines. In the same way I tried to obfuscate my cultural and ethnic background, I told stories to present myself as a grander figure, a member of a more prestigious caste. I recognize now that much of my childhood behavior was driven by *hiya*, a sense of shame stemming from a belief that my true identity would not secure acceptance or validation.

I first developed a sense of pride in my diasporic Philippine identity in a series of undergraduate Philippine Studies courses and a corresponding set of trips back home (specifically to Manila and my mother's province of Narvacan, Ilocos Sur). In those classes, I learned about the Mactan chieftain Lapu-Lapu's defeat of Ferdinand Magellan. In late-night conversations with Ilocano elders in our ancestral home, I learned about the Cordilleran tribes who fought off Spanish, American, and corporate incursions onto their lands and who continue to defend their children, homes, and waterways (Simbulan, 2016). I learned about Indigenous Philippine virtue ethics, which prioritized engagement, egalitarianism, and reciprocity over self-flagellation and the performance of piety. These courses also led me to community organizing work with San Francisco's migrant Philippine community, where I realized that serving my people and honoring my culture would become my life's work. Mine is a *mestizo* family, or one that traces its mixed ancestry to multiple Philippine peoples (such as Ilocano, Tagalog, Visaya, Ati, Bago, and Cordilleran) as well as Spanish settlers and Chinese merchants. Instead of feeling shame toward this legacy, the critical and decolonizing education I encountered at university and on the ground in the Manila and Ilocos informs my commitment to embracing the heterogeneity of Philippine culture and contributing to efforts to safeguard Indigenous sovereignty in Philippines alongside Indigenous teachers, students, and advocacy groups.

I offer the above discussion to foreground a discussion of how this dedication to community-responsive and decolonizing praxis influences my everyday life as a parent, partner, and critical unschooler. My ongoing immersion in punk and skateboarding subcultures, along with Amanda's commitment to attachment parenting, partially informed our decision to practice unschooling with our children. Our goal, to borrow a phrase from the unschooling activist, advocate, and author, Akilah Richards (2020), is to *raise free people*. We hope to guide our children toward an embodied knowledge that they are the sole proprietors of their minds and bodies, but they can always depend on their elders for guidance and support. As they grow older, we hope to shepherd them toward an understanding

of their responsibilities to others, their communities, and the world. At their age, this mission is most often best served by encouraging them to have fun, engage with people, ask questions, take on projects, and not worry about having to be shuttled from one uninspiring place to another.

Writing on the pedagogies and praxes of critical unschooling demands that I think deeply about the kind of mentor and guide I wish to be, and the social, historical, political, and personal phenomena that inform these aspirations. The practice of critical unschooling accordingly requires that I navigate the tensions between theorizing the tenets of critical unschooling and embodying them. In the following section, I explore how my own postcolonial healing (the seeds of which were sown in my Philippine Studies courses, organizing efforts in San Francisco's historic Manilatown, and *kuwentuhan* sessions with elders, youth, and peers) flourished when I became an active participant in the unschooled lives of my partner and children. Reflecting upon my experiences in unschooling, through the lens of Philippine history and culture, shows how decolonizing education can be an intensely personal experience that involves reimagining my positionality in the world, my responsibilities to my community, and my relationships with my loved ones. The next section describes how this realization was catalyzed by my partnership with and proximity to a uniquely healing and restorative force- my wife and partner, Amanda. I note here that the following section reflects pakapa-kapa methodological principles and was composed in a collaborative and reflexive manner. In crafting this section, Amanda and I both prioritized representing her reflections accurately and worked together to reconcile any differences in our particular recollections of specific events. Amanda was fully consulted in all aspects of its construction and has opted not to use a pseudonym. I also consulted our children, who are mentioned briefly below, and ensured that their recollections of specific learning events were also represented accurately and respectfully.

A Gift of the *Babaylan* - Unschooling, Attachment, and Motherhood

As our children approached school age, Amanda and I were drawn to the idea that they could continue directing what they learned. We did not see this as particularly revolutionary- it simply meant that they would carry on with the methods they used to learn all life skills, like how to walk and talk, up until that point. Our decision to unschool largely emerged out of Amanda's instinctive parenting style, which prioritizes secure attachment, or the idea that an "infant's intrinsic motivation to learn about the world is more evident when the infant shows a secure attachment [or close bond rooted in unconditional love and support] to their parent or parents" (Riley, 2020, p. 26). Amanda's parenting also recalls the ideas Rosenberg (2002) put forth in his writings on *nonviolent communication*, a set of strategies designed to remove comparisons, denials of responsibility, and moralistic judgements from one's thinking and speech.

The philosophy of unschooling resonated with Amanda because she recognized its principles in her formative experiences in directing her own learning outside of school. As a child, Amanda often skipped school to pursue her own educational interests, ironically resulting in her spending many of these ostensibly truant days reading. She also witnessed the value of attachment, nonviolent communication, and self-direction in practice, through her experience teaching literacy skills to primary school students from targeted, underserved, and marginalized communities. Tasked with one-on-one tutoring sessions with children experiencing a variety of difficulties in their home and school lives (one child was held in second grade for three years, another spent his evenings in the bar where his mother worked), Amanda spent much of her time weaving through their assigned tasks with casual chatter, asking questions about students' likes and dislikes, and playing silly games. Before honing in on what her students were *supposed* to be doing, she looked them in the eye, learned about their interests, valued them as people, and drew out their *elán vital*. Inevitably, they learned to read.

In the same way she approached formal teaching, Amanda's unschooling pedagogy emerges out of open and respectful conversation with our children. A key part of Amanda's approach is that

she responds to their questions thoroughly and does not oversimplify her answers. When our children show interest in a topic, Amanda directs them toward resources to explore that topic in-depth. Our son Leo, for example, grew intensely curious about the game of chess after reading about it in a magazine. Amanda responded to his demonstrated interest by buying him a chess set and a book on chess strategies. She then learned to play chess herself and now takes Leo on regular 'chess dates' at cafés. The process by which Leo learned to play chess comprised a series of responsive engagements in which his attachment to Amanda was reinforced at every step, thereby allowing him to pursue and develop this interest without trepidation.

Viewing Amanda's unschooling praxis through Philippine concepts allows me to appreciate it as an inheritance from the *babaylan*. In our family, she is a leader and a healer whose authority comes from a distinctly restorative, relational, and life-giving source of power. *Babaylan* "were (and are) healers, priestesses, ritualists, herbalists, and mediators between realms" (Mendoza & Strobel, 2013, p. 403). Amanda's approach to being an unschooling guide and mentor encompasses all these roles, and it springs naturally out of her commitment to being an attached and observant parent who is in tune with the needs of her community. She recognizes when our children are anxious, upset, or scared without them saying so, can discern if the problem lies in a nutritional, emotional, or physical imbalance, and immediately sets about healing all wounds.

A researcher on attachment theory once approached Amanda and our kids at the grocery store while they were having a snack. He observed their "secure" dynamic from afar. He noticed that our children had no qualms expressing themselves or taking part in the world, which correlated with his observation that their basic need for safety, love, and affirmation seemed to have been met. Even with everyday tasks like brushing their teeth or getting dressed, Amanda tells Leo and our daughter, Rosie what she is doing, her logic for doing so, and asks for their feedback. Her approach has helped our children read, make puns, and predict the weather by looking at the shape and density of distant

clouds. Amanda's habit of noting the natural beauty of different trees and flowers often prompts our kids to go home and research the characteristics of their bark, leaves, and petals to identify them. With Amanda's guidance, our kids also learned how to start conversations, listen carefully, and ask for help. Imbuing her childrearing approach with an indefatigable conviviality has also modeled the expectation that our children look out for and respect others. Leo places his hand on the small of his sister's back when they cross the street. Rosie comforts people when they are upset and helps them look for things they cannot find. At snack time, she offers one berry to her brother if she notices there are two left. At the park recently, I watched Rosie playing on a miniature see-saw by herself, vigorously shaking it up and down. When a much younger child tried to sit in the seat opposite her, she slowed her tempo and let her new friend climb aboard safely.

The restorative practices of *babaylan* are motivated by the Philippine concept of *kagandahang-na-loob*, the act of beautifying the inner lives of others. *Babaylan* cared for communal life through therapeutic rituals, such as talk therapy, preparing herbal medicines, and resetting fractured bones. *Babaylan* traditions grew out of their consummate understanding of their communities and a sacrosanct bond with the non-human world (Apostol**,** 2010). *Kagandahang-na-loob* involves "opening up one's inside to another. It is to show the other that one means well. And one proves that one means well by performing beneficial actions" (de Castro, 1999, p. 39). Amanda's sensitivity and attunement to a more-than-human consciousness helped restore my inner life after an especially harrowing and surreal experience: the death of my grandmother.

Most people knew my grandmother as Mila del Sol, but my siblings, cousins, and I all called her *Lulay*, a nickname she invented and a portmanteau of *lola* (grandmother) and *inay* (mother). From the 1930s to the 1950s, Lulay was an actress renowned for her graceful movements and bright expressions. Her home was decorated with photos from her days as *the Queen of the Golden Age of Philippine Cinema*. In these photos, she cut a reliably regal figure and was often dressed in gowns

adorned with ornate butterfly sleeves. When she died in November 2020, family members outside of the Philippines were unable to travel there due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so we attended her funeral and memorial services through a video stream.

In the days after her death, Amanda and I showed Leo and Rosie clips of their great grandmother's films and told them about her life, which included serving as the matriarch of a family with 17 grandchildren and more than 30 great-grandchildren. She founded several charities and a janitorial services company that has employed over 100,000 people over four decades. After my grandmother's passing, Amanda noticed that her and Rosie's expressions were nearly identical and that monarch butterflies seemed to follow us wherever we went. My grief gave way to gratitude and hope, largely owing to the solace I found in feeling like Lulay had managed to wish us well before the next leg of her journey. Amanda's observations reminded me that my grandmother indeed lives on; through her descendants, her art, and most importantly, her legacy of charitable works that spanned nearly ten decades. Virgil Mayor Apostol (2010) notes that in Philippine healing traditions, the sensation that one has been in commune with the recently deceased "points to a transition from the physical plane to an etheric one" and that "visitations from departed souls are not unheard of, especially when ties are close and people are receptive…it provides a hint of how in tune our ancestors were with the spirit world" (p. 420). Such is the role Amanda plays in our familial *barangay* (village) - she uses her relational, extrasensory, and healing acumen to cultivate a shared and joyful vitality from her surroundings, the spirit world, and our interconnected humanity.

Ang Tungkulin ng Bayani **– The Warrior's Role in Confronting Coloniality**

While I conceive of Amanda's approach to unschooling as inspired by, indebted to, and reflective of the *babaylan*, I understand my experiences in critical unschooling as a transformation from colonial subject to *bayani*, or warrior. In traditional Philippine societies, *bayani* were charged with protecting a community and defending its resources while "serving as bearers of good human

relationship" who "attained their leadership roles in recognition of their skills, training and expertise, and community values" (Canlas, n.d., p. 2). The work of a *bayani* parallels that of an unschooling guide or mentor in that both look after the community's material well-being and adapt their practices to its evolving needs. The *bayani*, however, plays a supporting role to the *babaylan* in matters related to the community's emotional, cultural, and physical health. In supporting Amanda in her role as the primary caregiver in our family, I understand my own role as a continuation of the traditional practice of *bayani* seeking counsel from the *babaylan* in decisions that affect the community.

This attempt to assume the warrior role in my unschooling *barangay* is a product of my efforts to confront the effects of colonial mentality on the formation of my identity. Nadal (2021) and Halagao (2010) note that diasporic Filipinos can develop a healthy sense of ethnic identity if their parents talk to them about precolonial Philippine history, emphasize the positive traits of Indigenous knowledge systems and practices, and actively combat colonial mentality at home. My experience of healing from internal coloniality through unschooling demonstrates that this process cannot end with talking about facts and figures. For me, cultivating *kapwa* has corresponded with me embracing the reciprocity and engagement of *barangay* society and disinvesting in values embedded in both Hispano-Catholic doctrine and American consumer culture, such as the imposition of rigid social hierarchies and the definition, segregation, and pathologization of difference (Giroux, 2001; Fanon, 2004). As Grunzke (2010) notes, gradually embracing a more ecological worldview is a common experience among unschooling parents. Petrovic & Kuntz (2016) further theorize unschooling as a response to the socioeconomic influence of neoliberal ideology, which is marked by the "ever-expanding material wealth and the concentration of that wealth in the hands of a few…the promotion of consumption as citizenship… [and the] private takeover of once public goods, including education" (p. 958). Neoliberal orders reduce knowledge, land, and bodies to single-use commodities; my formative experiences as a parent and unschooling guide and mentor further show how viewing the world in

this way can inhibit one's ability to develop a healthy sense of cultural identity and comprehend the interconnected vitality of *kapwa*.

I was absent for much of my children's infant and toddler years, as I busied myself working full time while pursuing a Master's degree. I was perpetually in transit- distracted, unsettled, and on my way elsewhere. I had neither the time nor desire to appreciate the ground beneath me or the people in my midst. I partially attribute this tendency toward distraction and disengagement to the values impressed upon me as a child navigating strictly hierarchical environments at home and at school. I learned to value assimilation and instantaneous approval over the messy process of trying to excel at or understand something. I carried this learned disinterest in developing my own capabilities into parenthood. When Leo was a small child, I often read stories to him in a dispassionate manner without varying my intonation, performing voices to differentiate characters, or slowing down my pace so he could follow the plot. I knew that I could make reading more fun, but I saw it simply as a chore that needed doing so that I could move on to the next one. I did not view reading to Leo as an opportunity for familial bonding, community building, or cultural enrichment. Leo soon grew uninterested in the prospect of me reading to him.

By seeking the easiest (or in economic terms, *most efficient*) way to complete the task of reading to my son, I stripped a potentially engaging experience of its relational value. Reducing this nurturing act to an assignment and a burden further undermined its greater purpose as a beneficial action that could cultivate our father-son bond and shared inner identity. Though I have since learned to become a more thoughtful reader, inherited colonialism is at least partly culpable for impressing a proclivity toward self-centered detachment on my psyche and identity, which subsequently delayed my ability to fully protect and enrich my community. By neglecting to actively combat coloniality as a young adult, I unknowingly constructed unequal and distant emotional dynamics that required additional effort to overcome later.

A *bayani*, however, views a child's nascent consciousness as a communal treasure, the protection and cultivation of which is partly a warrior's responsibility. Milligan (2021) illustrates this idea by drawing from Maranao oral tradition to examine the vaunted role education and childrearing played in precolonial Philippine societies. In the *Darangen*, the epic poem of the Maranao, warriors and leaders are portrayed as being in charge of passing on the tribe's knowledge to its young people. Maranao conceptions of 'education' were "existential [rather] than epistemological, a conception expressed in the quality and nature of the individual's being rather than the quantity or quality of knowledge possessed" (Milligan, 2021, p. 32). Being 'educated' in precolonial Philippine life was both an exalted status and one that was equivalent to being just, forthright, and caring as opposed to simply learned. Constructing a decolonial Philippine identity through unschooling, as such, might begin when one critiques the individualistic and shame-based orientations associated with colonial mentality and seeks to replace them with the embodied ethics of reciprocity found in native Philippine traditions.

Unschooling, for me, has accordingly been a process of learning and enacting "relational practices that seek to create more intersubjective, interdependent, and reciprocal ways of relating to one another" (Mendoza & Strobel, 2013, p. 494). Protecting and nurturing a *barangay* involves active engagement in community life that transmits established information while exploring new ideas. In short, the warrior's calling is not to begrudgingly trudge through a succession of orders. Reorienting my thinking around everyday responsibilities has made it so I now view these duties as an opportunity to cultivate relationships and foster the well-being of our community. My role as an unschooling parent has, as such, been to answer the ancestral call of the *bayani* and protect my community through educationally and experientially beneficial acts. I see the affective capacity in playing games, giving advice, planning outings, listening, and supporting my partner and children in their chosen endeavors. I no longer dispassionately shuffle through tasks or live in fear of what might come next. I instead

experience learning and living as an unschooling mentor and guide as an active process of engaging with my *barangay* at all times, in real time, and in real life.

The decolonial underground pedagogy of unschooling, in my experience, is entangled with a commitment to open communication with my partner and children, along with guidance from a professional practitioner trained in culturally responsive therapy. As an unschooling parent, I have come to understand that it is impossible to disengage from everyday life without becoming *walang kapwa tao* or acting in ways that denigrate our shared sense of self-in-the-other. For a *bayani*, there is no distinction between work, life, and education as they are interconnected domains that are integral for protecting the *barangay*. Avoiding or begrudging our responsibilities, as such, serves to rupture our communal ecology. I cannot escape to the fifth grade and present myself as a different person. I live in a community where everyone knows the truth and the responsibilities entrusted to me are tailored to my known strengths and interests. Now that I understand that my identity is shared, lying about it can be considered an act of betrayal.

