

WHAT MATTERS?:

LISTENING TO/WITH PRESERVICE SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHERS IN GEORGIA

by

MORGAN PAIGE TATE

(Under the Direction of H. James Garrett)

ABSTRACT

In this study, I utilize Rosi Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism to theorize preservice social studies teachers' beliefs and perceptions of what matter matters in social studies education as well as what an attention to material relation in social studies offers. The purpose of this project is to be responsive to preservice social studies teachers based on the politics of location, by mapping power, multiple becomings, and ethics in service of locating sites of rupture in supposedly totalizing subjectivities and relations. Through a posthuman sound and listening (Flint, 2021a, 2021b) with preservice social studies teachers, sites of rupture became audible, both in attention to essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity as well as the relationship between Sport and social studies. The implications of this work highlight the need to query the taken for granted subjectification and roles associated with/in social studies education, particularly in the presentation and positioning of what matter matters implicitly and explicitly in social studies education (teacher preparation). Further, this research highlighted the utility of complexity, as it opens up sites of possibility for alternative figurations with/in social studies education (teacher preparation), in service to more sustainable social studies futures.

INDEX WORDS: social studies education, teacher preparation, Rosi Braidotti, Critical Posthumanism, posthuman sound and listening, preservice teachers, potentia, potestas, becoming, nomadic ethics

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## DEDICATION

To everyone and everything that poured into me. But especially to my mom: Teresa Anne Tate. Thanks for being my day one, Mom.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Like other parts of the nation, social studies education in Georgia is currently experiencing focused policing and surveillance amidst the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, alt-right backlash, a global pandemic, teacher attrition,<sup>1</sup> and a multitude of climate crises. Amidst this precarity, Georgia’s politicians appear to be sanitizing social studies curriculum of anything that could potentially be ‘divisive’ (I.e., discussing anti-Blackness, Black joy, people who are apart of the LGBTQIA+ community, and white rage), attempting to codify what social studies is and who it is for. For instance, in 2021 and 2022, Georgia’s Republican congressional leaders pushed legislation which aims to control what is taught in social studies spaces (e.g., Senate Bill 375, Senate Bill 377, and House Bill 1084), and they were successful in making one of the bills a law (House Bill 1084).

Concern about what is taught in social studies classrooms, explicit and implicit, is not a new phenomenon (Evans, 2004). For example, Republican Georgia politicians made changes to the social studies standards in 2016, after 9000 professional educators had already spent hundreds of hours reviewing and making suggestions for revisions (Downey, 2016). This included adding “Christmas and Columbus Day in Kindergarten,” which could be seen as a

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<sup>1</sup> In March of 2022, Martha Dalton of WABE, a public news medium out of Atlanta discussed Georgia’s teacher attrition problems: A [new survey](#) of educators conducted by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) shows more than 20% of new hires are considering leaving the profession within five years. That’s compared to 12% the year before. About 4600 school staffers — including classroom teachers, counselors and administrators — responded to the survey. (Para 1)

foundational (being in kindergarten) norming of Christianity (Christmas) and Eurocentrism (Columbus) in the social studies curriculum in Georgia. In this context, norming is a form of calcification, as it attempts to stabilize what can –and cannot—be learned in social studies classrooms in Georgia.

Thus, there is a precedent for politicians, who usually lack education degrees, telling professionals, with education degrees, how to do their jobs –particularly in the case of setting cultural norms through curriculum, ignoring educators' expertise in their own field.<sup>2</sup> Returning to the aforementioned legislation, the *current* scope of efforts to surveil and police social studies appears to be more organized beyond the parameters of formal social studies spaces (i.e., involvement of Moms for Liberty, the Heritage Foundation, partisanship in the Georgia General Assembly). Politicians, such as Bo Hatchett, argue, “At the core, this bill will simply be an attempt to affirm core values that unite all Georgians and mirror how we should all view our fellow man” (Cottingham, 2022). Hatchett aimed to codify Georgia’s “values” and “worldviews.” Hatchett, and his peers, seem to believe that there is a universal set of values that social studies educators should teach children in Georgia. Further, Hatchett articulates this for “man.” Again, Hatchett uses a normed (within Western humanism) singular conception of subjectivity: Man –in comparison to saying students, though the proposed legislation directly affects students. However, what *seems* and what *is* are not necessarily one and the same, a theme that will resonate throughout this dissertation.

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, the current Board of Regents only has one member that has a degree in education –Erin Hames. Hames did teach in the classroom setting for a few years --in North Carolina. Link to Board of Regents biographies: [Board of Regents | Members of the Board | University System of Georgia \(usg.edu\)](#) Additionally, our current Chancellor of Education, Sonny Perdue, has never worked in education prior to this role.