Like other unschoolers (see Purcell, 2019; Richards, 2020), Amanda, our children, and I view learning as a natural process that flows through all facets of everyday life. There are no designated times for learning and living, nor are there hierarchical values ascribed to the types of learning one does. We play games, read, make crafts, share ideas, explore our neighborhood, tell stories, attend dance and theater classes, clean our living areas, support each other, and simply 'do nothing' as we see fit. All of these activities present an opportunity for growth and bonding, so all are perceived as beneficial actions. Through this sense of shared inner identity, Amanda, Leo, Rosie, and I see one another as knowledge bearers co-constructing reality together.

Developing an appreciation for the generative possibilities of everyday learning has provided me an unexpected opportunity to reveal a more proudly Filipino sense of self, even if I continue to grapple with the colonial origins of that largely imaginary and fictive national identity. Actively

enriching and engaging in my family's everyday life and learning has allowed to me to better understand the wisdom of my ancestors, who knew existence as an interconnected whole whose constituent parts are accountable to each other. The benefits of a positive attitude and an assumption of good intent can extend in infinite directions. They are not just performative signifiers one can use to win approval from peers and authority figures. A relational and accountable approach to home education ultimately encourages me to live in my community as myself and bring the spirit of *kagandahang na loob* to my interactions with others. It is for this reason that I view unschooling as the *balangay* delivering me from a narrow strait of colonial self-denigration, where shadows of trauma threaten to cloak me in shame and obscure the people in the boat with me. I cannot see them, let alone my self-in-them. I sail on toward a more fully realized version of the *home* I knew as a child: floating with a sun-drenched ocean undulating with vitality, aboard a *balangay* where people are not bound by captivity but connected by *kapwa*.

Conclusion

The concern of this chapter is to show how I have experienced unschooling as a decolonial underground pedagogy that allows for the development of a shared inner identity and a positive understanding of Filipino identity. The deepened sense of cultural self-esteem I have found in unschooling has further enabled me to think and act beyond the immediate needs of my *barangay*, as I have begun to take on the *bayani* role in communities outside of my immediate family. I specifically center the values of *pakikiramdam, pakikibaka, kagandahang ng loob* and *kapwa* in my collaborative research with Indigenous and diasporic activists and scholars who explore the resonances between subculture, decolonization, and alternative education in Aotearoa, the US, and the Philippines. My experiences as an unschooling guide and mentor have further fostered an embodied understanding that my needs, goals, and identity are inseparable from my responsibility to others. Diasporic Philippine scholars like Mendoza & Strobel (2013) and Wilcken (2010; 2015) remind us that

postcolonial healing can occur in myriad contexts, such as community organizing, teaching, tattooing, art, and immersion in Indigenous healing practices. For me, unschooling has been the prism through which I have rediscovered *kapwa* and, in so doing, have reclaimed a relational, reciprocal, and ancestral sense of agency.

Before unschooling, the voices of my inner life echoed those Dean Worcester, hissing that my fate was a better man's province. My job was to present myself to classmates, teachers, employers, and authority figures as someone worthy of their investment- a model minority and a little brown brother. I know now that I am the *bayani* in a *barangay* of my own making and that someone else is not going to create an ideal learning environment for me, my partner, or our children. Through the relational, reciprocal, and decolonial underground pedagogy of unschooling, I now know that Worcester's tables, disgruntled K-Mart shoppers, and colonizing logics will no longer force us to bow our heads in fearful deference as we make our place in the world. Unschooling helps to situate my work and thinking in an understanding that our inner lives, while ours to determine and advance, are also shared and constituted in relation. The decolonial underground pedagogy of unschooling consists primarily of informal and spontaneous moments of consciousness-raising, healing, and reconnection. This realization accordingly informs my priorities as an educator, mentor, and guide and reminds me that decolonial and decolonizing education is not about readings, jargon, or name-dropping. A decolonial pedagogy and a decolonizing education instead involves walking the talk, embracing the warrior and healer roles established by our ancestors, and understanding that our responsibilities are infinite and unending. Foregrounding this thesis in an examination of how these concepts look and feel in my familial and interior life facilitates explorations of how decolonial underground pedagogies are enacted in more visible subcultures. As such, I turn this thesis's attention toward the diasporic Philippine punk rock scene- the subculture that catalyzed its conception and sparked the first embers of decolonial agency in my own life.

Chapter 6: Punk Rock Pedagogy and the Philippine Diaspora

Introduction: Diaspora, Colonialism, and Punk Rock Pedagogy

With populations of over 3 million in the United States, 300,000 in Australia, and over 40,000 in New Zealand, the Philippine community is becoming increasingly visible in multicultural states of North America and Oceania. The Philippine diaspora, however, is not adequately theorized by the assumption of tensions between invader/indigene, western/non-western, or English speaking/non-English speaking populations. The history of colonialism in the Philippines distinguishes the contemporary and historical contexts of diasporic Filipinos from other Asian migrant groups, particularly because they have greater familiarity with western culture and the English language. Seventy-six per cent of people in the Philippines, for example, understand spoken English (Social Weather Systems, 2008) while Hong Kong, a former British colony, has an English-speaking population of fifty-three percent (Census and Statistics Department, 2016). Still, Philippine migrants are racialized and treated as outsiders in the west and this outsider status correlates to social ostracization and racial abuse (Bonifacio, 2009; Eisen, 2011; Eisen, 2018). The complexity of Philippine subjectivity means that theorizing diasporic Philippine experiences should allow that historical, political, discursive, ontological, and epistemological concerns are constitutive elements of identity formation.

It is therefore necessary to question and critique standard stories, or stereotypes that affect how nondominant groups are treated and perceived. As the standard story goes, Philippine peoples are *alipin ng mundo* – a Tagalog phrase meaning 'servants of the world' or 'servants of globalization' (Bonifacio, 2009). The framing of Philippine peoples as servants is a racialized construction, for as hooks (2003) writes "…the very notion that we are here to *serve them* is itself an expression of white supremacist thinking. Embedded in this notion of service is that no matter what the status of the person of color, that position must be reconfigured to the greater good of whiteness" (p. 33, emphasis added). The conception of Filipinos as *alipin ng mundo* should therefore be confronted as a consequence

of colonialism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, misogyny, and economic exploitation as opposed to a genetic trait. Still, diasporic Philippine narratives are rife with resistance, solidarity-building, activism, consciousness-raising, and joy (Bonifacio, 2009). Diasporic Philippine subjectivities are not solely products of oppression and resistance- they are also amalgamations of lives spent "world"-travelling (Lugones 1987, p. 17), or embodying "the material multiplicity of self, the way it is diffracted across spaces, times, realities, imaginaries" (Barad, 2014, p. 175). As a child, punk rock introduced me to the possibilities of generative and principled resistance, assailing the dominant narrative that a child of Philippine migrants should only be seen not heard. I devote this chapter to analyses of songs, artwork, and conversations with other punks, each of which were integral to my ongoing life's work toward activating and reclaiming a decolonial subjectivity. Methodologically, I closely read these texts and situate them within broader political, cultural, historical, and social analyses that draw out their broader pedagogical significance.

Pakapa-kapa approaches to analyzing text

This approach represents a pakapa-kapa approach to text-based methodologies like critical hermeneutics and discourse analysis. I intentionally frame the following two chapters as a pakapa-kapa study to emphasize playfulness, openness, and a willingness to think deeply about the resonances between disparate, diffuse, and even contradictory sources. Doing so represents a hopeful unsettling of western academic concepts like disciplinarity and reductionism, seeking instead to theorize diasporic Philippine punk pedagogy using processes and philosophies that center kapwa and the communally-oriented values of Philippine peoples. Furthermore, I have chosen to primarily analyze the public works of diasporic Philippine punk artists because these works represent curated and developed articulations of the bands' politics, philosophies, experiences. Recordings and cultural productions thus holds an advantage over informal conversations because they represent the finished work of Philippine punks in a state they deem appropriate for public engagement, thus providing an

initial data set with a clear narrative arcs and ideological and political agendas. Prioritizing the public works of punk artists accordingly mitigates the possibility of misunderstanding or misinterpretation that become more pronounced when analyzing informal conversations. I thought deeply about what these songs meant to me, reading them against historical phenomena that helped deepen my understanding of why they meant so much to me in the first place. When needed, I deepened my engagement with the songs by reading interviews with the artists of speaking with them personally. This process of refining one's analysis through open and multimodal engagement reflects pakapa-kapa principles like *pakikiramdam* (connecting with others to cultivate a shared sense of affection and affinity), *pagtatanong-tanong* (asking questions), and *pagdalaw-dalaw* (repeated informal visits).

For me, applying pakapa-kapa methodology to the study of subcultural text also accurately reproduces and articulates the organic experience of being deeply moved by a work of art. An unsettling act of creation can forge a cognitive or emotional experience that compels one to learn more, seek out others with similar passions. These processes might even inspire one create something new, whether it is in reference to or reverence for the work or works that set this process in motion. With this ethic and approach in mind, this chapter analyzes and assembles the material, discursive, economic, and political constituency of diasporic Philippine becoming before re-reading this history through the public pedagogy of punk rock, specifically through the educative healing intimated in my engagements with the work of three bands: Dispossessed, Material Support, and AninoKo. Punk rock pedagogy accordingly helps us understand that Philippine identity "is not essence, fixity or givenness, but a contingent iterative performativity" (Barad, 2014, p. 174). This chapter frames the decolonial underground pedagogies found in diasporic Philippine punk subcultures as an onto-epistemological practice that cultivates what hooks (2003) calls "alternative ways of thinking" through which Philippine peoples not only challenge stereotypes but "engage in the insurrection of subjugated knowledges" (p. 2). My "educated hope" (Kidman, 2018) that theoretical emphases on the relational

and performative dimensions of racial subjectivity thwart the proliferation of standard stories and, in turn, prevent such stereotypes from ossifying into social, political, and racial reality.

"World"-Travelling and Diasporic Philippine Subjectivities

Diasporic Philippine identity enfolds several contested histories, signifiers, and discourses. These include cultural subjectivities like cuisine, sport, art, history, and kinship ties. But Philippine experiences are also influenced by the physical movements of gendered and racialized bodies traversing national borders and the legal, social, cultural, and historical frameworks that shape how diasporic Philippine peoples are treated and racialized abroad. Theorizing the diasporic Philippine condition should therefore include an understanding of the Philippines' role in global capitalism, given the influence that economic concerns exert upon Philippine bodies. Per world systems theory, the Philippines is a *peripheral* nation whose role in the global economy is to provide raw materials to postindustrial, or *core*, nations (Navarro, 1982). The vestiges of colonization in the Philippines include the ongoing influence of the Roman Catholic Church, national systems of government and education that are organizationally identical to those of the United States, and the concentration of power and capital among an elite group of families of European descent (Iglesias, 2003). For deepened multicultural and decolonial relationalities to emerge out of theorizing diasporic Philippine experiences, it is necessary to complicate the established literature on Philippine subjectivities even further. To this end, I theorize the Philippine diaspora through the practice and pedagogy of punk- a countercultural milieu in which Philippine peoples are not always essentialized as servants but are often respected as artists, organizers, activists, and community liaisons.

Punk Culture as an Educative Means of Resistive Becoming

This chapter's use of punk culture and pedagogy to trouble the standard story of diasporic Philippine subjectivity is rooted in my own educative becoming as a Filipino or *Pinoy* punk. My *conscientizacao*, Freire's (2018) term for the development of a critical consciousness, began not in the

classroom but in dilapidated concert halls and during late nights spent listening to songs like Anti-Flag's "Red White & Brainwashed" and Bikini Kill's "George Bush is a Pig." As an undergraduate, the work of Filipino-American punk bands like Signal 3, Eskapo, and Digma provided vital and visceral context for concepts I encountered in Philippine Studies courses, such as colonial mentality, anti-miscegenation laws, and the Bataan death march. Most importantly, I learned through punk rock that opposition cannot stop at critique. Instead, it requires a lived commitment to egalitarian ways of knowing, being, and becoming "part of the world" (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017, p. 123). This experience is not unique to me, as the theorization of punk as a public, community-responsive, and decolonizing pedagogy is established in educational literature. While popularly identified with loud music and outlandish fashion, punk culture is more appropriately understood as the social practice of developing oppositional orientations toward dominant culture (Dunn, 2016). Re-reading diasporic Philippine identity through the oppositional educative practice of punk therefore intimates the unearthing of emergent and insurgent conceptions of what it means to be and become a Filipino person in ways that reject racialized standard stories first written by colonizers in centuries past.

"They Do Not Assimilate": Philippine Resistance to Standard Stories in Oceania

As an international PhD candidate, arriving in Aotearoa required that I acclimatize myself with a new culture while encountering new modes of racialization. I had no inclination about what being Filipino meant in Australasia, but it turned out that punk subculture could offer valuable insights. Listening to and learning about the Australian band Dispossessed, in particular, helped me begin to understand what it meant to be a deterritorialized Philippine subject on occupied land. Before examining the decolonial insights laden in Dispossessed art and activism, I note that examples in both popular and scholarly Australasian discourse suggest a belief that while Philippine peoples do often assimilate to the dominant cultures of Australia and Aotearoa, they can only do so by subjugating their own cultural identities. The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), for example, concludes that

Filipinos in Australia "are making an effort to forge compromises between their values and the prevailing Australian mores" (Soriano, 1995, p. 118). While the AIFS report is over two decades old, its framing of Philippine and Australian values as intrinsically at-odds continues to inform race relations in Australia, where "despite the high rates of English language skill, labor participation rates and higher qualifications, Filipinos register much lower rates in skilled managerial, professional or trade occupations, only 39% compared to the Australian average at 48%" (Espinosa, 2017, p. 68).

The assumed perfidiousness of Asian and, by extension, Philippine values is more explicitly reflected in Queensland Senator Pauline Hanson's lament that "I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate" (quoted in Martino, 2016). Allegations of racism (Remeikis, 2019) have done little to curb Hanson's power, as her One Nation party garners support by espousing the view that "unabated multiculturalism could only be successful at the expense of silencing the voices of long-time (white) Australians" (Espinosa, 2017, p. 23). However, Montayre, Neville and Holroyd's (2017) quantitative study on the narratives of older Philippine migrants adjusting to life in New Zealand troubles Hanson's fears by noting that "Filipino migrants adjust to living in western society by a complex process of learning to speak and understand English, as well as assimilating their religious beliefs and practices into their host countries" (p. 6). This finding should be of little surprise given that 94% of religious Filipinos identify as Christian (Miller, n.d.) and English is one of two official languages of the Philippines (Philippine Constitution, art. XIV § 7.). But orientalist characterizations continue to inform how Philippine peoples are racialized and treated in white majority nation states, impeding migrants' efforts to develop a sense of belonging (Siar, 2014).

But examining the tensions between the Philippine diaspora and the dominant cultures of Oceania through punk rock pedagogy reveals more productive linkages, and provocations pertaining to the possibilities of diasporic Philippine subjectivity. In particular, the Sydney hardcore punk band

Dispossessed complicates the discourses of Filipino migration by asserting that Philippine peoples themselves are capable of deciding what constitutes 'belonging'. Moreover, Dispossessed contends that the assimilative responsibility of diasporic Filipinos is not to the dominant culture at all, as migrants should instead be accountable to the rightful and traditional owners of their adopted land.

Comprised of Indigenous and immigrant Australians whose vocalist, Harry Bonifacio Baughan, is a first-generation Australian-Filipino, Dispossessed questions the notions that a) Filipinos cannot be truly home in Australia and that b) white Australians get to decide who does. Dispossessed demarcate their allegiances in the "About" section on their official website, which asks the following questions of media members:

> Do I acknowledge that this publication exists on stolen land?
> Do I give a voice to indigenous writers and artists?
> Is Dispossessed the first and only indigenous band I will ever support?
> Is my idea for a piece giving them space to help their cause or do I just want a slice of them to satisfy my capitalistic, colonial and egocentric agenda?
> Thank you. (Dispossessed, 2018)

In a 2018 interview with the news website SBS Filipino, Baughan describes how learning to write and play music with Dispossessed made him realize that "…white Australia isn't going to serve our needs…they're never going to hand over any liberation. They're never going to willingly dismantle the structures that make them beneficiaries. It's our moral duty to be closer to the people whose land it actually is" (Violata, 2018, n.p.). Later in the interview, Baughan (2018) renders his commitment to Indigenous and immigrant solidarity through the lyrics of an unreleased and untitled Dispossessed song:

> Awakening from the deepest sleep
> What we see is not a dream
> From the concrete, from the street
> A new world blossoming (Violata, 2018)

If the automaticity of colonial mentality represents "the deepest sleep," consciously deciding to exercise influence over one's racialized becoming represents an "awakening." By explicitly centering

their art around the needs and historical contexts of Indigenous Australian nations, Baughan suggests that immigrants need not be concerned with assimilation, pleasing those in power, or proving the likes of Pauline Hanson wrong. What diasporic Filipinos are truly responsible for is the "new world blossoming," by casting aside the colonized thought patterns of the old world and complicating conceptions on the ultimate purpose of the Philippine diaspora.

But music alone cannot lead to a new world blossoming. Dispossessed's music therefore informs and inspires direct actions undertaken in solidarity with aboriginal communities. In early 2019, for example, the band used their platform to raise funds to purchase water filters in response to a drought in Collaranebri, New South Wales, which forced the region's Indigenous communities to drink water from contaminated bores (Allam, 2019). Per punk's do-it-yourself ethos, the members of Dispossessed also travelled to Collaranebri to install the water filters themselves. As a member of the Philippine diaspora, Baughan's work with Dispossessed suggests that his participation in the pedagogy and praxis of punk complicated the colonial assemblage of his Philippine-Australian becoming. The diasporic subjectivity that emerged from Baughan's encounters with art, history, migration, and discourse was not that of a servant of the world, but a servant of the people.

Resistive Pinay Feminisms

Another under-reported aspect of Philippine subjectivity is that women in the diaspora face intersecting risk factors, which expose them to multifarious forms of violence and exploitation (Bonifacio, 2009; Parreñas, 2015). Following gendered flows of migration, many diasporic Filipinas relocate to countries with demand for low-wage work in the healthcare sector and as domestic helpers (Parreñas, 2005; Bonifacio, 2009, Parreñas, 2015). But due to the high number of women who migrate to Australia and Aotearoa to marry white men, a standard story and predominant depiction of Filipinas in Oceania is as "mail-order brides":

> Embodied as racialized, sexualized, and submissive wives, Filipino marriage migrants are susceptible to abuse and violence…All too often, they have been portrayed as if they were

> trapped in time, hapless victims without agency to negotiate their marginality and subordination, let alone exercise citizenship. (Bonifacio, 2009, p. 1)

Bonifacio (2009) notes that Filipinas in Oceania bear the overlapping burdens of racism, misogyny, the devaluation of womens' labor, and the widespread perception that they are helpless to change or even fathom their circumstances. These discursive entanglements coalesce into material realities defined by physical, mental, sexual, and economic abuse (Marsh, 2019).

Music, however, has long been a medium through which women in vulnerable social positionalities have confronted misconceptions of their agency while unpacking the reality of their circumstances, as Angela Y. Davis (1998) explored in *Blues Legacies, Black Feminism*. Bessie Smith's "Yes, Indeed He Do", for example, contrasts its narrator's violent home life with sardonic vocals, playful instrumentation, and absurd imagery:

> And when I ask him where he's been, he grabs a rocking chair
> Then he knocks me down and says, "It's just a little love lick, dear"
>
> I don't have to do no work except to wash his clothes
> And darn his socks and press his pants and scrub the kitchen floor
>
> I wouldn't take a million for sweet, sweet daddy Jim
> And I wouldn't give a quarter for another man like him
>
> Gee, ain't it great to have a man that's crazy over you?
> Oh, do my sweet, sweet daddy love me? Yes, indeed he do (Davis, 1998, p. 255)

Taken together, Smith's performance demonstrates "that the victim does not cower before the batterer but rather challenges his right to assault her with impunity" (Davis, 1998, p. 29). The tradition of feminist musicking pioneered by early blues singers continues in punk rock, a community understood to be dominated by white men but in which women of color have been highly influential for four decades (Bag, 2015). Like the complex Black women of Bessie Smith's blues, Pilipina punks refuse to let stereotypes essentialize them. They are the complex protagonists of their own stories, fully capable of deciding their fates without trivializing their circumstances.

Material Support, a "Filipina-fronted agit punk band from NYC, agitated by state repression, government corruption, and patriarchy" (Material Support, 2018) exercise punk rock pedagogy as a means of asserting Pilipina agency. Material Support's lyrics, penned by Filipina-American songwriter Jackie Mariano, are explicitly antiauthoritarian and represent a Philippine psychology in which colonial mentality is replaced with a Freirean (2018) sense of community-responsive critical consciousness. Mariano demonstrates her conscientization in the song "Manarchist Brocialist," which calls for the violent destruction of the very agencies that exploit diasporic Filipinas. For Material Support, learning and creating in the educative healing spaces of punk culture allows for the cultivation of a Filipina psychology that is anything but helpless:

> Manarchist, Brocialist
> Fuck your autonomy
> When it's an excuse
> To manhandle me
>
> Smash the patriarchy, transmisogyny
> Hetero- and homo-normativity
> Smash it now (Material Support, 2016)

Like "Yes, Indeed He Do", "Manarchist Brocialist" challenges men's feelings of entitlement toward the bodies of women, even when those men espouse progressive values. "Know Your Rights" demonstrates an even more fully formed feminist conscientization by serving as a polemical against police brutality and a guide for persons-of-color interacting with police:

> You don't gotta talk to no fucking cop
> But if you have to talk to the cops
> Be firm and assertive
> Why did you stop me?
> Do you have reasonable suspicion?
> Officer, please give me your badge number (Material Support, 2018)

Here, Mariano directly challenges "the patriarchy" alluded to in "Manarchist Brocialist" by giving it a corporeal form and positioning herself as an equivalent force of agency and authority. For Mariano, smashing the patriarchy begins with refusing to cower before its capacity for violence. Instead, she

insists the policeman be held accountable to *her*. Mariano's discursive unsettling of power relations between Philippine women and carceral power contradicts perceptions of Philippine peoples as servants and Filipinas as even less than that (Bonifacio, 2009). "Know Your Rights" instead portrays Pinay punks, like Mariano, as agitators, activists, and authority figures in their communities.

Like Dispossessed, Material Support are more concerned with community-responsiveness than assimilation and their social practice is not limited to music. All the band's members are community organizers who coordinate protest actions against human rights abuses in the Philippines. Mariano and guitarist Miles Ashton also founded their own civil rights and immigration law firm, through which they conduct pro-bono work on behalf of the National Lawyers Guild (Mariano Ashton PPLC, 2019). Material Support are members of the Philippine diaspora, but instead of striving to serve and assimilate, the community-responsive pedagogies and praxes of punk allow them to envision divergent Pilipina futures and feminisms.

Do It Yourself or Do It with Friends: Punk Culture as a Racial Counterspace

As a peripheral economic nation, one of the Philippines' chief exports is *people* (Dudwick, 2011 Parreñas**,** 2015). Perceptions of Filipinos abroad are, in turn, molded by stereotypes of Philippine people as a desperate lot with entire families sustained by comparatively meager wages from industrialized nations. This discourse then inflames the perception that Filipinos are happy to be exploited abroad because staying home would mean starvation or death (Parreñas**,** 2015).

Though organizations such as Migrante advocate for migrant Philippine workers in Aotearoa, belief in the innate otherness of Filipinos has fueled incidences of racial abuse (Small, 2018; Kireby, 2019). In the face of racist violence, punk culture holds the potential to provide punks-of-color the opportunity to seek refuge in "racial counterspaces, which can provide individuals with avenues to critically examine their racial experiences and identities" (Eisen, 2018, p. 12). Educative racial counterspaces informed by punk culture include workshops convened to discuss global and local

politics, the composition of art and music, community organizing, volunteer work, protest actions, and direct advocacy work on behalf of the unhoused and economically disadvantaged, such as the free lunch programs provided by Food Not Bombs. The work of AninoKo, "a fast hardcore punk band composed of 4 Filipino immigrants" whose songs are "about the immigrant experience and the issues facing the Filipino community" (AninoKo, 2018), demonstrates how the educative healing of diasporic Philippine punk provides them with onto-epistemological armor against interpersonal, institutional, and self-inflicted denigrations of their identities.

AninoKo's lyrics are sung exclusively in Philippine languages like Tagalog and Ilokano and contain explicit critiques of power, white supremacy, and global capitalism. "Kawalan" (Nothingness) for example, articulates the alienation of migratory assimilation by describing a process in which navigating white, American, and capitalist structures can leave migrant Filipinos adrift and abandoned- a state of rootlessness that AninoKo songwriter Rupert Estanislao portrays as a state of insanity:

> *Panalo na kayo!* [All of you win!]
> *Normal ba tayo?* [Are we normal?]
> *tayo'y may katuturan?* [Do we make any sense?]
> *Buhay ba natin* [Are our lives]
> *ay may kahulugan?* [filled with meaning?] (AninoKo, 2017)
>
> *Nakakasira sa isipan* [The destruction of my mental state]
> *na parang ako'y naiiwanan* [like I am being abandoned]
> *Nasasagasaan* [Being run over]
> *sa takbo ng buhay* [by life's course]
> *kinakain ng kawalan* [consumed by nothingness]

By shouting "Panalo na kayo!" or "All of you win!" AninoKo suggests that destroying the cultural distinctiveness of Philippine peoples is an endemic feature of white supremacy. While the song itself offers no silver linings, it attests to the potentially redemptive power of subcultural participation itself, as the act of composing and performing "Kawalan" signifies a defiant gesture in which the members of AninoKo recognize, articulate, critique, and endeavor to transform the isolation of migrant life through participating in punk subculture.

Another AninoKo song, "Tangina Mo Trump" (Fuck You, Trump) gives the discursive, institutional, and epistemological antagonism (that has indelibly affected their experience of diasporic Philippine subjectivity) a recognizable body- that of former US President Donald Trump. When Estanislao screams "*Tang ina* white power *mo*!" (Motherfuck your white power!), he conveys a perception that Trump's rise to power emerged from entanglements inverse to his own becoming as working-class Filipino immigrant. To AninoKo, Trump possesses generational wealth instead of generational trauma and "white power" instead of automaticized colonial mentality. Estanislao himself posits that the ruinous influence of white (American) power in the Philippines has itself catalyzed the Philippine diaspora:

> I think it's important to understand why we're leaving the Philippines in such mass numbers. I went back [to the Philippines] in 2009 and since 2009, I can't count how many people are now in Dubai, Canada, the UK, Istanbul, everywhere, man. Americans will be like 'well, your economy can't sustain you, blah blah blah'.
>
> But centuries upon centuries of intervention from the West, not only military-wise, but psychologically, education-wise, it really does force you to leave. (Estanislao, 2014, personal communication)

To Estanislao, Donald Trump is not just a politician but an inevitability of imperial power structures- the same structures that bequeathed power and capital to white men who then used those resources to exploit the Philippines and its people. It is for this reason that AninoKo ends "Tangina Mo Trump" with a vulgar release of contempt (translation in brackets):

> Tang ina mo! [Fuck you!]
> Trump! (AninoKo, 2016)

AninoKo's screeds against white supremacy in the United States reflect the resistive psychology Estanislao developed through his participation in punk, demonstrating the pedagogies of educative healing laden in punk's processes countercultural production. Where global capitalism and world systems relegate Philippine peoples to "…racialized social systems that denigrate Filipino culture and identity and encourage one to disassociate from being Filipino" (Eisen, 2018, p. 4), AninoKo use the

trappings of punk's aesthetic and axiological style to derive resistive and resilient ontologies from Philippine culture and history. Like Dispossessed and Material Support, AninoKo's art informs the practice and activism of its members, who have dedicated their lives outside of music to organizations such as the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Migrante, and Bayan USA. AninoKo's members also work to expand the possibilities of diasporic Philippine themselves by operating a record label exclusively for Filipino, Filipino-American, Indigenous, and immigrant punk bands, Aklasan Records. The members of Aninoko also run Aklasan Fest, the only annual Filipino-American punk festival in the US. Through the label and festival, the members of AninoKo create racial counterspaces for minoritized punks to share knowledge, create shared meaning, and redefine the affective capabilities of diasporic Philippine subjectivity. I regret my circumstantial inability to attend an Aklasan Fest, which is now in its seventh year. Still, Aklasan Records merchandise comprises half of my wardrobe and record collection. The label and festival's existence assures and assuages me, as it lets me understand that and a community of like-minded kinfolk exists no matter how much I twist in the wind.

Educated Hope

In a keynote speech delivered to the Oceania Comparative and International Education Society in 2018, Ngāti Maniapoto and Ngāti Raukawa Professor Joanna Kidman (2018) called upon Oceanic scholars to embody *docta spes*- the "educated hope" that decolonizing education will "deny the power of the colonizer- that relentless, hectoring voice- passed on through settler-colonial generation after generation" (p. 7). One way to deny the power of the colonizer is to refuse to engage with the world on colonial terms and by refuting colonial taxonomies that shunt people and ideas into binary, oppositional, and fixed categories (Hoskins, 2017). Colonial hierarchies have defined Philippine subjectivities for long enough, as the Spanish-Filipino caste system separated Philippine peoples into categories- *peninsulares*, *insulares*, *mestizos*, and *indios*- that institutionalized access to rights

and power as a function of Spanish ancestry (Nadeau, 1992). Instead of reforming these hierarchies to be more inclusive, punk rock pedagogy dares us to engage with the historical contexts and contemporary experiences of diasporic Philippine peoples in ways that not only theorize change but demand it.

Conclusion

In analyzing the decolonial underground pedagogies intimated in the artistic productions and grassroots organizing of diasporic Filipino punks, this chapter sought analyses of the various ways Filipino punk subcultures help their members envision decolonial multicultural relations in the multicultural states of North America and Oceania. Enfolding theorizations of Philippine history, contemporary race relations in contemporary multicultural contexts, and the decolonizing education diasporic Filipinos encounter in punk rock subcultures, this chapter argued that the study of punk rock pedagogy yields numerous insights into the possibility of decolonizing education through informal and community-based experiences. The decolonial underground pedagogies of diasporic Philippine punk scenes occur in the creation of songs, in conversation, and in organizing Philippine punk spaces, which breathe life into the creation and celebration of anti-assimilatory, anti-racist, and decolonial Philippine subjectivities and communities. These teaching and learning experiences show how multicultural sociality might move beyond assimilation and attend to the colonial traumas that underpin contemporary injustices. But diasporic Philippine punks do not exist in isolation. Pinoy, Pinay, and Pinxy punks belong to and organize alongside other minority-led punk communities, such as feminist, queer, Indigenous punks. The next chapter expands the scope of this thesis by examining the decolonial underground pedagogies of other *punx of color* communities to further address this thesis's need to theorize how decolonial underground pedagogy can enrich our understanding of decolonizing education. Such an objective requires an understanding of how subcultures differ from dominant ones and how those differences correlate with emancipatory teaching and learning. An

important aspect of punk is it gives a voice to those who perceive themselves to be voiceless (Bag, 2015). To theorize how and why this might be the case, I ground the following chapter in an analysis of the meaningful ways minority-led punk communities decolonize their tongues, exemplifying liberatory ways of practicing the human right to free speech.

Chapter 7: Punx Up, Bros Down: Defending Free Speech through Punk Rock Pedagogy

Introduction

This chapter builds upon the analytical strategies introduced in the previous chapter to position punk rock pedagogy, or the educative dimensions of punk rock subculture, as an exemplar for defending free speech. This chapter shows how punx of color sensitively balance a desire for free expression with a responsibility to counter discrimination and protect targeted communities. I contrast this with an examination of how some universities have relied upon absolutist interpretations of free speech, which hold that all forms of expression and speech must be protected and encouraged regardless of its consequences (Downing, 1999). Arguing that minority-led punk subcultures practice free speech in ways that reflect how it is framed in international human rights law, this chapter illuminates how the decolonial underground pedagogy enables punx of color to illustrate how free speech can be exercised in ways that attend to historical injustice. This chapter suggests that educational leaders could consult decolonial underground pedagogies to cultivate nuanced and embodied understandings of the rights (and responsibilities) associated with free speech and expression. Such understandings could benefit efforts to construct educational environments committed to honoring the rights and aspirations of all learners, along with the ideals of equity, inclusion, and decoloniality. This discussion is necessary because a key feature of decolonial and decolonizing education is the call to use everything at one's disposal to construct alternative institutions, material conditions, and realities. To practice decolonial pedagogy and decolonizing education, people from presently and persistently marginalized communities must be able to depend upon the free speech protections enshrined in human rights law.