Reflecting on this geopolitical and temporal landscape, and my own situated location (white, cis woman), teaching and field instructing preservice social studies teachers in Georgia, I began to question what preservice social studies teachers thought of entering the field of social studies at this particular moment in time in Georgia. Though teaching, and teaching social studies in particular, can be tough, looking at the landscape from the perspective of someone just entering the field, the landscape seems a bit formidable. These preservice social studies teachers were still dealing with the ramifications of a global pandemic. Further, a new Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report (2021) also set off more alarms about the climate crises around the world. These were, and are, more-than-human phenomena (i.e., hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, etc.) that have had devastating effects. Further, these preservice social studies teachers also witness(ed) the increased prominence of the Black Lives Matter movement, while simultaneously encountering an intensification of outside pressure by politicians and other organizations to police and codify what social studies is and who it serves. Additionally, research shows that many preservice teachers that graduate and enter the field of education in Georgia will also quickly exit (Owens, 2015), which is alarming. If Georgia, and the United States generally, aims to keep introductory teachers in the classroom, it is imperative that we engage in research about their beliefs and perceptions of their field.

Understanding the urgency of the present moment, with all its complexities, I wondered what preservice social studies teachers in Georgia thought of the social studies landscape. Indeed, my participants, preservice social studies teachers, were in the midst of the broiling landscape, as they engaged in practicum and students teaching in social studies classrooms in Georgia. Given that they are the ones entering the field during this fraught moment, I wondered what and how they mapped the landscape from their vantage points, dealing with humans (I.e.,

politicians, parents, students, colleagues, administration, etc.) as well as the more-than-human (I.e., viruses, racism, rules, discourses, climate crises, the physicality of a classroom, social media). Further, I wondered what the landscape was doing to them, what they were doing to the landscape. Originally, I wondered, “What do preservice social studies teachers in Georgia believe matters in social studies?” In light of my theoretical commitments and methodological choices, I began to question: *What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia? What is produced through an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?* With these questions in mind, I will put my work in conversation with the existing literature in social studies that explicitly theorizes the human and more-than-human. Then I will briefly discuss my theoretical framework, methodology, and discuss patterns of destabilization, theorized with Critical Posthumanism, that were generated with critical artful methods, in my time with preservice teachers in Georgia. For now, I turn to the social studies literature.

### **Review of Literature**

It might seem most advantageous to survey literature in social studies on preservice social studies teachers’ perceptions and beliefs. Yet, the work I am doing is concerned with perceptions and beliefs ontologically, in comparison to conceptualizing beliefs as only epistemological (the mind’s relation to reality). Instead of assuming that the mind is separate from the body, I assume the mind and body are inseparable. Because of this assumption, I do not attend to beliefs as though they are only something of the mind. Beliefs are also embedded in becoming, an emergent and relational process of change (Braidotti, 2002, 2006). As preservice social studies teachers are becoming social studies educators, and I am preoccupied with their

beliefs about what *matters* and what an attention to *material relation* offers, I turn to literature in social studies that has also (always already) made that ontological turn.

Though some traditions in the Academy, such as Indigenous scholarship, have highlighted matter and material relations (I.e., humans' relations with Earth) (Deloria, 2001; Eastman, 1911; Kimmerer; 2013; TallBear, 2011, 2015, 2017), social studies scholarship has been a bit slow on the uptake (if not ignoring the uptake), in comparison to other social studies' commitments (I.e., humanist theorizations of civics). In the past ten years, some social studies scholars have incorporated and advocated for Indigenous ways of knowing and being in social studies education publications (Adeyemi & Salawudeen, 2014; Aponte-Safe et al., 2022; Arisi, 2013; Christoff, 2019; Sabzalian et al., 2021; Shear, 2018; Shear & Varga, 2022; Situmorang et al., 2021; Stanton, 2012; Stanton et al., 2019; Stanton & Morrison, 2018; Turtle Island Social Studies Collective, 2019), mainly highlighting the *need to include* and utilize Indigenous knowledge and histories. These contributions are imperative for critically<sup>3</sup> teaching social studies.

Beyond Indigenous knowledges, much of the published work that attends to the more-than-human explicitly in social studies utilizes posthuman and new materialist frameworks. At this moment, I find Indigenous knowledges to be generative to think alongside, but I turn to posthuman and new materialist thought for the confines of this project.

Most of this posthuman and new materialist scholarship in social studies has been published in the last four years (see [Table 1](#)). Posthuman and new materialist scholarship proffer alternatives to the humanist conception of human (I.e., rational, autonomous, and agentic

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<sup>3</sup> In this iteration, critical means attending to power, particularly in relation to erasure of Indigenous peoples in social studies education (I.e., curriculum that begins with Columbus).

humans) and anthropocentrism (centering of man), in social studies education, offering alternative cartographies for classrooms and research, which I will describe in depth across this

**Table 1**

*Review of Posthuman and New Materialist Literature in Social Studies Education*

<b>Scholars</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Theory/ Theorist</b>	<b>Conceptual or Empirical</b>	<b>Social Studies or Discipline</b>	<b>Journal/ Book</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Location of Research (Conceptual : First Author's University Location; Empirical: Location of the research with participants )</b>	<b>Research Location (Empirically or Conceptually )</b>
Adams & Kerr	2021	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Pedagogies: An International Journal</i>	Disciplinary Thinking	United States	Post-secondary
Cho et al.	2021	Posthumanism	Empirical	Discipline : Geography	<i>Journal of Geography</i>	Photovoice and Feral Cats in Korea	South Korea	High School
Cook et al.	2019	New Materialism	Empirical	Discipline : Geography	<i>Thinking Skills and Creativity</i>	Technology as Agentic	Norway and the United Kingdom	Middle School
Durham & Bronstein	2020	New Materialism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>Textiles and Tapestries</i>	Self-study and Teacher Preparation	United States	Post-secondary

Errázuriz	2021	Posthumanism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>Theory &amp; Research in Social Education</i>	Feminism and Becoming Political Subjectivities - History and Civics Courses	Chile	High School
Gunnarsson	2020	Posthumanism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>Pedagogy, Culture &amp; Society</i>	Tension and Choreography	Sweden	High School
Gunnarsson	2021	Posthumanism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>Gender and Education</i>	Equality	Sweden	High School
Helmsing	2016	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Counterpoints</i>	Curriculum	United States	K12+
Isbell et al.	2020	Posthumanism	Empirical	Discipline : Civics	<i>Journal of Multicultural Affairs</i>	Civics Literacy and Agency	United States	Elementary School
Nelson & Durham	2021	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy</i>	Curriculum	United States	K12+
Nelson et al.	2021	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Theory &amp; Research in Social Education</i>	Curriculum and Agency	United States	K12+
Romano	2021	Posthumanism	Empirical	Discipline : Art History	<i>Higher Education Hauntologies</i>	Decolonizing Art History	South Africa	Post-secondary
Sonu & Snaza	2015	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy</i>	Ecological Pedagogy	United States	K-6
Sundberg	2014	Posthumanism	Conceptual	Discipline : Geography	<i>Cultural Geographies</i>	Critique of Posthumanism in Geography	Canada	Post-secondary

Varga	2022	Posthumanism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>	Historical Consciousness and (Re)photography	United States	High School
Varga & Shear	2020	Posthumanism	Empirical	Social Studies	<i>Theory &amp; Research in Social Education</i>	Research and Methodology	United States	Post-secondary
Varga & Shear	2022	Posthumanism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy</i>	Indigenous Studies and Critique of Posthumanism in Social Studies	United States	K12+
Varga & van Kessel	2022	New Materialism	Conceptual	Social Studies	<i>Theory &amp; Research in Social Education</i>	Violence	United States	K12+

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chapter. In the following section, I begin by situating and describing posthumanism and new materialism. Afterwards, I trace the emerging social studies research that puts posthumanism and new materialism to work and attempt to map some of the ways in which the field is being theorized, connections across texts, places of absence, and potential becomings, including my own research with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia.

### **Posthumanism and New Materialism in Social Studies**

Posthumanism, taken at its word, is a bit of a misnomer in the context of my theoretical commitments in this dissertation. Posthumanism is not post, or after, the human, in that the human is not abandoned in posthumanism, though conceptions of the human do *shift*. Instead, the commitment to humanist ideals of human supremacy and rationalism are queried and critiqued, and alternative configurations of the human are proffered (Haraway, 1991; Wolfe, 2010). For instance, posthumanism decenters the normed human (I.e., white, male, able bodied) in the aim of producing inclusive conceptions of ‘we.’ We, in this iteration, includes people that have usually *not* been humanized or recognized as fully human (I.e., women, immigrants, Black folx, children). Furthermore, humans are in relation with the more-than-human world (I.e., viruses such as COVID-19, bacteria that lives in and on our bodies, air particles).

A posthuman figuration of human is different than humanism, which as previously noted, considers humans to be autonomous, rational, and agentic, and therefore superior to other matter. Posthuman theorizing usually focuses on the relationality between humans and the more-than-human, and the implications of that relationality in the context of the Anthropocene (an epoch named the negative effects of humans on Earth). This attention to relationality assumes that humans are not at the center of the world, which displaces humans from the top of the socially constructed pyramid produced by humanism. Instead, more-than-human matter co-constitutes

humans and humans co-constitute more-than-human matter. This becomes important in the context of social studies education, as the field traverses a global pandemic, climate crises, racism, and myriad of other complexities. Within my work, I specifically question what matter preservice social studies teachers in Georgia believe matters, as they traverse these complexities and become social studies educators. I will attend to the preservice social studies teachers' locations in relation to the complexities for the rest of this project. Next, I will delve deeper into new materialism, another paradigm which takes on matter (human and more-than-human).

Like posthumanism being a bit of a misnomer, new materialism is a bit of a misnomer, as it is not 'new' --though theorizing with new materialism is relatively new to social studies. As Plate (2020), a gender and cultural scholar, argued:

The post-anthropocentric [post man-centered] interest in the vitality of things parallels the non-dualist modes of thinking of Indigenous ontologies on which some new materialisms may in fact be based, but whose influence has so far insufficiently been acknowledged. (n. p.)

Here, Plate highlights that the more-than-human has always already been of important for some Indigenous ontologies.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, the 'new' of new materialism is also tacked onto materialism because materialism is already a tradition. This paradigm, new materialism, builds on materialism, and yet, is different than the older conception of materialism. Materialism, which is believed to be popularized in the first millennium from many parts of the globe, is an ontological theory that holds that everything is made of matter (Gordon & Ladyman, 2020). Furthermore, philosophers

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<sup>4</sup> Though not the purpose of this specific project, some new materialism scholars could benefit from a greater attention to the roots of their ontological commitments, to give credit where credit is due (I.e., Indigenous knowledges).