Free Speech Absolutism and Human Rights

From 2014 until 2018, I was employed at the University of California, Berkeley in a variety of administrative roles. During this time, I was honored to bear witness to innumerable

consciousness-raising community activism initiatives, mostly led by students. Such efforts included the Ban the Box campaign, which ended the University's practice of refusing employment to formerly incarcerated people. I also witnessed the administration's ham-fisted efforts to defend its reputation as a bastion of free speech by hosting white nationalist provocateurs on campus. In an announcement that proclaimed her first year as UC Berkeley's Chancellor as "Free Speech Year," Carol Christ stated, "We would be providing students with a less valuable education…if we tried to shelter them from ideas that many find wrong, even dangerous" (Marantz, 2018). Free Speech Year included a rally led by Milo Yiannopoulos, a far-right media personality who claimed that he would expose the identities of undocumented students at the event, thereby endangering those students' immigration status and physical safety. UC Berkeley both allowed this rally to take place on campus and spent $800,000 on security (Dinkelspiel, 2018). Mounting student unrest made it so security for a separate lecture by far-right internet personality Ben Shapiro cost $600,000, a figure Christ herself noted was "unsustainable" (Marantz, 2018).

Though education and educative processes, by design and necessity, challenge students with information that may not conform to their worldviews, Christ's interpretation of free speech indicates a lack of professional or academic training in legal instruments that establish limits on protected speech. Much of the speech that predominates far-right discourse, in which "elites from the KKK, Neo-Nazi, and Christian Identity factions repeatedly call for whites to carry out violence against Blacks and Jews" (Blessing & Roberts, p. 15), warrants no protection under international human rights law and the domestic laws of various nation-states. Therefore, prohibiting university-sponsored civil gatherings by figures and organizations known to traffic in messaging that meets the criteria for unprotected speech is a legally defensible course of action. The University's actions, for me, felt particularly discordant with the expressed needs of the community that was constantly dominated by

institution. The door at 924 Gilman, located only 4 miles away from campus, was far less equivocal about the kind of speech permitted on its grounds: *No racism, no misogyny, no homophobia.*

Though multilateral human rights treaties (such as the *International Convention on Civil and Political Rights* and the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*) make clear that hate speech is not protected under their articles, the influence of free speech absolutism on policy, media, and education allows for the normalization and institutionalization of white supremacist discourses. Leonardo (2015) implicates education as a primary site in which white supremacist discourses are internalized on a broad enough scale to ensure that this process continues unabated. Examples of the ways by which educational gatekeepers deploy free speech absolutism to protect white supremacy include inviting known white supremacists to campus for guest lectures, diverting funding to protect white nationalist rallies, and otherwise failing to discern the difference between the phrases "all are welcome" and "hate will not be tolerated here." White supremacy, as Leonardo (2015) contends, "is institutionalized in school practices whose consequences for students of color have been grave and consistent." (p. 96).

Punk subculture, however, often functions as a counterspace to dominant institutions, including the university. This sentiment especially applies to punk communities predominantly comprised of femme, queer, Indigenous, immigrant, and racialized people (who often self-identify as punx of color or POC punks). Early punk bands such as Bad Brains, the Clash, the Bags, and X-Ray Spex popularized forms of rock-n-roll music that combined fast, loud, and abrasive instrumentation with confrontationally political lyrics and aesthetic signifiers (such as dyed liberty spikes, studded leather, dog collars, and tattered clothing) meant to demonstrate contempt for conventional norms. As a sociocultural practice, punk is "…about creating collectives to fight the social enemies and institutions that are designed to quite literally destroy not only alternative cultural spaces, but people, humanity, and life in general" (Malott & Peña, 2004, p. 96). As contemporary punks define themselves

in opposition to an oppressive and exploitative mainstream, predominant social practices of punk are informed by understandings of free speech that reflect a refusal to concede physical and discursive space to white supremacy. In so doing, the punk communities explored in this analysis demonstrate abolitionist philosophies of education that protect free speech as defined by international human rights law.

Problematizing Free Speech

Should philosophies and practices of education be constructed to defend and promote free speech, educationalists might first consider how free speech protections were initially conceptualized. This process begins with understanding the types of expression protected under international law. Article 19 of the ICCPR "recognizes that reasonable restrictions on freedom of expression may be necessary or legitimate to prevent advocacy of hatred based on nationality, race, religion that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence" (Callamard, 2008, p. 19). Incitements to violence, for example, are legally defined as unprotected speech by the US Supreme Court's ruling in Brandenburg v. Ohio, sections 61 and 131 of New Zealand's Human Rights Act 1993, and Article 20 of the ICCPR. Within an historical framework that recognizes the ongoing trauma caused by Euro-American colonialism and racialized capitalism, the freedom of speech has been specifically constructed as a tool for the advancement of marginalized people and "…helps build democratic possibilities only in so far as it is articulated within the framework of a broader push for social equality and emancipation" (Hoffman-Kuroda, 2018, p. 371).

Hoffman-Kuroda (2018) writes that proponents of white nationalism rely not upon historical analyses or legalistic frameworks of free speech but what Downing (1999) calls *free speech absolutism*. Free speech absolutism reframes the freedom of speech simply as the dictate that anyone can say anything, no matter how damaging, without fear of censorship or consequences. Contrary to the specific emancipatory functions of free speech protections in human rights law, Hoffman-Kuroda

(2018) notes, "when freedom of speech is framed as a universal right—without regard to the specificities of race, class, and gender—it can in fact work to consolidate the power of the ruling majority and thus reproduce the status quo" (p. 370). In his analysis of the First Amendment of the US Constitution (which guarantees freedom of speech and the press along with the right to peaceful assembly and to petition the government), Downing (1999), examines the influence of free speech absolutism and its effects. He concludes that the prevailing attitude toward hate speech in both American culture and jurisprudence is defined largely by apathy:

> …the best and only cure against the harmful effects of negative speech is 'more speech'…This hypothesis holds that public outrage at racist speech…will provoke a counter-reaction in which the errors and ugliness of racism…will be exposed and subjected to criticism and condemnation, thus leading to a healthier situation than one in which people are not compelled to confront the issue. (p. 176)

But 'more speech' has done little to eliminate racial and gender-based discrimination in the United States. In light of the connection between negative speech against minoritized groups and acts of violence against them, Downing (1999) concludes that "more speech" is an inadequate defense against hate speech and "it is high time to demythologize contemporary First Amendment discourse and…to undertake sustained dialogue between the voices of social analysts, anti-racist and other activists, public administrators, and lawyers, in order to frame effective codes, legal and otherwise, that address hate speech much more forcefully" (p. 184).

As a human right, "freedom of expression is essential to the democracy and the democratization process. It forms a central pillar of the democratic framework through which all rights are promoted and protected, and the exercise of full citizenship is guaranteed" (Callamard, 2008). In contrast, free speech absolutism practiced by far-right figures and white supremacists exploits the language of rights and reinterprets them as totems to unbridled individualistic power, or the notion that the individual must be free to do or say whatever he pleases and any legal, physical, or logistical

obstacle preventing him from doing so is tantamount to oppression. This dynamic was on display during Yiannopoulos's tour of US universities, which included the UC Berkeley rally:

> These talks followed a highly predictable pattern: Yiannopoulos would arrive on campus; deliver an inflammatory speech in which he would spew hateful rhetoric against marginalized groups of people, as well as harass and target individual students; students and activists would protest the talk and call for its cancellation; and Yiannopoulos would argue that his free speech rights were being violated by these protests. (Hoffman-Kuroda, 2017, p. 370)

The role of free speech absolutism as deployed by white nationalists and school leaders alike, is ultimately the de facto endorsement of legally indefensible speech that exposes vulnerable groups to even greater risks and reinforces the diminished social location of these communities. By understanding that there exist two dominant yet dialectical interpretations of free speech, postcolonial, decolonizing, and rights-based philosophies of education possess the potential to provide clarity. The decolonizing philosopher of education, however, would do well to find inspiration outside of dominant culture and in communities that forcefully confront hate speech. In these communities, a radical belief persists that the experiences, ideas, and lives of racialised, minoritised, and marginalized people are valuable.

Defining and Defending Free Speech through Decolonizing Punk Rock Pedagogy

Formal schooling systems in the west, like the governments under which they operate, are theorized to have been built upon the same hegemonic ideologies (economic exploitation, class warfare, the scapegoating of othered communities) that sustain white nationalism (Althusser, 1971; Giroux, 2001). As such, it can be hardly surprising when a generation of students emerges from the schooling experience with internalized orientations toward white supremacy and heteropatriarchy when they are taught that the world as they know it emerged from the heroic adventures of white men who discovered "new" lands and upon those lands created "new" worlds. Ideologies that reflect this sense of heteropatriarchal white supremacy are reflected in the motto of the Proud Boys, an organization defined by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a violent hate group. The Proud Boys

describe themselves as "Western chauvinists who refuse to apologize for creating the modern world" (Coaston, 2018). Insights into the ways by which educative processes defend free speech are more readily found outside of the academy and in the practices of those engaged in liberatory modalities that negate essentialist and perennialist philosophies of education.

Punk, in its broadest conception, cannot be defined merely as a genre of music, a manner of dress, an organization, or even a cohesive subcultural community. Rather, Dunn (2016) defines punk as a social practice that involves "a two-part process: a rejection of the status quo and an embrace of a do-it-yourself ethos" (p. 11). The pedagogical practices found in minority-led punk subculture model those of a new abolitionist movement due to their emphasis on social, political, economic, and intellectual agency by "making their own music, being their own journalists and writers, making their own movies, designing their own clothes" (Dunn, 2016, p. 11). Dunn's conceptualization of punk parallels the definition of punk rock pedagogy introduced in previous chapters, which holds that punk culture is oftentimes educational in that it facilitates historically responsive analyses of oppression, offers a theoretical framework for contextualizing this inquiry, and spurs community responsive action rooted in solidarity with marginalized communities. Though the specific products and processes associated with navigating these pillars will vary according to the needs of individual punks, PRP has the potential to engender what Cordova (2017) terms *educative healing*, a process in which subcultural participation enables individuals to unlearn and negate oppressive discourses. PRP impels its practitioners to act upon this knowledge and use whatever resources may be at their disposal to contribute to the creation of non-oppressive ways of knowing, being, and relating to human and non-human others. When applied to free speech discourses, the cognitive and experiential outcomes of punk rock pedagogy could be reasonably expected to engender understandings of expression that negate the historically non-responsive nature of free speech absolutism.

Punks often work collectively to subvert the racial contract and reject socially constructed hierarchies informed by race, gender, and class. This ethos of solidarity has been evident in punk culture from its inception, as Mattioli and Spaccone (2015) describe even the notoriously violent punk scene in Los Angeles during the mid- to late-1970s as "a movement based on togetherness; we were all in the same tribe. Color and religion meant nil" (p. 10). Though PRP contends that participation in punk culture is a pathway to decolonization, punk itself is by no means free of sexism, racism, white supremacy, and violence (Leblanc, 2007; Douglas, 2014; Mattioli & Spaccone, 2015). Nguyen (2011) notes that punk rock in the 1990s reflected dominant orientations toward race in which whiteness is considered *normal* and anything else was *other*. Like dominant culture, "*whitestraightboy* hegemony organizes punk" (Nguyen, 2011, p. 267). Nguyen (2011) accordingly exhorts punks to acknowledge the ways by which it had been shaped by white supremacist masculinities and instead find ways to engage in the praxis of dismantling *whitestraightboy* hegemony within their own community so that larger society may one day follow suit:

> What needs to happen- on a punk scale and a large scale sort-of-way- is a revolution in the ways in which we frame ourselves within social, psychic, and political relations…What all this doesn't mean is, 'I can't talk about anything because I'm a white, straight male.'
>
> That's too easy…I don't believe the specific plot points of your social location have to determine your conscious political agenda…and I'm way over the 'more oppressed than thou calculus'…Interrogate and historicize your place in society, punk, whatever…Recognize power in all its forms, how it operates. Engage it, even use it strategically. And work *with* me, not for me. (p. 268)

Nguyen's (2011) vision of large-scale revolutions originating from the deepening of relationalities within punk rock communities is evident in the work, art, and activism of contemporary punx of color. At times, punk rock pedagogy provides the opportunity for racialized people to unite under shared counter-hegemonic ideologies to develop philosophical orientations and patterns of behavior that oftentimes prime them to recognize and contest instances of white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and, by extension, hate speech (Leigh-Douglas, 2014). In so doing, punx of color

(alongside allied entities such as venues, labels, and organizations) answer Downing's (1999) call to forcefully combat hate speech by demonstrating a responsive commitment to free expression that parallels its definition in human rights law.

Muchacha Fanzine: Punks of Color Media and Placemaking

Daisy Salinas is the editor of *Muchacha Fanzine*, which "began… as a feminist punk zine and over the course of 8 years has grown into a larger, submission-based social justice compilation of work by marginalized artists and writers" (Salinas, 2018). Salinas also organizes the annual *Black and Brown Punk Fest* in San Antonio, Texas, which provides a supportive environment for racially minoritized artists, musicians, and writers to engage in decolonizing praxis through art. Moreover, Salinas is responsible for *Xingonas in the Pit!* "…an all-ages San Antonio-based decolonial feminist punk fest aimed at celebrating *mujer* and nonbinary artists of color!" (Salinas, 2018). Salinas and those involved with her community-based artistic ventures are unequivocal in their opposition to white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, colonialism, and police brutality. Their work builds upon this opposition by developing and fostering alternative and autonomous physical, digital, and printed sites of meaning-making and community-building in which the experiences, historical contexts, and ingenuity of indigenous, Latinx, Chicanx, women, and gender-nonconforming punks are centred and uplifted.

Like Daisy Salinas, the Filipina/o-American punks (alternatively referred to as *pinoy/pinay/pinxy punks*) behind Aklasan Records engage in similar decolonizing, rights-affirming, and solidarity-building efforts in the San Francisco Bay Area of California. Aklasan promotes regular shows featuring Filipino-American punk bands, funds and distributes these bands' records, and fosters their growth as engaged community members and artists, notably by connecting punks isolated by the Philippine diaspora with one another. Aklasan's proprietors, along with an organizing committee, coordinate a yearly festival called *Aklasan Fest*. Like *Black and Brown Punk Fest* and *Xingonas in the Pit!*, *Aklasan Fest* exits to provide punx of color places and spaces to create shared meaning. This

undertaking, which nets the organizers little in the way of profit, provides Filipino punks an opportunity to build communities and coalitions that did not exist before *Aklasan Fest's* inaugural iteration in 2015. In an interview with *Maximumrocknroll*, musician and *Aklasan Fest* organizing committee member Christopher 'Burd' Quines states that "…Pinoy punk I feel helps remind us of our history as a people through an outlet that encourages conversations for change and revaluation. Resistance is the middle item in the Pinoy and punk Venn diagram and they both span through time" (Ambrose, 2017, p. 49). In subsequent years, the organizers recognized a need to intentionally center other communities in addition to Pinoy punks, as they "…realized that this was important not just to the Pinoy community but to the POC/immigrant/LGBTQ community more broadly because we adamantly advocated for a space, inclusive space for everyone" (Ambrose, 2017, p. 50).

In terms of combatting white supremacy, *Aklasan Fest* and *Black and Brown Punk Fest* are distinct from schools, governments, and even other punk rock festivals because they explicitly center the identities, labor, experiences, and historical contexts of groups marginalized in intersecting and overlapping ways, as opposed to those in power. This is not to say that white men cannot attend, participate in, and even play valuable roles in these communities. Rather, these festivals attest to the notion that whiteness, masculinity, and heteropatriarchy (or what the Proud Boys refer to as "Western Chauvinism") do not have to be the foundational ideologies of a concert, a festival, a government, or a society.

To revisit Downing (1999), the meaning-making that occurs within punx of color communities doesn't stop at mere speech or 'more speech'. The punx of color who frequent 924 Gilman or might be involved in Aklasan Records or *Muchacha Fanzine* organize direct actions in protest of human rights violations in the Philippines, Latin America, and the US. Through concerts and festivals, POC punks carve out liberatory spaces for historically marginalized communities that did not previously exist. Some participate in Food Not Bombs benefits to assist individuals and families struggling with food

insecurity whilst others participate directly in antifascist and antiracist action. Music is only the catalyst for punx of color to disrupt dominant discourses through community-responsive engagements with the historical and contemporary contexts that have perpetuated conditions of oppression, viewing "…theory as a form of practice and practice as a form of theory as we contest the psychopathology of everyday life incarnate in capitalism's social division of labor" (McLaren, 2011, p. 135). Joshua F. Castro, one of the founders of Aklasan Records elucidates the decolonial underground pedagogy of Pinoy punk as such: "Punk shouldn't only be about making great music and building a safe place for expression. Punk also needs to be a place to build skills and foster wisdom so that we can make the world better" (Ambrose, 2017, p. 54). Punks of color, through their participation in subculture, often find opportunities to develop critiques of dominant norms and expectations that govern social life, including those that frame how the right to free speech is exercised and granted. The dialogic and iterative processes punks deploy to develop these critiques attest to the important role of informal learning in decolonial underground pedagogy. This understanding enables analyses of punk culture to make relevant contributions to discussion on a variety of issues related to decolonial and decoloniality. The work and social practice of Māori punks, for example, highlights the relationship between the decolonial underground pedagogy of punk and the pursuit of Indigenous self-determination.