Gordon and Ladyman (2020) write those early philosophies of “materialism always looked for naturalistic explanations rather than, for example, those that referred to the supposed emotional states of the locally popular supernatural beings” (n.p.), differentiating this philosophy from religious thought. The importance here is the attention to “natural explanations” which were drawn from the senses. These facets (attention to matter and sensory experience) are pertinent for new materialists.

Yet, new materialists went a bit farther in their theorization of matter. According to Gamble et al. (2019):

...all ancient and modern materialisms deny matter any self-determining agency over either its own characteristics or the invariant, external laws or forces that constrain or determine its movements. Likewise, these materialisms all share the assumption that we humans are exceptional given our ability to know those fundamental properties, laws, or forces. (p. 116)

Gamble et al. seemed to be arguing that many *older* philosophies of materialism appear to be anthropocentric (man-centered).

New materialism articulates the human as embedded in nature (van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010), in comparison to the center of all matter. With this theorization, humans are matter. Matter, the human and more-than-human, is understood to be agentic and affective, particularly in relation (Barad, 2007). Based on this relational agency, new materialist scholarship tends to focus on material relation and what is produced by material relations. Further, Yi Sencindiver (2017) wrote:

Reworking received notions of matter as a uniform, inert substance or a socially constructed fact, new materialism foregrounds novel accounts of its agentic thrust,

processual nature, formative impetus, and self-organizing capacities, whereby *matter as an active force is not only sculpted by, but also co-productive in conditioning and enabling social worlds and expression, human life and experience* [emphasis added].

(n.p.)

Here, Sencindiver (2017) highlights how matter is “co-productive,” which means that matter (human and more-than-human) produce the world together. It is not simply the Man that builds the world. This foregrounding opens up new inquiries in social studies, as new materialism explicitly assumes that social studies cannot be solely relegated to humans (I.e., The history of urbanization should include cows, pigs, air particles, concrete, trees). Ignoring other matter in social studies would be considered fallacious in the context of new materialism. Some of the following scholars take up this call in their work, which I discuss further later in the review of literature. Next, I note some of the commonalities between posthumanism and new materialism.

### **Intersections**

Both posthumanism and new materialism are concerned with the human and more-than-human, bringing tendrils of the scholarship together. Moreover, both theoretical frameworks offer ample discussion on relation and causation as nonlinear. As Fernández (2016) wrote:

Like many posthumanists, new materialists reject traditional notions of subjectivity, unilinear models of causation, human mastery over nature and other nonhuman entities and detach intentionality from agency. (p. 275)

Thinking back to this decentering of humans, and instead articulating matter as in relation and “co-productive” (Yi Sencindiver, 2017, n.p.), the subject necessarily morphs from being autonomous (as in humanism) and it no longer becomes easy to identify causation.

This attention to relation and process leads to discussion on the concept of becoming and therefore, becomings, for the human and more-than-human. Drawing on theoretical physicist Karen Barad, Cassar (2017) wrote that “this notion of becoming... emerges out of different possibilities occurring at each moment and comes into existence through the fusion of social and material phenomenon, which are not distinct entities” (n.p.). In this quote, Cassar highlights the idea that matter coming into relation can produce a multiplicity of effects and affects, which can lead to different becomings. For instance, when teaching geography, a new materialist theorization of becoming might query agricultural practices to attend to how different material relations produced different becomings (I.e., attending to Earth, air, humans, patriarchy and capitalism in relation to over farming and the Dust Bowl in the United States).

The overlap between more-than-human ontologies as well as the attention to relation, process, and becoming sometimes leads to composting of the two theoretical frameworks, as they are mixed and begin to decompose, recomposing, offering space to question, critique, and advocate the role(s) of Othered humans and more-than-human matter in social studies.

### **Posthumanism and New Materialism in Social Studies Education**

To review emergent research, I used Google Scholar. To begin, I implemented a cold search of both posthumanism and new materialism social studies scholarship.<sup>5</sup> My search produced 120 pieces. Sifting through the 120 pieces, I only included scholarship in my mapping that included the key term “social studies,” in reference to the field. Sifting included reading the abstract of each piece and using the ‘find’ feature in the documents to ascertain if the piece was

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<sup>5</sup> My first search was “social studies education” and “posthumanism,” which included 62 results. My second search was “social studies education” and “new materialism,” which included 58 results.

within the field of social studies or just mentioned social studies tangentially.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, I focused my search on peer reviewed journals, book chapters, and book reviews. I excluded non-peer reviewed pieces (I.e. website blogs) in my search. Once I concluded with my sifting, I had ten pieces.

In the aim of obtaining a larger pool of literature on posthumanism and new materialism in social studies, I also cold searched the four most common disciplines taught in the state of Georgia: history, economics, geography, and civics. I limited the scope of disciplines to those in Georgia, as this is where my research occurs. During this search, five more pieces met the previously mentioned criteria. In an effort to include more scholarly pieces, I continued to search for pieces that met the previously identified criteria throughout the research process. After six months, I found three more pieces to include in my review of social studies literature that takes up posthumanism and new materialism. In total, my literature review included 18 pieces, including: book chapters, journal articles, and book reviews.

Excluding pieces is a form of boundary keeping, and thus there are limitations to the scope of my mapping. Though I included pieces outside of the United States, I did not include any pieces that were not in English, as I am only fluent in English and do not have the ability to review pieces in other languages with respect and rigor.

Additionally, while I believe social studies has porous boundaries and exists outside of the terms “social studies,” I did not include pieces that did not reference the field or a common discipline taught in Georgia (I.e. the classroom and research), as my goal is to map the collective

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<sup>6</sup> A tangential mention includes a sentence mentioning social studies in some capacity (e.g., Author’s Biography). However, a tangential mention does not include any substantial posthuman theorization or discussion in relationship to posthumanism or new materialism within social studies.

engagements (Boote & Beile, 2005) of scholars who want to be in the conversation of social studies education. For instance, social studies scholar Rebecca Christ is engaged in posthuman queries, but their work focuses on higher education and qualitative inquiry, not social studies education or its disciplines, specifically or explicitly. Therefore, I want to articulate that this mapping is non-exhaustive, partial, and situated (Lather, 1999), contingent upon my only speaking English and reading from folx that are using colloquial language of the field, for the field and its disciplines. With those limitations in mind, I turn to the literature.

### **Posthumanism and New Materialism in Social Studies Literature**

As noted earlier, new materialism and posthumanism are preoccupied with matter –both human and more-than-human matter-- as well as relationality between matter and what is produced by that relationality. This attention to matter and relation, and its effects and affects, featured strongly in my review of social studies literature.

The literature offered ample discussion of how new materialism and posthumanism could be generative for (re)thinking social studies conceptually (Adams & Kerr, 2021; Nelson et al., 2021) with technology (Cook et al., 2019), social studies curriculum (Gunnarsson, 2021; Helmsing, 2016; Nelson & Durham, 2021; Sonu & Snaza, 2015), and its affective qualities (Gunnarsson, 2020; Romano, 2019; Varga & van Kessel, 2022). Further, social studies scholars highlighted the possibilities that new materialism and posthumanism offer academic research, particularly in relation to method(ology) (Cho et al., 2021; Durham & Bronstein, 2020; Varga, 2022). Additionally, this review proffered criticism of new materialism and posthumanism, in line with my earlier discussion of the role of Indigenous knowledge being marginalized and ignored by posthuman and new materialist scholarship (Sundberg, 2014; Varga & Shear, 2022).

Much of the literature in this review focused on the more-than-human qualities of social studies classrooms and research, with little attention to the role of *human* bodies. There were only two pieces that heavily theorized the human in social studies, conceptually or empirically: Isbell et al.'s (2020) attention to children's agency and Errázuriz' (2021) work with high school students' subjectification. This is a critical point, as an attention to what new materialism and posthumanism offers curriculum and academic research is important, and I also argue that research should be brought into relation to the specific *bodies* (I.e., preservice teachers, practitioners, students) that are *accountable* (Braidotti, 2006, p. 78) and *responsible* (Haraway, 2016, p. 29) for helping<sup>7</sup> set into motion the material relations (I.e., classroom, curriculum, affect, etc.) of social studies classrooms. I argue that there currently appears to be a missing link in the chain, as important bodies (human in this case), and their perceptions and beliefs are marginalized within social studies literature that takes up new materialist and posthuman theories. I will elucidate this further in my review of the literature.

Though this avoidance/lack could be due to a concern about anthropocentrism in the field of social studies (I.e., desiring to focus on the more-than-human since social studies as a field tends to be anthropocentric), I further argue that the co-constitution of human and more-than-human (I.e. discourses, ideologies, flora, fauna) is an important theoretical project for new materialism and posthumanism in social studies, particularly in social studies teacher education, as preservice teachers are being formally trained in relation to many different ideologies and discourses (implicitly and explicitly), which has the capacity for effect and affect on their

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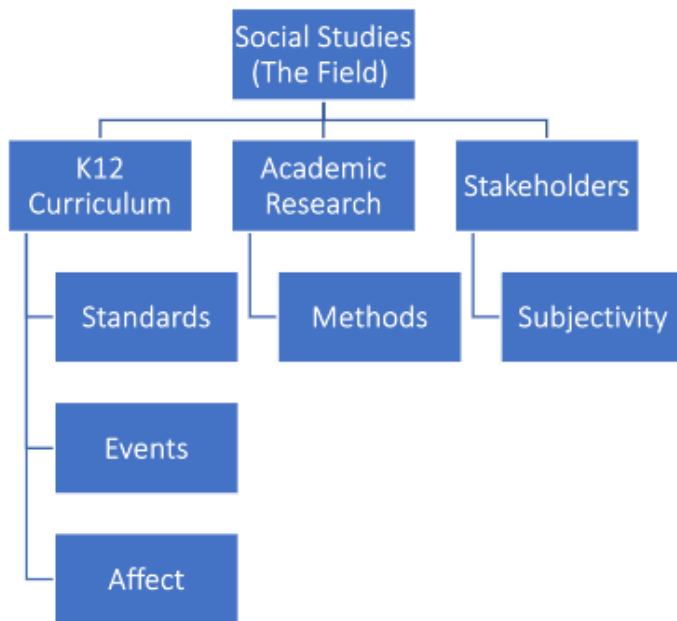
<sup>7</sup> Understanding humans as co-producing the world with more-than-human matter, I articulate humans as helping, in that they are not individually, but relationally, helping.

embedded locations as future social studies educators.<sup>8</sup> In conversation with the current literature, preservice social studies teachers are co-implicated in the work of (re)conceptualizing social studies, implementing curriculum, and helping produce effects and affects.