Punk, Indigeneity, and Resistance in Aotearoa

The educative healing of Indigenous punks in Aotearoa illustrates some of the ways by which systemically marginalized people practice free speech and defend themselves against white supremacy. In a Master's thesis exploring punk culture and indigeneity in Aotearoa, Leigh-Douglas (2014) demonstrates how, in the Aotearoa context, the oppositional social and educative practice of punk can be a means for Māori to hold the nation's founding document to account and establish autonomous institutions that center indigeneity.

Though Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi "…sought to capture the broad principle of 'two people sharing one land,' promises of equal partnership have been thwarted by the policies of the British Crown...these policies undermined traditional indigenous authority with becoming subject to the sovereignty of the Crown and their rights to self-governance largely ignored" (Tuffin, 2008, p. 595). The tacit endorsement of discriminatory speech is critical to the consolidation of colonialism and is evident in what Wetherell & Potter (1992) describe as the standard story of race in Aotearoa. The standard story, which informs the speech, beliefs, and policies of European New Zealanders holds that:

> …Māori are malcontented having failed to adapt to modern life. Māori who contest these views are seen as disrupting otherwise harmonious race relations and are, therefore, themselves the source of racial tension. The standard story includes strong evaluative claims whereby troublemakers are referred to as 'bad Māori' who contrast strongly with 'good Māori' who cooperate by successfully assimilating into contemporary Pākehā [European] culture. (Tuffin, 2008, p. 597-598)

Douglas (2014) indicts education in Aotearoa as responsible for perpetuating the standard story and constructing Māori as colonial subjects: "The native school system created in Aotearoa in 1867 highlights the impact of government legislation and colonial powers on indigenous culture in Aotearoa that has subverted Māori culture and language in preference of British-based norms" (p. 64). Given the historical context of invader-Indigenous conflict in Aotearoa, punk rock and other emancipatory spaces which exist to challenge the mainstream are sometimes beneficial in efforts to foster Indigenous understandings and identities outside of mainstream, traditional, or colonial constructs. Douglas (2017), as such, looks to punk culture to provide her (and other Māori punks) space to cultivate a relationship to te ao Māori (the Māori world) on their own terms.

Punk scenes, however, can be equally hostile to Indigenous peoples as colonial education systems, especially if their participants neglect to contend with their ascriptions to the standard story and other normative discourses founded upon colonial genocide (Malott & Peña, 2004). In Aotearoa, punk culture's inability to completely diverge from the colonial foundations of dominant culture have

resulted in violence against Indigenous punks, leading to feelings of ostracization and otherness. In response, racialized punks in Wellington have carved out indigenous and immigrant-centred scenes within the larger punk community (Douglas, 2014). The praxis of establishing autonomous punx of color networks predicated upon the existence of robust free speech protections, which ensure that Indigenous punks can freely associate and organize. In the context of indigeneity in Aotearoa, the formation of Māori punk scenes can be interpreted as an act of defending free speech as defined by ICERD (by creating closed spaces for Indigenous people to secure their advancement and challenge systems of oppression) while cultivating new understandings of cooperative Māori-European relations consistent with te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Douglas (2014) notes that "punk communities have provided [Indigenous] punks with settings that are controlled by community members themselves and that reflect anarchist political standpoints and that share parallels with indigenous desires for tino rangatiratanga, self-determination, and sovereignty separate from the controlling institutions of dominant societies" (p. 17). Douglas (2014) locates punk culture in Aotearoa as an extension of the history of Māori activism and advocacy that has led to the revitalization of te reo Māori (the Māori language) and the undoing of "the inter-generational damage done by the ruling elite of New Zealand on Māori cultural self-determination" (p 66). Douglas (2014), however, takes care to note the pervasiveness of the standard story even within the countercultural context of punk rock. For this reason, Douglas (2014) identifies the need for Indigenous punks in Aotearoa to create their own spaces within the punk scene to exist simultaneously as punk and Indigenous. Douglas (2014) points to Māori-led initiatives to raise funds for Indigenous communities and individuals targeted by police, to produce a benefit recording in support of the Zapatista movement, and the programming of punk festivals with "politicized workshops that encourage knowledge sharing inclusive of Indigenous rights and activism" (p. 68) as examples of the educative healing that is possible when Indigenous people take action to redefine punk in Aotearoa.

Douglas's (2014) work, informed by her own participation in Aotearoa's punk rock scene as an artist, activist, scholar, and musician, demonstrates that punk culture cannot be simplistically assumed to be a utopian ideal in comparison to social contexts governed by the negations of racialized capitalism. What Indigenous punk communities do, however, is afford racialized individuals the opportunity to deconstruct their identities and vocalize their discontent without fear of persecution. As such, the praxis of Indigenous punks in Aotearoa attests to the educative capacity of punk rock to serve as a conduit for the advancement of protected groups, in keeping with the ICERD's definition of the role of free speech. Per Douglas (2014), participation in punk culture's alternative social vision strengthens Māori punks' collective knowledge of their values and histories. The artistic and organizational skills Indigenous punks develop subsequently inform their capacity to take forceful and community-responsive action based upon this heightened historical, sociopolitical, and Indigenous awareness.

Decolonizing Philosophies of Education through Punk Rock Pedagogy

Punk culture, represented herein by the work of Daisy Salinas, the organizing activities of Aklasan Records, and Sarsha-Leigh Douglas's art and research represent expressions of free speech rooted in a need to foster community relationships rather than the demand for entitlements from, representation within, or legibility before a repressive authority. In punk counterspaces that center Indigenous people, women, people of color, immigrants, and other marginalized communities, speech and expression are the instruments by which these groups analyze, confront, transform, and transcend the circumstances of their oppression, whilst celebrating their vitality and survival. By intentionally uplifting the historically oppressed and engaging in the radical negation of white supremacy, minority-centred punk rock scenes routinely practice the type of forceful confrontation of hate speech Downing (1999) advocates. The decolonial underground pedagogy of punks of color, moreover, ensures that their speech does not stop at simply defining what they oppose - they act upon their critiques to build

and sustain more equitable relationalities in the here and now. This praxis is embodied by the initiative punks have shown in creating minority-centered punk festivals, zines, record labels, and value systems. Liberatory punk movements accordingly demonstrate how one of the most impactful means of confronting hate speech is for the targets of such speech to radically negate the coloniality of power and then activate decolonial underground pedagogies borne out of the passions and needs of their own communities. Integrating punk rock pedagogy into a formal educational setting might include creating curriculum rooted in punk rock's orientations toward solidarity, consciousness-raising, and a do-it-yourself mentality. But community buy-in and input must be sought in decision making processes, particularly those which might reproduce colonial hierarchies or subject vulnerable members to trauma. To achieve a liberatory educational milieu, a punk rock-influenced pedagogy must be accountable to the needs of real people in real time.

Conclusion – Is Conservatism the New Punk?

Proud Boys leader Gavin McInnes has stated that conservatism, due to its opposition to what he perceives as a mainstream dominated anti-white political correctness, is the new punk (Jensen, 2017). A comparative analysis of punk culture as practiced by people of color and the actions and ideologies of right-wing groups like the Proud Boys, however, reveals a stark disconnect. In the communities profiled in this chapter, the social practice of punk is a transformative and educative process in which their identities, subjectivites, aspirations, and lives can be celebrated and valued. In minority-led punk communities, subcultural insiders often take forceful stances against hate speech and engage in the physical, mental, and emotional labor of creating closed spaces in which to engage in decolonizing praxis. As evidenced in records like "Punch a Nazi in the Face" by Sarsha-Leigh Douglas's band, Rogernomix, this stance equates to forceful condemnations of threats of violence against vulnerable communities.

Though punk remains a subculture influenced by *whitestraightboy hegemony*, it has also served as countercultural space shaped by the needs, demands, and artistic passions of women, people of color, the LGBTQ community, and other minoritized groups. Alice Bag, the artist, musician, and educator who played a pivotal role in defining punk rock in the 1970s, laments the white washing of punk culture that occurred as music industry tastemakers pursued the commodification of punk culture, which represented the antithesis of what punk meant for her:

> It does bother me that people have been led to believe that punk is music created for and by white males. Punk's diverse roots are bound to come to the surface, I will shout it from the roof tops! (Gleason, 2017)

Punks from communities that human rights treaties define as protected groups often find affirmation of their inalienable human dignity in the punk scene that they did not readily find in mainstream institutions like schools, workplaces, and courthouses (Bag, 2011). Analyzing the rights-affirming pedagogies and praxes of punks of color lends credence to the notion that the human right to free speech can be defended through education, even if it may be difficult to accomplish these goals in schools. By participating in punk culture, individuals from historically othered groups engage in decolonizing forms of education that foster ways of knowing and being that problematize and protect the right to free speech.

But for me, punk was not always enough. My participation in punk emerged alongside my interest in skate culture, or the subcultural formations that coalesce around a shared interest in all things related to skateboarding. Over the last two decades, skateboards have served as my preferred means of exercise, relaxation, meditation, motivation, and transport. Skateboards helped me expand my understanding of the world beyond the simplistically rendered and dyadic power struggles that predominate punk songs and organizing spaces. While punk helped me find a voice, colonization is a total endeavor, in which invading battalions attempt to claim all life as property (Tall Bear, 2021). Decolonial and decolonizing education thus involves affording Indigenous, minoritized, and othered

peoples pedagogical space to claim their corporality as their own, in addition to their lands, minds, stories, and futures. Decolonial underground pedagogy extends the possibilities of decolonizing education by showing us that acts of teaching and learning for sovereignty and self-determination cannot solely be confined to the colonial schoolhouse (which ties decolonization to colonial technologies) or in metaphorical returns to precolonial knowledge transmission processes (which tethers liberation to the past, limiting our ability to consider decolonization as a contemporary experience and a condition of futurity). Decolonial and decolonizing education can also occur in the here and now, as individuals from Indigenous and racialized backgrounds travel worlds and navigate contemporary social formations, like subcultures, weaving together disparate identitarian signifiers into new possibilities for personhood and communion. The next chapter extends the analytical scope of the last two by showing how decolonizing education is not a simple matter of curricular reform, critique, and intellectual breadth. It also involves understanding our perennial responsibilities to our communities the oftentimes occupied and contested lands on which subcultures convene, in addition to reclaiming our bodies as unconditionally our own.

Chapter 8: You're Skating on Native Land: Queering and Decolonizing Skate Pedagogy

Introduction

From 2009-2011, my life was largely funded by Barack Obama Genius Grant- my euphemism for an extended suite of unemployment benefits designed to pull the country out of a recession induced by perpetual war and predatory capitalism. I spent those years writing scripts and short stories, making movies, playing in bands, and volunteering for a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting independent film culture in Central Texas. These experiences afforded me the time to develop advanced skills that would propel me back into a 'productive' economic life. I also spent much of those two years skateboarding, from which I learned to focus my efforts and trust in abilities. I credit skating (along with my partner, Amanda, and our beloved Jack Russell Terrier, Jeannie) with maintaining my corporal and psychological well-being during a time in which I perceived that society had little use or respect for me.

I logged most of skating hours in a seemingly infinite movie theater parking lot behind my apartment in Austin, Texas. I idealized this lot for its acres of smooth concrete, flat ground, and gentle slopes. I practiced tricks by a dumpster behind the movie theater with a piece of particle board leaned up against it to form a ramp. I dragged a loose parking block nearby so I could ollie over it, as well as to work on my grinds and stalls. I mostly skated this spot, which I called "the dumps," in the morning, before the Texas sun could bake the dumpster's contents into a radioactive stew. I would try new tricks, fall, and get back up, conveniently ignoring the fact that unemployment left me with zero health insurance. I refused to go home until I landed an ollie, kickflip, heelflip, or shove-it five times in a row. This determination inflamed my sporadic run-ins with the theater's security guards, a troika of boneless sunburned men who would shout at me to leave before muttering numbers into their yellow walkie-talkies. Their accusations sounded official and serious: I was creating a nuisance, threatening customers, and damaging property. Sometimes they would give me a two-minute warning so I could

land one trick and leave in peace. If they had strict orders to remove me from the parking lot or threatened to call the *real* cops, I would nod my head and ride off, sometimes shouting "*see you tomorrow*" when I was too far to chase.

This chapter applies the thesis's interpretive methodological approach to consider the decolonizing potential of skate pedagogy and the teaching and learning experiences associated with skateboarding subculture. Originally written for a special issue of *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry* dedicated to the life and work of Maya Angelou, this chapter's analyses are catalyzed by a meditative interpretation of *Caged Bird*, which situates its insights about how Queer and Indigenous skateboarders figuratively and literally take to the skies to develop critical and community-responsive ways of knowing and being. The decolonial underground pedagogies of two minority-led skate communities- Sibling and Apache Skateboards- are contrasted with the implications of skateboarding's debut as an official Olympic sport. This approach enables theorizations of how minority-led skate subcultures build self-supporting social formations despite institutional efforts to regulate and exclude them from public life. Skateboarding is herein conceptualized as a decolonial underground pedagogy that enables minoritized people to reclaim space, achieve self-defined learning goals, and challenge the authority of oppressive institutions built on what Angelou calls "the grave of dreams." Analyzing skate pedagogy through this lens offers further insights into the physical dimensions of decolonizing education, suggesting that informal and nonhierarchical conceptions of sport can enrich educational efforts to critique and contest multilayered inequities.

Of caged birds, planks, and wheels

Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird* is imbued with the desperate anger of the oppressed, as emphasized in the poem's second stanza:

> *But a bird that stalks*
> *down his narrow cage*
> *can seldom see through*
> *his bars of rage*

his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing

The caged bird's imprisonment is unjust, its suffering is undeniable, and any outcome other than its liberation is unacceptable. But interpreting *Caged Bird* in terms of its relevance to decolonization, which would entail contesting, critiquing, and subverting worlds that attempt to categorize, contain, pathologize, and erase minoritized people, invites deeper thinking about the implications of *Caged Bird*. While the caged bird sings of freedom, decolonization asks what freedom is, where it comes from, and what it costs.

Angelou contrasts the caged bird's squalor with the ostensibly carefree life of the free bird:

A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky

This stanza combines active verbs (*leaps*, *floats*, and *dips*) with descriptions of natural wonder- flowing currents of wind and *orange sun rays*. Angelou creates this joyful scene only to trouble it by revealing that the free bird claims all this wonder for himself. This revelation suggests that the free bird is something of a conqueror, one who believes in his right to assert ownership over nothing less than the sky. The caged bird's cries for "things unknown" invite the reader to wonder if she truly wishes to join the free bird. Having been imprisoned and maimed, perhaps the caged bird yearns to live in a world where such suffering will not be inflicted on anyone else - one where it is at peace with the sky instead of embroiled in a narcissistic campaign to claim dominion over it.

This reading parallels Freire's (2018) assertion that education should not be limited to a process of acquiring the credentials and capital needed to benefit from an exploitative society. A liberatory pedagogy is instead tied to the need to establish kinder societal frameworks altogether. This chapter

explores how the decolonial underground pedagogies of minority-led skateboarding subcultures moreover foster community-responsive and antiauthoritarian approaches to teaching and learning. By applying a decolonial lens to the study of skate pedagogy in Queer and Indigenous communities, this analysis demonstrates how discourses such as heteronormativity and white supremacy can be challenged even when they are enshrined in law. Still, skateboarding communities are contested spaces where pressures associated with commercialism, nationalism, and gender inequality are as influential as the anti-establishment ethos commonly associated with skate culture. This chapter explores some of the discursive and epistemological tensions affecting contemporary Queer and Indigenous skate pedagogies as they emerge alongside the sport's official debut at the Olympic Games. In examining Queer and Indigenous skate communities through the lens of decolonial underground pedagogy, this chapter shows how skate culture helps insiders undertake complex educative processes in which they gain a deepened understanding of themselves, their relationships, and their responsibilities to their communities as they, like Angelou's caged bird, dream of freedom.

A History of Skate Culture

Skateboarding was popularized by American surfers in the 1960s who wanted to practice their sport in the off-season (International Olympic Committee, 2017). Despite its recreational beginnings, skateboarding soon became associated with antiauthoritarian philosophies and politics, which were entangled with those of punk rock. Both subcultures center oppositional orientations toward mainstream norms, do-it-yourself approaches to problem-solving, and the belief that growth is the sole responsibility of the individual (Dinces, 2011; Cordova, 2017). The oppositional philosophy of skate culture is evident in its iconography- shirts and boards emblazoned with slogans like *Skate and Destroy*, *Skateboarding is Not a Crime*, and *This Toy Kills Fascists*.