Thus, in what follows, I will elucidate how the current research offers tools for theorizing facets of social studies classrooms and research with new materialism and posthumanism (Figure 1), while simultaneously (mostly) ignoring the elephant (or human) in the (social studies class) room.

### Figure 1

*Visual Organization of My Literature Review*



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<sup>8</sup> For example, Ritter and Lee (2009) analyzed how Parker’s (2003) conceptualization of democratic citizenship had implicit cultural norms that were exclusionary to other conceptions of citizenship. Ritter and Lee argued that preservice teachers and teacher educators need to engage in reflexive investigation about such “folk theories” (p. 97). In this way, Ritter and Lee highlight how preservice social studies teachers encounter implicit and explicit curriculum in their preparation.

I organize the review into four chunks. The first chunk (in the section below) reviews scholarship that reconceptualizes the *field* of social studies with new materialism and posthumanism. The next three chunks of the review theorize the following facets of the field of social studies: 1) K12 curriculum (e.g., standards, events, and affect), 2) academic research (e.g., methods), and 3) social studies stakeholders (e.g., subjectivity of stakeholders).

### ***Theorizing the Field of Social Studies with New Materialism***

Some social studies scholars (re)conceptualized social studies, utilizing new materialist concepts, such as intra-action (Adams & Kerr, 2021; Nelson et al., 2021) and thing power (Nelson et al., 2021). Additionally, one manuscript (Cook et al., 2019) reconceptualized the impact of technology in a social studies classroom. In what follows, I will draw coordinates of their contexts and synthesize what their theorizations offer social studies.

Adams and Kerr (2021), of Kennesaw State University and Central Michigan University, respectively, used theoretical physicist Karen Barad's concept of intra-action to conceive an intra-disciplinary social studies (2021, p. 2), rather than disciplinary or interdisciplinary. Barad's conception of intra-action offers that agency occurs in the relation between things, as these things exchange and diffract (Barad, 2007, p. 141). Intra differs from inter, because intra assumes that two (or more) things co-constitute each other. They cannot be understood individually.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> In an interview with Adam Kleinmann of Mousse Magazine, Karen Barad explained the difference between interaction and intra-action, "The usual notion of interaction assumes that there are individual independently existing entities or agents that preexist their acting upon one another. By contrast, the notion of "intra-action" queers the familiar sense of causality (where one or more causal agents precede and produce an effect), and more generally unsettles the metaphysics of individualism (the belief that there are individually constituted agents or entities, as well as times and places). According to my agential realist ontology, or rather ethico-onto-epistemology (an entanglement of what is usually taken to be the separate considerations of ethics, ontology, and epistemology), "individuals" do not preexist as such but rather materialize

Thinking with Barad's conception of *intra*, Adams and Kerr (2021) wrote that an intradisciplinary social studies constitutes disciplines to be "seen as immanent to one another" (p. 7), instead of separate. For instance, when studying the Civil Rights movements, economic justice, civics, and history co-constitute each other. Adams and Kerr specifically argued that thinking the Montgomery Bus Boycott as intradisciplinary reframed the event as "space, power, time and resource allocation" (p. 7). It would be inadequate to discuss the Montgomery Bus Boycott just in terms of being a *historical* event in the Civil Rights movement. They also theorized different intradisciplinary social studies contexts, based on their work with preservice teachers: an art museum, neighborhood, and grocery store (p. 9-13). This theorization complicated the political boundaries of disciplines in social studies, offering space to think about social studies as relational.

Due to the concept Adams and Kerr (2021) utilize, intra-action, with their particular unit of analysis -conceptualizing social studies disciplines as immanent to each other--, they are heavily focused on the relationality between disciplines. Therefore, they are not so much focused on preservice teachers' subjectivities, as much as constituting them as part of the events and discussing what was produced (e.g., on pages 10 and 11, Adams and Kerr discuss white women preservice teachers feeling uncomfortable about being followed at a museum). Thus, Adams and Kerr attend to responsible bodies in their theorization of an intradisciplinary social studies, but preservice teachers are positioned as ancillary. They are proffered as part of the implications of reconceptualizing social studies, but they are not the focus of the research.

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in intra-action. That is, intra-action goes to the question of the making of differences, of "individuals," rather than assuming their independent or prior existence. "Individuals" do not exist, but are not individually determinate. Rather, "individuals" only exist within phenomena (particular materialized/materializing relations) in their ongoing iteratively intra-active reconfiguring" (p. 77).