Skateboarding's rebellious ontologies (ways of being) and epistemologies (ways of knowing) have grown alongside public demands for its regulation and its burgeoning commercial appeal (Chiu,

2009; Willing, Green, and Pavlidis, 2019). Chiu (2009) notes that while skateboarders redefine the purpose of public space, their transgressions have inflamed reactionary politics of exclusion. Skate parks, for example, provide a place for skaters to practice, but Chiu (2009) contends that their construction can sometimes be underwritten by a desire to remove skaters (and their perceived antisocial inclinations) from public areas. Chiu (2009) also observes that despite the growing availability of public skate parks, "skaters prefer the natural environment of the street over purposely built spaces" (p. 26). While skate parks might serve the physical needs of skateboarders, they can also fall short of cultivating the unique orientations skate culture engenders toward land and space. Skate park construction and other municipal attempts to regulate skate culture (such as signs banning skateboarding, the installation of deterrent devices on public structures, and fines) can thus be conceptualized as small exertions of state power that are nonetheless designed to control public space and those who use it. The sport's debut at the 2020 Summer Olympics, a potentially momentous event in skateboarding history, might accordingly be examined within the historical tension between skate culture and efforts to regulate it.

Though the Olympics are anticipated to signify skate culture's transformation from outsider art to mainstream sport (Kassel, 2016), Olympic skateboarding has proven divisive among skaters (Kassel, 2016; Hawk, 2018). In Kassel's (2016) interviews with both amateur and professional skateboarders, one participant calls the notion of Olympic skateboarding "kind of lame" (p. 1). Another notes that "skateboarding is about having a good time with your friends, not about competing" (p. 2). A third fears that Olympic skateboarding "will erode the cultural values [skateboarders] cherish more than anything" (p. 4).

The discourse surrounding the 2020 Olympics and the history of skateboarding's spatial politics demonstrates how skate culture is a contested space. This contestation partly stems from the role skateboarding can play in the formation of antiauthoritarian identities and communities, a role

skaters feel is threatened by increasing mainstream influence (Beal & Weldman, 2003). This chapter reads narratives of LGBTQ and Indigenous skaters through Queer and decolonizing theory to encounter minority-led skateboarding subcultures as sites of decolonial underground pedagogy. This chapter thus aims to deepen our understanding of decolonizing education by showing how Queer and Indigenous skate pedagogies draw synthesize community-embedded, informal, and physical forms of teaching and learning might presage decolonial futures.

Situating Skate Pedagogy

As discussed in Chapter 3, skate pedagogy refers to the teaching, learning, and relationship building that occurs in skateboarding. Learning to skate requires a high level of discipline and the ability to endure mental fatigue and physical injury (Adi, Aditya, & Citrawati, 2010). Skaters often practice the same maneuvers for years or even decades, committing themselves to skateboarding well into adulthood (Willing, 2019). One learns to skate in a largely individualized manner, which iteratively introduces skaters to the mores and values that distinguish skateboarding subcultures (Kassel, 2016, p. 4). Such values often include antiauthoritarianism, individualism, creativity, bodily autonomy, and a fellowship with other skateboarders (Beal, 1995; Chiu, 2009; Lombard, 2010). Other values include questioning dominant constructions of gender and gender roles (Hellman, 2016; Mackay and Dallaire, 2014) and countering racial stereotypes (Neumann, 2017; Rockett & Fine, 2019). In these skateboarding subcultures, the skateboard itself unlocks possibilities and pedagogies, as riding it encourages a skater to envision novel ways of engaging with discourses, people, and environments (Pyyry & Tani, 2017; Willing, et al., 2019). But learning to skateboard is not the only pedagogical process associated with skateboarding subculture, as Apache Skateboards founder Douglas Miles Jr. notes that access to skateboarding culture affords young people opportunities to develop related skills like film making, community development, activism, and photography because such competencies are needed to sustain a skateboarding community. The decolonial underground pedagogies found in skate

cultures link to this thesis's objectives as they show how unstructured, indeterminate, and playful forms of informal learning might catalyze knowledge construction processes that unsettle colonizing logics. As such, they hold numerous insights that might enrich further efforts to decolonize education.

Despite its decolonizing potential, skate pedagogy is not immune to the influence of neoliberal economic ideologies founded upon the hegemonic discourses it ostensibly rails against (Beal, 1995; Brayton, 2005; Lombard, 2010). Beal's (1995) and Lombard's (2010) accounts of corporate incursions into skate culture demonstrate how skateboarding's marketable rebelliousness has piqued the interest of shoe companies, television networks, and the film industry for decades. Lombard (2010) notes, however, that skaters engage with money and power relationally and assuredly. Though skaters profess allegiance to skater-owned or *core* companies, they do not reject corporate partnership by rote and welcome resources so long as sponsors do not exploit or disparage skateboarding (Dinces, 2011). This cautious openness has led to multinational corporations like Nike, Converse, and Adidas engaging with the skateboarding industry, where they enjoy strong reputations largely due to their support of women, queer, and minority skaters (Harrison-Caldwell, 2019). Despite its antiauthoritarian foundation, skate pedagogy is complex and emerges out of the disparate discourses of rebellion, corporatization, conformity, and nonconformity. As Brayton's (2005) and Lombard's (2010) analyses of skateboarding iconography (like deck art, t-shirts, stickers, and advertisements) demonstrate, theorizations of skateboarding which portray it solely as a rebellious act overlook the fact that, for many, the purpose of skateboarding is simply to *have fun*.

In theorizing skateboarding as a decolonial underground pedagogy, it is important to remember skateboarding is primarily understood to be a recreational activity, and a solitary one at that. There is no guarantee that skateboarding itself compels individuals to upscale their learning experiences toward broader concerns of local and global import. It is for this reason that we cannot understand skate pedagogy as inherently decolonizing. However, this chapter aims to show how the

teaching and learning practices that emerge out of minority-led skate cultures (or groups of minoritized people skateboarding, mostly *together*) illuminate novel insights into how decolonizing forms of education are actuated through the everyday activities of subcultural insiders. The skateboard itself is a teacher, as placing a skateboard between a person and a cityscape alters the affective capacities of both. The skateboard redefines the purpose of a curb, ledge, ramp, or handrail, as well as capabilities of the person riding it. The venerated skater Daewon Song demonstrates this when he skates atop rocks, tree roots, and water. As does Lizzie Armanto, who was the first woman to complete *The Loop*, a skatepark obstacle that turns the rider completely upside down. Armanto and Song both show how skateboarding opens up new understandings of the relationships between human beings, their environments, physics, and their own bodies. This paper's latter sections explore how adding Queer and Indigenous bodies to those skateboards complicates taken-for-granted concepts like gender, race, and personhood even further. To foreground this study in the complex amalgamations of movement, matter, and discourse that give rise to skate pedagogy, I begin this chapter's analytical sections by analyzing the epistemological considerations suggested in one of skateboarding's most basic techniques – the *ollie*.

Of Ollies and Ontology

The ollie is a foundational maneuver in skateboarding and is a key component of more advanced maneuvers (or "tricks"). At first glance, an ollie looks simply like the rider is jumping into the air while the board follows suit. The ollie is much more complex. Beginning with all four wheels of the board touching the ground, the rider first *pops* the tail of the board by extending their back foot downward, which lifts the nose of the board into a vertical position. Shortly after popping the tail, the rider slides their front foot up the length of the board, scraping the edge of their shoe along the board's grip tape, which is typically made of an abrasive material akin to rough-grain sandpaper. This motion will wear holes into the rider's shoes, and these holes are a badge of honor, worn by skaters to as a

signifier of authenticity and belonging. This combination of motion, force, and friction allows the rider to flatten out the board in mid-air, at which time they must *catch* the tail of the board with their back foot, land back on the ground, and roll away.

Though bringing an ollie into existence depends upon the physical force a skateboarder applies to a skateboard, it is also contingent upon the texture of the pavement, the size of the skateboard's wheels, and the placement of the rider's feet. The addition of an outward rotation, furthermore, will transform an ollie into a *kick flip*. Adding a horizontal spin to a kick flip creates a *360 flip* and a 360 flip could be conceived of as a *tre flip* depending on the skater's sociocultural context. Several tricks performed in succession are a *line*, and the aggregation of skaters performing lines, the businesses created to serve them, and the grammatological systems that enable them to signify their experiences are all distinct agencies within the assemblages of *skateboarding* and *skate culture*.

Decolonial underground pedagogy is not limited to observable phenomena, and analyses of the decolonizing potential of skate pedagogy must also consider the political, economic, and sociocultural factors that lead skaters to their boards in the first place. These considerations include the physical, emotional, and intellectual labor of women and LGBTQ skaters who, by *having fun*, counter, contest, and queer skate culture (Beal, 1996; Carr, 2017). Still, skate culture would not exist if the skateboard itself is removed from it.

Despite skate pedagogy's liberatory potential, the power and capital associated with skateboarding rests mostly with corporations, regulatory bodies, and its predominantly straight male cadre of influential skaters, all of which contribute to the masculinist overtones of mainstream skate culture (Dinces, 2011). However, the minority-led skate cultures profiled here show how the value of skateboarding is not always and solely derived from the endorsement of the International Olympic Committee, multinational corporations, or wealthy power brokers. In framing the teaching and learning experiences found in some skate cultures as decolonial underground pedagogies, this chapter

aims to show skateboarding is cherished in Queer and Indigenous communities because it offers "that magical feeling you get from knowing that, whatever other identities you own, you're a fucking skater" (Skateism, 2019).

A Note on Data Collection

In the sections that follow, I read texts on gender, decolonization, state power, and skate pedagogy through one another to consider how material conditions informed by these discourses affect and unsettle one another. Data was sourced from two short films: *The Mystery of Now* and *Sibling – London's Queer Skateboarding Crew*. To approximate my own understanding of skateboarding as a holistic and embodied experience, I privileged texts which resonated as *sense-events*, or observations that trigger a researcher's "memories, feelings, [and] world-relations" (Allen, 2018, p. 45) in ways that reflected my own experiences as skater, thus inspiring further inquiry rooted in an embodied understanding of those events and their broader significance. Sense-events resonate with the pakapa-kapa principle of analyzing the communal value of production activities, or fishing (*pagkapa isda sa tubig*). The metaphor of fishing as a methodology can be traced to José Rizal, whose works describe the forced conversion of Philippine peoples to Catholicism as a process in which the Filipinos 'fished' for familiar-sounding Spanish words and assigned meaning to them based on local languages. Philippine Catholicism, as such, can be interpreted as a work of bricolage consisting of appropriated and assumed meanings that reflect context-specific values more so than essentialized truths or the orthodox teachings of the Roman Catholic church. *Pagkapa na isda* thus describes how this chapter plumbs the seemingly distant resonances that nonetheless link the visual culture of skateboarding, my own knowledge of skate culture, queer theory, the Olympics, and the fraught themes of freedom and captivity that weave their way through Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird*.

Throughout data collection, I often found myself comparing the seemingly infinite possibilities of skate pedagogy with the rigidity of the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) regulations.

Reading the data through the work of Indigenous scholars further unearthed parallels between the IOC's assumptions of gender and national identity and the concept of *settler futurity*, or policies and philosophies that call for "the containment, removal, and eradication of autochthonous peoples" (Goodyear-Ka'ōpua, 2019, p. 86). In contrast, the skate pedagogies documented in in these films reflect Goodyear-Ka'ōpua's (2019) conception of *Indigenous futurity*, "which does not foreclose inhabitation of Indigenous land by non-Indigenous peoples but does foreclose setter colonialism and settler epistemologies" (p. 86). They suggest the possibility of futures founded upon collaboration and reciprocity instead individualism, competition, and the pathologization of those gendered or racialized as other. The following analyses of Queer and Indigenous skate pedagogies demonstrate that the purpose of liberatory education is not to make invader colonialism inclusive. Decolonizing education means working to eradicate such discourses while establishing new ways of being that center our respect for (and responsibilities to) one another, our environment, and our ancestors. Skate pedagogy moreover demonstrates that this work can be *fun*.

Gender, Space, State Power, and the 2020 Olympics

Despite its anarchic reputation, skate culture is often a site in which dominant norms rooted in heteronormativity (Rockett & Fine, 2019), gender-based inequity (Mackay & Dallaire, 2014), and white supremacy (Brayton, 2005; Atencio, Beal, & Yochim, 2013) are reproduced. Through its imposition of regulations informed by assumptions of gender essentialism and the legitimacy of state power, Olympic skateboarding has the potential to further inscribe these norms onto mainstream skate culture. This potential is evident in the language the IOC uses as the regulatory framework of Olympic skateboarding, which stipulates that the athletes in the skateboarding competition must fit the Commission's definition of *men* and *women*.

IOC policy documents sort athletes into gender categories on the basis of "legal sex" (IOC, 2012, p. 1), or the sex printed on one's birth certificate. While the IOC (2012) acknowledges that

"human biology…allows for forms of intermediate levels between the conventional categories of male and female" (p. 1), the Committee's regulations reduce the existence of intersex and gender-nonconforming athletes to their hormones:

> Regulations are designed to identify circumstances in which a particular athlete will not be eligible (by reason of hormonal characteristics) to participate in 2012 OG Competitions in the female category. In the event that the athlete has been declared ineligible to compete in the female category, the athlete may be eligible to compete as a male athlete, if the athlete qualifies for the male event of the sport. (IOC, 2012, p. 1)

The IOC also conflates a medicalized understanding of gender with a concern for fairness in competition. This concern presupposes that a certain level of hormones will provide an athlete an advantage while ignoring more comprehensive theorizations of gender and sexuality. Such frameworks consider one's physical attributes, the ways others perceive one's gender, and one's own gender performance as constitutive factors of gender identity (Egan & Perry, 2001). An outcome of this policy is to eliminate the possibility that the Olympic Games might serve as a competitive outlet for gender non-conforming athletes. Olympic skateboarding is similar to formal schooling in this regard, as both enforce understandings of normative bodies and ensure that those who "transgress societal gender norms" are "largely left out" (Rands, 2009, p. 1). The institutionalized exclusion of Olympic skateboarding thus undermines what White (2015) identifies as a foundational component of skate culture- the dynamic relationship between skaters, skateboards, and difference:

> …skateboarding in urban environments critiques contemporary cities, and that skateboarding and celebrated [as]…opposed to the abstract spaces of capitalism, which are homogenous and controlled" (White, 2015, p. 12).

Sibling, a UK queer skateboarding collective, demonstrates how skate culture can foster richer understandings of gender identity. The film *Sibling – London's Queer Skateboarding Crew* documents a skate pedagogy that recognizes the importance of occupying space in a gender non-conforming body. In resistance to the hostility of non-queer skaters, one Sibling member notes that "we did end up taking over one corner of the big room because we were not gonna get any turns if we don't just take

over one space." (Sherlock, 2019, n.p.). Paralleling White's (2015) conceptualization of skateboarding as "a form of resistance to spatial [and] racial segregation" (p. 14), Sibling's occupation of contested space at a London skatepark could be interpreted as a challenge to the heteronormative and transphobic discourses within that context. The fact that queer skaters must fight for space in a skate park, a place already built to segregate an undesirable population from the public, provides a layer of irony.

Still, Sibling members bond over and within the liberatory and judgement-free environments they create for themselves:

> Skaters love other skaters trying, whatever you're trying. If you're just trying to go down a bank or drop in you'll have the whole park cheering. But until you feel comfortable in a skate park, you're not gonna take the space and do that. (Skateism, 2019, n.p.)

Another Sibling member recalls needing ten years to learn to kickflip, a basic technique that involves spinning the board in the air and requires significant technical and physical skill:

> When I landed my first kickflip, I was like, wow, imagine my little 11 year old self being like yes! But also, wow, it took me ten whole years…You get so much better when people are like "do it again do it again…you have a lot more motivation to like, to do stupid shit as well. (Skateism, 2019, n.p.)

These anecdotes were prompted by an interviewer asking Sibling members to describe what they appreciate about skate culture and the queer skate enclaves they establish with their friends. In both instances, Sibling's members noted that support, encouragement, and the freedom to learn at an individualized pace ultimately helped them learn to skate.