Like Adams and Kerr (2021), Nelson et al. (2021), curriculum scholars at Michigan State University, also took up Barad's intra-action in their reconceptualization of social studies. Differently than Adams and Kerr (2021), Nelson et al. (2021) used intra-action as a tool to "disrupt anthropocentric conceptions of agency" (p. 457). The scholars coupled intra-action with political ecologist Jane Bennett's concept, thing power, leading to a focus on the agency of things. Bennett (2010) defined thing power as "the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle" (p. 6). Put differently, things are not static. The scholar's usage of intra-action and thing-power led to an analysis of how things are entangled and in relation, intra-acting. For example, Nelson et al. articulated possible ways to integrate 'natural' and 'man-made' material in social studies curriculum, by extrapolating on multiple examples of materiality (e.g., Hurricane Maria, COVID-19, lead pipes, statues, parks, and textbooks). The scholars argued that matter has agency and, in turn, the ability to affect human agency (i.e., producing intra-actions in the social studies classroom between the human and more-than-human). The scholars offered example lessons about architecture in history and school buildings as new materialist civic inquiry. Nelson et al. (2021) attention to more-than-human matter (e.g., Hurricane Maria) is helpful for understanding the agency of the more-than-human in social studies classrooms. In line with Adams and Kerr (2021), Nelson et al. (2021) scholarship offers a new materialist analytical framework that shines a light on the more-than-human, but it does not orient discussion towards how responsible parties, such as (future) practitioners come into relation with this conception of social studies.

One piece of scholarship, Cook et al. (2019), was more specific in its reconceptualization, primarily in relation to technology in a social studies classroom. Cook et al. (2019), educational scholars at the University of Cambridge, utilized new materialism to theorize Talkwall, a

dialogic software, in seventh year geography lessons in Norway and the United Kingdom. In this journal article, Cook et al. argued technology is not usually recognized as important in dialogic accounts, but instead, the human is centered. The scholars use Vygotsky's conception of dialogue with Barad's concepts "intra-action" and "affordance" to analyze how Talkwall was an actor in producing understandings about sustainability. Cook et al. wrote that they "apply the notion of intra-action to the digital to explore how discourse and matter conspire to produce key decisions that affect learning" (p. 220). In other words, the scholars argue that they are shifting attention to what is produced with the more-than-human (discourse, matter, and dialogic space). Cook et al. position Talkwall as "a performative agent in the material-discursive intra-action" (p. 228). In the analysis, Cook et al. specifically highlighted how the literal positioning (p. 229) and space of Talkwall afforded certain understandings and limited others (e.g., students not knowing the term "stone paper," which stymied dialogue (p. 228)). Cook et al. (2019) research is generative in recognizing the agency of technology and how it participates in the material discursive in social studies disciplines, such as their context of geography. However, again, this research is focused on technology as a unit of analysis, which the scholars recognize. They call on research scholars to study the implications of their work for teacher preparation and practitioners, writing:

If current constructivist and dialogic theories used in teacher training and professional development are to be strengthened with the introduction of new materialism, further research must focus on understanding the different ways teachers work with their pedagogical intentions, students and technology. (p. 230)

Here, Cook et al. (2019) recognize the importance of understanding how social studies practitioners come to the work, which is very much in conversation with my research, which

seeks to understand what preservice social studies teachers in Georgia believe matters and what an attention to material relation does.

Thus, across these three manuscripts (Adams & Kerr, 2021; Cook et al., 2019; Nelson et al., 2021), new materialism and posthumanism were proffered as helpful theoretical orientations and frameworks for (re)conceptualizing social studies. This offered a juxtaposed rendering between what is (tendency to study individuals, which are usually normed as humans) and what could be (studying relationality between human and more-than-human matter). This was productive, as it offered a different figuration of social studies, though it left plenty of space to research the responsibility and accountability of the figures who help produce social studies classrooms (I.e. preservice teachers).

### ***Theorizing Facets of Social Studies with New Materialism and Posthumanism***

**Curriculum** Some of the scholars targeted specific facets of social studies curriculum, the knowledge taught within a given course or space, with their new materialist and posthuman theorizations. For instance, like the aforementioned politicians in Georgia, new materialist and posthuman research has a heavy focus on social studies curriculum (Gunnarsson, 2021; Helmsing, 2016; Nelson & Durham, 2021; Sonu & Snaza, 2015). Some of the scholars theorized standards, themes, and events as curriculum. I turn to the specificity of their work next.

**Standards.** Some of the scholars theorized social studies standards.. For instance, Sonu and Snaza (2015), who draw on environmentalist discourses, theorize elementary education standards in New York. They wrote their work functioned as “an experimental and open practice of trying to act in ways that pursue what Haraway has called ‘flourishing’ or Dewey calls ‘growth’” (p. 259). Furthermore, the scholars cited Biesta and Bennett, focusing on Bennett’s use

of thing-power and agentic assemblages (p. 262) in their analysis of teaching, standards, and political ecology, within social studies.