The documentary then shows Sibling members skating a small ramp in a corner of a London park. Few words are spoken but the scene is awash in sense-events. The sounds of wheels rolling over concrete are interspersed with those of wooden tails popping off the floor. These sounds herald the sight of a skateboard spinning in mid-air. A skater with pink hair wearing a sweat-soaked t-shirt hovers over this spinning board, controlling the board while moving in tandem with it. The skaters appear content and focused as they work on tricks and encourage one another. Though this scene lasts only

a few seconds, it captures a moment of joyful resistance built upon an embrace of difference. This moment attests to the capacity of skate pedagogy to cultivate compassionate physical, cognitive, and relational skills and orientations. At the center of this potentially transformative learning event is the skateboard. This moment, in fact, would be impossible without it. Underlying this joy is the fact that LGBTQ youth rarely encounter moments like these in school (Allen, 2015).

The ways in which skate culture might help subvert the colonial invention of gender is further encapsulated by a Sibling member's observation that skateboarding is "just fun, it's just a like stupid sport where you have like a plank with wheels. Why would you be so rigid about, like, gender?" (Sherlock, 2019, n.p.). This question underscores how the skateboard, even when presented as a child's toy, is a *queer thing* – a object that draws attention to the discursive construction of identity categories rendered natural and inevitable in Eurocentric culture. In this skater's account, a "plank with wheels" reveals the legal endorsement of homophobia, transphobia, and gender-based violence. The prevalence of these discourses even in a 'stupid sport' indicts both the pervasiveness of bigotry and the harm done in places where this bigotry pervades. This statement also provokes another realization: that the work of queer collectives like Sibling accounted for little in skateboarding's mainstream unveiling. Under the IOC's policies, Olympic skateboarding mandates that queer skaters must again be left alone to claim their space.

Skate Pedagogy and Indigenous Futurity

In addition to the IOC's gender regulations, Olympic skateboarding also conforms to the Games' competitive format, which requires athletes to compete on behalf of a national athletic commission, with few exceptions. The national mandate of the IOC regulations precludes participation from nations not recognized by the IOC (such as Niue, New Caledonia, and Iraqi Kurdistan) and by athletes who refuse to tether sport to national politics. Pramod (2008) analyzes the role of the Olympics in wedding ideals of human excellence to a robust state apparatus:

> The Olympics is acknowledged worldwide as the point of reference for nations' involvement in creating a *spirit* that could induce human beings to strive for excellence, that is, *faster, higher and longer*. (p. 112)

As an Olympic sport, skateboarding is no longer "about having fun with your friends," partly because the very format of Olympic competition transforms it into an exercise in nation-building. Apache Skateboards, a company founded by the artist Douglas Miles, provides a counterpoint to Olympic statism by promoting a skate culture whose legitimacy is not derived from the state but from the relationships between people, matter, and land. The entanglement of skateboarding and Indigenous ontology is showcased in *The Mystery of Now*, a documentary on the history of Apache Skateboards. In addition to tracing the growth of skate culture in Apache nation, the film functions as a source of sensory data on the affective capacities of decolonizing skate pedagogies, or educative contexts that uplift Indigenous ways of knowing and being through skate culture.

The operations of Apache Skateboards include producing boards with Apache-centered graphics, running a skate shop on the San Carlos Apache reservation, and employing a team of professional Indigenous skaters. Miles observes parallels between skateboarding and Apache warrior culture, as he interprets both to require resilience and the willingness to persist in the acquisition of skills and knowledge despite tremendous physical pain (Koht, 2005). *The Mystery of Now* documents the pedagogies and praxes embedded in the history and everyday administration of Apache Skateboards as it enters its third decade in operation. The film situates Miles's work and the educative becoming of the skaters recruited for the Apache Skate team within the broader collective endeavor of securing the rematriation of Indigenous lands and the preservation of Indigenous ways of knowing and being (Alfred & Corntassel, 2005). Endemic to Southern Arizona, Apache Nation was forcibly exiled and resettled on reservations as a result of the US military confiscation and occupation of Apache land in the late 1800s. Laluk (2017) notes, however, that displacement and genocide have not diluted the Apache sense of kinship with their lands:

> Despite continuous deception, mistreatment, dehumanization, and eventual exile of various Apache groups from southeastern Arizona, Apache communities retain strong social ties through kinship and clan obligations and retain significant associations to their former homelands. (p. 97)

Laluk (2017) further notes that Apache identity, which is defined by the relationship Apache have with land, becomes more intricate over time. An Apache skateboarder skating on Apache land therefore represents an evolving understanding of the contingent relationality of bodies, land, and matter. This respect for the unfolding bond between land and human vitality underpins Miles's art:

> When I look out at San Carlos, I see the power of the past. I see the way Native American people resurrected themselves and why. Because the land is forever. And when you realize the land is forever you realize you are forever. We are forever. (Buchanan, 2019, n.p.)

Miles founded Apache Skateboards as a means of connecting Apache understandings of the interconnectedness of human beings and nature, or what Styres (2019) terms *literacies of Land,* with the contemporary priorities of Apache youth, or their need for "access to goods and services like everyone else" (Buchanan, 2019, n.p.). Di'Orr Greenwood, a Diné/Navajo woman and Apache team rider, illustrates the role that skate pedagogy plays in her life when she explains that her identity is entwined with a history of trauma. Greenwood asserts that this cycle has ended with her, a fact she credits to her participation in skate culture:

> My great grandmother, who's still alive, had to endure such a tremendous amount of pain for me to even live. And that pain followed to my mother. It could've followed me but it didn't. Wherever you're from, it's not gonna dictate where you're going. That's why it's really important for me to connect my culture with skateboard culture. There is a rich, pungent aura that I'm supposed to carry to touch a little girl's heart that needs it and needs to be told *hey, you're special. You're gonna change the world.* (Buchanan, 2019, n.p.)

Greenwood's words are laid over footage of her weaving *lines* through freight trucks and skating through desert landscapes. In one scene, Greenwood rides up a bank and performs a *shove-it* (an ollie with a 180-degree rotation). After landing the shove-it, Greenwood exchanges high-fives with a fellow skater. One can see a fleeting glimpse of the graphic on her board- an Apache warrior wielding a rifle. Other skaters ride boards that are emblazoned with a reminder: *You're Skating on Native Land.* For

Miles and the Apache team, skate pedagogy helps to ensure that emerging generations of Native youth can see, hear, feel, and *know*, as Di'Orr Greenwood does, that they will one day change the world.

Apache Skateboards co-founder Douglas Miles Jr. exhibits a similarly relational understanding of his numerous roles as a skater, community leader, and subcultural insider. As one of a small number of Indigenous professional skateboarders, few would blame Miles for focusing on his career and prioritizing the common concerns of other professional skaters. These include largely individualistic pursuits like filming skate videos (or 'parts') which showcase a skater's talent and help them secure lucrative sponsorships and financial partnerships with skateboarding companies. Instead, Miles primarily uses his status as "the rez skateboarding expert" to expand belonging, create opportunities, and achieve tangible systemic change on the San Carlos Apache Reservation. The relational autonomy that underpins Miles's skate pedagogy is evident in his *Apache Passion Project*, a grassroots initiative to construct skate parks in Native American reservations:

> Skateboarding is the fastest growing "sport" on Native reservations. Most of our communities do not have spots or parks we can skate. We are taking the initiative and raising funds to build skate parks and ramps in our communities and neighboring towns.
>
> These funds will go directly to building skate parks and DIY skate spots for the younger generations to come. Most people continue to leave us out because we are not into mainstream sports but we love what we do and want help others too. (Miles, 2022, n.p.)

Though bolstered by his profile as a professional athlete, Miles's objective with the Apache Passion Project demonstrates a distinctively community-embedded and relational set of priorities. Miles seems unconcerned with bolstering his professional profile or securing opportunities to advance his own skateboarding career based on the traditional metrics of professional success in skateboarding (i.e. sponsorships, money, fame, and magazine covers). Instead, he has largely opted to leverage his notoriety and standing to secure recreational and creative outlets for Apache youth, particularly those who feel excluded from or disinterested in mainstream sports:

> When kids go here to skate, this isn't only going to create skaters. This park is going to create filmmakers and it's going to create photographers, it's going to create business owners, it's going to create social media people (Lerner, 2021, n.p.)

Here, Miles also demonstrates an understanding that skate pedagogy goes beyond skateboarding and skate culture. He recognizes that the skate park's communal functions might also offer Apache youth opportunities to develop creative, social, and professional skills. As such, Miles positions skateboarding as a catalyst for systemic change and personal growth that emerges out of the self-directed actions of Indigenous youth.

In the Summer that preceded this writing, I called Douglas Miles, Sr., unprompted but following his urging to 'call him any time.' I spent an hour visiting with him. In our kuwento, Miles shared some of the hardships involved in managing Apache Skateboards, as he observed that museums, art galleries, academics, and skate magazines only seem to care about Native American skate culture "once every five years" (Miles, 2022, personal communication). He also noted that despite being featured in ad campaigns, documentaries, museums, and art galleries at home and abroad, Apache Skateboards had yet to be featured in *Thrasher*, skate culture's de facto publication of record. Still, Apache Skateboards soldiers on, and the elder Miles beams as he calls his son "the hardest working skater" in the world.

Through skateboarding, art, and activism, Apache Skateboards, its founder, and its riders demonstrate how decolonizing pedagogies trouble "the ways colonist ideologies become normalized within national discourses and internalized among minoritized peoples" (Styres, 2019, p. 32). For Di'orr Greenwood, skate pedagogy led to her disinvestment from the notion that inherited trauma is inextricable from Indigenous identity. For Douglas Miles, skate pedagogy provides opportunities for Apache youth to develop into self-actualized adults. For Douglas Miles Jr., it is a means for safeguarding and sustaining Apache futures. After the 2020 Olympics have come and gone, Indigenous skaters will continue skating, creating art, and securing Apache self-determination on

Apache terms. Miles's work will continue to "help people become aware that Native American art is a living tradition. It is not static, it is definitely not just teepees and headdresses" (Koht, 2005, p. 3). The decolonial and decolonizing skate pedagogy of Apache Skateboards also underscores the fact that the Apache nation survived the genocidal crusades of the US military. It continues to survive and will live, in the words of Douglas Miles, forever.

Conclusion

The act of reading skate pedagogy, Queer narratives, Indigenous knowledges, and Olympic legitimation through one another, however, also begets a realization that athletes formally recognized as the world's best skaters will now be legally classified men and women competing on behalf of their governments, many of which are guilty of crimes against humanity. Those who deviate from the IOC's gendered and statist norms are effectively disqualified from participating in a potentially lucrative form of skateboarding. The IOC's policy thus centers what Trinh-Ha Ma calls "…the concept of difference not as a tool of creativity…but as a tool of segregation, to exert power on the basis of racial and sexual essences. The apartheid kind of difference" (as quoted in Barad, 2014, p. 169). Olympic skateboarding is moreover predicated upon Barad's (2014) conception of *colonizing logic*, in which the *self* comes into being by removing, resettling, and exterminating *the other*.

Yet, Olympic skateboarding is just one form of skate culture. Though the Olympics are only accessible to a small group of approvable athletes, there is no combination of laws, street signs, or obstacles that can prevent a person from riding a skateboard. Once astride that board, there is no predicting what a skater will learn about themselves and their relationship to the ground beneath their wheels. The ongoing commodification of skateboarding thus presents skate culture with an opportunity to recognize the subaltern discourses emerging from within it, inviting all skaters to participate in a new paradigm that offers collaboration instead of competition and support instead of

suffering. Revisiting *Caged Bird*, these analyses eschew literal interpretations that assume "freedom" means simply being able to "claim the sky." As Angelou writes, these cries cannot go unheeded:

> *and his tune is heard*
> *on the distant hill*
> *for the caged bird*
> *sings of freedom*

The decolonial underground pedagogies found minority-led skateboarding subcultures like Sibling and Apache Skateboards can ultimately be read as context-specific efforts to exercise sovereignty and self-determination in ways that are reflexive to the changing needs of Queer and Indigenous communities. This interpretation forms the crux of skate pedagogy's contributions to decolonizing education, as it suggests that teaching and learning to subvert coloniality and colonialism involves a prolonged and respectful engagement with one's community, surroundings, and self. Skate pedagogy shows how decolonizing education is not simply a matter of instituting the 'correct' curriculum, using the most appropriate and non-offensive terms, and making teaching practices and assessment tools *less* oppressive, pathologizing, or surveillant. Skate pedagogy shows that decolonizing education might instead be a matter of uplifting forms of learning that encourage people to come into responsive communion with all human and nonhuman others and reject the colonial mandate of mastery- be it over land, bodies, or knowledge. Skate pedagogy instead shows that developing a critical consciousness about oneself and one's surroundings requires a simple willingness to come into relation, an act of agentic association in which the skateboard might serves as a talisman and guide. On two feet, it is easy to dismiss as handrail as *just* a handrail, a curb as *just* a curb, and a human being as *just* a human being. Skate pedagogy shows that on four wheels, each of those things has the potential to transform into formidable obstacles, catalysts for growth, and agents of change.

These last three chapters' respective engagements with minority-led skate and punk rock pedagogy surface an important provocation in relation to this thesis's research questions. If the skateboard itself as integral to the queering and decolonizing skate pedagogy, is it possible to

instantiate similarly healing educational experiences *without* the skateboard? If punx of color turn to punk scenes to experience decolonial underground pedagogy, is it possible to pursue a similarly decolonial and informal type of education without punk's readily observable aesthetic and ideology? These questions speak to the need to theorize subculture beyond their stylistic inclinations and political posturing, meaning this thesis's study of decolonial underground pedagogy benefits from explorations of social formations that *do* things and construct reality in ways that differ radically from established norms. As such, I sought to emphasize how minority-led subcultures make observable contributions to decolonial conditions, relationships, and states of being. This thesis sought to celebrate how punk scenes inspire community-building activism along with the embodied ways in which skate cultures inspire holistic, ecological ways of thinking, and how the practice of unschooling models non-hierarchical social forms that honor the skills, aspirations, and agency of all learners.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

Introduction

Through its collection of interpretive studies inspired by the suppositionless Philippine methodology of pakapa-kapa, this thesis offered insights into how decolonial underground pedagogies occur in minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling communities. These investigations leveraged my positionality as an insider in each of these communities to show how they enable subcultural insiders to recognize injustice, critique coloniality, and develop relational construals of self that are rooted in a sense of accountability to their communities. This thesis does not position decolonial underground pedagogy as a solution to pervasive and perennial issues in schooling, nor does it argue that minority-led subcultures perform the task of 'educating' young people 'better' than schools. Instead, it functions simply as a reminder that schools and subcultures exist in relation and might have important things to say to one another about creating educational experiences and environments that facilitate healing from colonial trauma. This understanding signifies a beginning rather than an end, and this conclusion hopes to draw attention to the ways in which decolonial underground pedagogy might be utilized to theorize other issues in education, along with provocations for future research. Chief among these considerations is how decolonial underground pedagogy can inform efforts to address issues in schooling, such as equity, inclusion, and community-responsive approaches to teaching and learning.

This thesis showed that potent forms of educative healing occur in the communities of interest minoritized peoples create for themselves. It did so primarily by examining how punx of color, queer and Indigenous skaters, and my own unschooling family enact decolonizing forms of education through conscious communion with one another. As initial provocations, this thesis asked what punk, skateboarding, and unschooling communities offer historically minoritized members. From there, I analyzed subcultural texts and narratives to theorize the various strategies insiders employ in their

attempts to cultivate community, as well as the broader sociopolitical and educational implications of those activities. Future research can draw from and deepen these analyses by considering how spontaneous, informal, and community-centered learning might enrich initiatives to educate for goals like anti-racist action, abolition, and movement building for human rights.

The decolonial underground pedagogies of punx of color communities, for example, unearth relational, contingent, and permeable understandings of race, gender, rights, responsibilities, and identities. By organizing diasporic and Indigenous punk spaces, making music, and allowing the anarchic/an-archic ethics of punk inform their community activism, the teaching and learning activities found in minority-led punk spaces show how decolonizing education can be an all-encompassing lifeway that takes in root in all aspects of one's life, rather than a fixed unit in a curriculum or fleeting module in a course. Queer and Indigenous skate pedagogies suggest that a decolonizing education is not only a matter of content, curriculum, or the resurrection of subjugated knowledge. Educative healing also involves an understanding that Land and community are the first teachers (Styres, 2019). This understanding is further deepened by valuing our interactions with non-human others, whether they take the shape of landscapes, waterways, or skateboards. Skate pedagogies, in turn, show how decolonization is not only a matter of reclaiming the mind, or restorying history. Decolonizing education also involves celebrating and cultivating the union of mind, body, spirit, community, and land that birth knowledge, subjectivity, and futurity. Finally, my own experiences of unschooling show how decolonization is enmeshed with unlearning colonial logics, cultivating relational conceptions of personhood, living out a commitment to one's community, and storying oneself beyond imposed roles and representations. Studying unschooling as a form of decolonial underground pedagogy shows that its analytic value lay not only in comparing the unschoolers' outcomes and experiences to those of schoolchildren or positioning self-directed education as an objectively preferrable alternative to formal schooling. Rather, this thesis showed how

I have personally experienced unschooling as a way of putting three decades of decolonial underground education into practice, where lessons learned in community and from my ancestors coalesce into an embrace of my primordial responsibilities as a parent and partner. This commitment to beautifying the inner and outer lives of my family has coincided with a confrontation of the coloniality that underpinned my experiences as a diasporic Philippine subject and has resulted in my intentional re-centering of ancestral knowledge in pursuit of intergenerational healing. When analyzed as a decolonial underground pedagogy, the generative implications of unschooling extend far beyond comparisons to and critiques of schooling. Decolonial unschooling, for me, is a gift of the *bayani* and the *babaylan*. It is an opportunity to honor my ancestors and restore their knowledge to its rightful and venerated place.

The informal and experiential dimensions of decolonial underground pedagogy draw attention to the fact that decolonial and decolonizing education can look, feel, and act in ways that are not always represented or reproducible in dominant practices of formal schooling. Decolonial underground pedagogy helps us understand that decolonizing education cannot be reduced to a pre-packaged curriculum consisting of counternarratives and a specific suite of pedagogical techniques. Decolonial/decolonizing education rather entails an appreciation for the spontaneous teaching and learning that occurs in tandem with life lived in community. Elucidating the broader practical and theoretical implications of this thesis therefore requires an understanding of how these educative subcultural experiences evince decolonial conditions, relationalities, and futures.

Implications for Decolonial and Decolonizing Education

Chapters 5 through 8 showed how minority-led punk, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures can double as decolonial counterspaces in which invisibilized people can have their perspectives centered and uplifted while contesting colonial logics and building movements toward self-determination. This thesis's primarily autoethnographic chapter on unschooling showed how self-

directed education can demonstrate how decolonizing education can become an all-encompassing way of life. *Of barangay, bayani, and babaylan: Decolonial healing through unschooling* developed this notion through a critical and autobiographic reflection on my own experiences as an unschooling guide, mentor, and partner woven into my own experiences as a diasporic Filipino navigating U.S. schooling. Drawing from the Philippine concept of *kapwa*, or self-in-the-other, this chapter offered an insider account of how the subcultural praxis of unschooling helped me catalyze a process of healing from postcolonial and intergenerational trauma. Decolonial healing through unschooling goes beyond a reactive disengagement from formal education. Rather, it involves deeper interrogation of the roles we assign to ourselves and our loved ones. Eschewing the colonial compulsion to police the performance of imposed roles like model minority, obedient child, authoritative parent, and disciplinarian schoolmaster, decolonial healing entails conscientious efforts to carve out new relationships based on who we are and aspire to be rather than the roles we are prescribed and the stereotypes our identities represent. This study aimed to contribute to the practice of decolonizing education by showing how critical approaches to self-directed education can unsettle colonizing logics and re-orient individual subjectivities toward the honoring of reciprocal relationships.

Diasporic Philippine becoming and punk rock pedagogy showed how punk rock pedagogy, which combines critical reflection on oppressive circumstances with informal arts-based pedagogies, activates resistive feminisms, decolonial diasporas, and community-responsive action. In terms of understanding the practice of teaching and learning, this chapter drew attention to the different ways Filipino-American punks learn to understand critical analyses of history and politics while developing the community-responsive orientations necessary for taking what they deem to be appropriate action. The decolonial underground pedagogies suggested in the works of diasporic Philippine punks suggest that decolonizing forms of education are activated through agentic moments of association that engage one's body, mind, and community in equal measure.

Punx up bros down: Defending free speech through punk rock pedagogy expands these analyses to consider how punx of color understand and embody the concept of free speech. In contrast to free speech absolutism, the idea that all speech should be legally permissible regardless of its consequences, Indigenous and immigrant punks often exercise their right to expression in sensitively negotiated ways that affirm the sovereignty of targeted groups. This analysis suggests that dogmatic approaches to expression- be they free speech absolutism or strict regulations on what can and cannot be said – cannot protect human rights in the same ways as community-based initiatives that reflexively consider the content, context, and consequences of speech. The decolonial underground pedagogies of punx of color communities suggest that the exigency of decolonial/decolonizing education is predicated on prioritizing face-to-face relations above all others.

You're skating on Native land: Queering and decolonizing Skate Pedagogy examines minority-led skateboarding subcultures to show how decolonial and decolonizing approaches to education benefit from an embodied and place-based understanding of teaching and learning. Theorizing the ontological links between Maya Angelou's *Caged Bird*, Indigenous futurity, the 2020 Summer Olympics, and decolonial underground pedagogies of Sibling and Apache Skateboards, this chapter suggested that skate pedagogy can unsettle social categories like race, gender, sexuality, and identity. It did so by exploring the educative implications of subcultural contexts in which individuals are encouraged to participate as complete mental, spiritual, and physical beings that transcend whatever identitarian pathologies are imposed on them by dominant culture and its regimes of regulation. Skate pedagogies show how a decolonial and decolonizing education is not a product that can be acquired when an educator declares commitments to concepts like social justice, equity, or inclusion. A decolonial and decolonizing education rather starts with the construction of educative spaces in which individuals are free to experience the world in ways that are meaningful to them.

Implications for Research and Practice

This thesis's methodological influences, comprised of decolonizing methodologies and the suppositionless Philippine methodology of pakapa-kapa, suggest numerous possibilities for decolonial educational research. Its focus on texts, artifacts, and autoethnographic narratives oriented this research toward openness, reflexivity, and reflection. This thesis's analyses were first presaged by deep and suppositionless engagement with subcultural life. The ethical and methodological imperatives of interpretative research subsequently compelled me to prioritize context and the deeper meanings of infrapolitical practices, rather than simply reporting on the activities of subcultural insiders. Pakapa-kapa research and decolonizing methodologies exemplify approaches to social science that reorient research away from the extractive, intrusive, and decontextualized forms of inquiry used in colonial efforts to categorize, pathologize, disenfranchise, and enslave Indigenous and racialized peoples. The suppositionless and decolonizing methodologies employed in this thesis disincentivize extractive and invasive research projects and encourage scholars to recognize the gifts of sound and vision interred in their own reflections and in publicly accessible works created by minoritized people themselves. Interpretive, reflexive, reflective, and suppositionless community research paradigms invite researchers to approach knowledge as an agentic and contingent phenomenon that emerges out of engagement and relation, rather than a discrete thing that can be owned and exploited using manipulative tools.

These methodological and conceptual influences illuminate novel ways of thinking about decolonial/decolonizing education. This thesis's specific understanding of decolonization itself defies generalization, as it is rooted in social, political, historical, and cultural phenomena that are specific to the Philippines and its people. Instead of arguing that Philippine experiences of colonization and decolonization are exclusive to the archipelago, this thesis sought to show that the long and unfinished arc of Philippine colonialism is an important consideration in all community-based struggles for self-determination, sovereignty, healing from intergenerational trauma, the rediscovery of ancestral

knowledge, and the resurgence of relational ways of knowing. This understanding supports conceptual theorizations of decolonization that extend beyond its customary definition as the end of overt colonial rule, including the ways in which colonial logics influence how we practice and understand education. Pedagogical efforts to critique and contest colonizing logics thus warrant analytical consideration on par with more overt political projects aimed at national liberation, the rematriation of stolen land, and the reclamation of Indigenous lifeways. But rather than positioning these goals as incommensurable, it is important to recognize the ways they inform and emerge out of one another. These provocations underpin concept of decolonial underground pedagogy, which offers a suite of philosophical and pedagogical considerations that future studies can draw from to theorize the obfuscated and infrapolitical educational strategies found in minority-led subcultures and other communities of interest.

Decolonial underground pedagogy also has valuable implications for research beyond subcultural studies. This contention underpins my current work as a postdoctoral researcher, where I am currently leading research projects dedicated to theorizing, implementing, and evaluating next generation practices in teacher preparation. For me, this has involved teaching courses in teacher preparation that introduce preservice instructional leaders to decolonial and decolonizing education while helping them work through how they would cultivate reciprocal and respectful communities in their own classrooms. This mission also involves developing pakapa-kapa research initiatives where pre- and in-service teachers openly discuss their challenges, victories, and moments of agentic community building laden in their experiences. In other words, decolonial underground pedagogy can help future iterations of this work act upon Heffernan & Thompson's (2022) provocation that "the field of education is in dire need of new ways of thinking about attracting, supporting, and retaining school leaders" (p. 1). In one recent *kuwentuhan*, a preservice teacher shared that they independently developed a lesson plan on the invasion and colonization of the Americas for primary school learners

to the. This teacher's actions defied of a state-mandated curriculum which reflected a revisionist history that portrayed colonization as a necessary evil needed to develop the 'unused' lands and 'uncivilized' people of the western hemisphere. The teacher's rationale for doing so reflected two truths that emerged out of reciprocal and respectful engagements with their classroom community: 1) the students encountered more critical perspectives outside of school and demanded to explore them in class and 2) the teacher felt an obligation to tell them the truth. In this case, decolonial underground pedagogy's tenets of relationality, informal learning, and the radical agency involved in subcultural identity management have been useful to research projects that interrogate discourses around what make a 'good' teacher.

Departing from colonial logics like content expertise, behavior management, and authoritarianism, future projects related to this work instead hope to deepen public and scholarly understanding of relational, ethical, responsive, and engaged perspectives on teaching. In other words, decolonial underground pedagogy helps advance the idea that a teacher's responsibility is to serve as a mentor, elder, and guide, in the same way scene veterans, unschooling parents, and seasoned skaters do in their communities. The conceptual inspirations of decolonial underground pedagogy help to illuminate the spontaneous, organic, and quotidian teachers already do so, while its theoretical Decolonial underground pedagogy offers conceptual tools that help catalyze research projects in the mooring in decolonial and decolonizing education draws attention to the ways in which teacher agency is constrained by institutional dictates, such as school policies and legislation designed to make schools function more like factories than communities. My hope is that these tools prove useful for educational researchers seeking new ways of thinking about how to solve persistent problems in teacher education. These include exponential rates of burnout and teacher attrition, political attacks on culturally-accountable pedagogy, and demographic disparities that make it so students of color are unlikely to learn from a teacher who likes them or understands their experiences.

It is my hope that this thesis, a provisional and preliminary study of decolonial underground pedagogy, prompts further exploration into the role of autonomy in education. The educative power of decolonial underground pedagogy ultimately lies in its voluntary and non-hierarchical nature. Decolonial underground pedagogy shows that educative healing can correspond with writing a song, going to a concert, making art, gradually understanding how to be a parent, or spending twenty years learning a skateboard trick. Minority-led punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling subcultures are sites of decolonizing education primarily because they afford insiders the freedom to pursue self-identified learning goals while forming deep and abiding connections with others. Punk rock pedagogy, skate pedagogy, and decolonial unschooling exemplify forms teaching and learning that enable minoritized people to practice stewardship over their universes while contesting "…the colonial, reductionist trap of assuming that there is one, singular truth or version in regards to how we understand our ways of being" (Pihama, 2020, p. 353). Illuminating the role of autonomy and self-determination in decolonial and decolonizing education helps this thesis serve as a conceptual touchstone for initiatives that reimagine education as an opportunity for all people practice courageous engagement, exercise care for all others, and be cared for in turn.

Implications for Philippine Studies

While this conclusion has primarily focused on this thesis's educational implications, I note here that its emphasis on Philippine perspectives has yielded some generative conversations for the study of diasporic Philippine subjectivity. Uplifting the decolonial underground pedagogies of punk subcultures throughout the Philippine diaspora, for one, proves that Philippine peoples can be punks and punks can be Filipino. In my unschooling family, being Filipino means answering the call of the bayani and the babaylan and acknowledging the profound joy that can be found only in the face-to-face relationships that define our communities, give our lives meaning, and call us to attention in the here and now. The resonances between Philippine scholarship an transnational perspectives on

Indigenous education and philosophy also call upon Philippine peoples to deepen our relationships with (and and act upon our responsibilities to) *tangata whenua* (people of the land) and the rightful stewards of the occupied and inherently sovereign lands where we find ourselves.

This thesis celebrated that fact that there is not a single story about Philippine subjectivity that confines our people to colonial markers of legibility, such as compulsory Catholicism or blind fealty to an oppressive state (what the American teachers aboard the USS Thomas would have called the virtue f *patriotism*). If one can be Filipino *and* punks, skaters, or unschoolers, Filipinos cannot *only* be feckless servants of globalization or destitute victims of circumstance in need of salvation. That we might also be punks, entrepreneurs, or scholars is too complex a conceit for theorizations in which Filipinos can only be *the oppressed*, forever indebted to *the oppressor* for our very existence. In this manner, the educative healing found in diasporic Philippine subcultures echoes Hoskins' (2017) provocation to avoid essentializing Māori as victims and instead account for the multiplicity of self and the relationality of becoming:

> We theorise about the struggle against oppression and about dominating power structures, colonizing western knowledge, deficit thinking- but we don't *behave* that way. Most often we don't act like victims but are courageous, relational, and engaging. We step up and face others rather than disengage or throw things from behind colonial lines (p. 104)

Yet the automaticity of colonial mentality shows that Philippine identity-formation has been indelibly transfigured by five centuries of violent subjugation and the ongoing traumas of colonialism require immediate reckoning. Still, this mission is underserved by theoretical essentializations of Philippine victimhood or otherness, which offer little space for nuanced characterizations, resistive psychologies, emergent feminisms, narratives of collective and individual resilience, or acts of joyful rebellion. Unlike "relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a classroom monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production" (Césaire, 1972, p. 26), the educative healing of decolonial underground pedagogy sheds light upon the complex situatedness of dispossessed Philippine peoples abroad. Instead of drawing

colonial battle lines anew, decolonial underground pedagogy asks us to "figure difference differently" (Barad, 2014, p. 170) while diminishing what Kidman (2018) calls "the colonizer's hectoring voice", even as it continues to squeal and beckon wherever Philippine peoples hazard to tread.

A Final Word

I conclude this thesis in the same place where it began, in the dingy annals of Filipino-American punk rock subculture. Speaking to me at a San Francisco bar, AninoKo vocalist and community leader Rupert Estanislao outlined his vision for the scene:

> Punk shouldn't be just one thing. It should be a lot of different things. It should be individuals. It should be groups and crews. It should be a better reflection of the world we have. (Estanislao, 2014, personal communication)

While Rupert directed these comments at the punk community, I look back on them and realize that they served as a conceptual roadmap for my own understanding of what decolonizing education can and might be. To be *a better reflection of the world we have,* subculture and decolonizing education must involve constant and unceasing reflection, critique, contestation, negation, and action, undertaken to subvert the role coloniality and invasion play in contemporary learning contexts. Decolonization also involves an appreciation for how struggles for sovereignty and self-determination take on new meaning as we travel through worlds and our identities shift with our location. Where Lugones (1993) notes that minoritized and racialized people often experience travelling as a hostile activity, studies of minority-led subcultures show how traversing colonial terrains can also be healing, restorative, and fun. In studying punk rock, skateboarding, and unschooling, this thesis sought to illuminate the possibilities of decolonizing pedagogy minoritized people encounter as they travel from the skate spot to the punk show, and home again.

Decolonial underground pedagogy draws attention to how decolonizing education can occur in agentic moments of association and communities of interest. There, racialized and minoritized people build their own societies, define their own roles within them, and conceptualize their own

strategies for nourishing them. These chapters suggested that decolonizing pedagogies also occur in conversations with our peers, elders, ancestors, and ourselves. Decolonizing education cannot be limited to statements of intent, declarations of purpose, and curricular interventions that serve solely as window dressing for the same surveillant, pathologizing, and managerialist forms of teaching invented in the colonial schoolhouse. Educating for ideals like human rights, peace, multiculturalism, and decolonization involves interrogating our understanding of what teaching, learning, and education are, as well as how they occur. Alternative learning environments, subcultural spaces, and countercultural movements warrant recognition as rich subjects of educational inquiry and integral sites of knowledge production, consciousness-raising, and transformative change. The increasing instrumentalization of formal schooling furthermore makes it so that many students might only ever experience decolonial and decolonizing education within subcultural settings. This thesis might therefore inform scholarship that addresses the complex needs of contemporary students through interdisciplinary inquiries that show how decolonial underground pedagogies can be integrated into other settings to serve the needs of all learners. Above all, decolonial underground pedagogy shows that educational justice means joyfully and critically carrying out our responsibilities while honoring the gifts of sound and vision that animate our worlds.

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