Sonu and Snaza's analysis and critique of discursive structures, such as the standards, advocated for a new materialist political ecology, which would, in essence, force a shift *away* from an anthropocentric (man centered) curriculum. For example, Sonu and Snaza argued they explored "representation of knowledge, and more specifically, the ways in which 'nature' is taken up" (p. 259) in the standards to help scholars and teachers work against anthropocentrism (p. 260). Specifically, their critique of the standards was focused on the dualism of the human/nature binary and representations of nature as "utilitarian and instrumental" (p. 266). Sonu and Snaza substantiate this within the standards by highlighting that "nature became waterways for transportation, plots for farming, animals for domestication, [and] plants for harvesting and health" (p. 265). Sonu and Snaza's work offers social studies stakeholders an opportunity to see how language of social studies can create a discourse of nature as subordinate and Other (p. 266), in comparison to understanding humans as being embedded in nature. This theorization bridges the tangible (plants) and intangible (discourse), articulating them as relational. After critiquing what is, Sonu and Snaza offer what could be with political ecology. Sonu and Snaza draw on Bennett's discussion of Dewey to do this:

Dewey presents the public as a confederation of bodies that are pulled together by a shared experience of harm that coalesces over time. These publics, (as there are multiple publics at any given moment) do not preexist the problem, but rather emerge in response to it. As problems shift and move, so do publics. They are contingent and temporary. They form, collapse, split, and merge. (p. 273)

In this quote, Sonu and Snaza bridge Bennett's theorization of Dewey's concept of the public to social studies curriculum. More-than-human matter becomes implicated in this conception of the public in social studies. Sonu and Snaza begin the work of theorizing how social studies stakeholders, such as preservice teachers, become accountable in relation to curriculum, though the scholars do not address preservice teachers or current practitioners' perceptions or beliefs of political ecology pedagogically within social studies.

In conversation with Sonu and Snaza (2015)<sup>10</sup>, Nelson and Durham (2021) also theorize curriculum. Specifically, Nelson and Durham theorized Michigan's K12 social studies state standards in the aim of a "new materialist social studies curriculum" (p. 20). They used Bennett's scholarship on vibrant matter, which articulates matter as capable and agentic, in reference to its sociopolitical theorization of 'the public' (p. 4-5). The scholars wrote:

Bennett (2010) theorizes the intra-activity that occurs within the assemblages of publics, and she highlights the implications of a human agency that is beholden to, and emergent alongside, the agentic capacities of other humans, nonhuman beings, and things. (p. 5)

Here, Nelson and Durham articulated the ways in which Bennett's conception of vibrant matter shifts the meaning of the public. Publics are co-constituted by humans and the more-than-human world, in comparison to conceptualizing the public as *just* human, which has important implications for social studies courses concerned with the public (e.g., civics and government courses).

Returning to Sonu and Snaza's scholarship, again, the public includes the more-than-human, and assumption that we (human and more-than-human matter) are responsible to each other. Nelson and Durham (2021) diverge from Sonu and Snaza's work (beyond the specific

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<sup>10</sup> Nelson and Durham cite Sonu and Snaza, explicitly building on their argument.

standards) by theorizing a new materialist social studies curriculum with these three social studies phenomena: climate crises, walls and borders, and immigration. In discussion of walls and borders, Nelson and Durham (2021) theorize the Berlin Wall, writing:

In this way, just as the material of the Wall itself was a site of death and escape—a manifestation of state power and control that continues in new forms today—the concept of the Wall assemblage might cultivate teacher and student acknowledgements of our own entangled, and complicit, positions within the problematic maintenance, and continued construction, of new walls—figurative or physical—in our world today. (p. 14)

Nelson and Durham’s theorization of more-than-human matter in curriculum, such as this theorization of the Berlin Wall, offers a civics lesson on the formal and informal ways more-than-human matter becomes implicated in public policy (I.e. border walls). This positions more-than-human matter as important curriculum and ethical endeavor (p. 21). Like Adams and Kerr’s (2021) work, this reconceptualization implicitly assumes practitioners as taking on this reconceptualization, but the attention stays focused on the more-than-human.

***Standards and Events.*** Helmsing (2016), a social scientist at George Mason University, also theorized social studies standards with new materialist concepts. Using the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) social studies thematic standards and events as their units of analyses, Helmsing (2016) put to work Bennett’s conception of matter in tandem with Vicki Kirby’s concepts of nature as culture (p. 139) to reorient thinking in social studies curriculum (NCSS thematic standards) to the *lively possibilities* of the more-than-human (e.g., drawing on events, such as Hurricane Katrina). Helmsing articulated that the new materialist concepts *enlivened* social studies curriculum instead of treating curriculum as passive. Specifically,

Helmsing theorized Bennett's vibrant matter to foreground the agency of matter, in its ability to create a sense of wonder. For example, Helmsing wrote:

Agency is shared, displaced, or replaced, and the world exhibits a more complex give and take between nature and culture in which organisms, worksapes, landscapes, ecosystems, and other formations reveal material forces at play across time and space.  
(p. 149)

Put differently, understanding matter as vibrant and agentic complicates the notion that only humans hold agency. Helmsing further argued that an attention to matter creates a "curriculum of enchantment" (p. 143). Helmsing used Hurricane Katrina to exemplify this (p. 141), attending to the more-than-human elements instead of focusing it as a historical event, shifting the units of analysis from one event of the past to agentic relations that still constitute the present. Helmsing teases this apart when he wrote that engaging with Katrina as curriculum:

requires students to think about the role of objects in history - floods and flooding, filthy water, the Superdome, levees, New Orleans as an inhabited place, the life of a hurricane - and to imagine things as historical agents. The relations between things and people, the human world and the natural world bind together students and the world (not necessarily their world) to make provisional connections. (p. 141)

In this quote, Helmsing offered Hurricane Katrina, traditionally positioned as a historical event and thing of the past, as an emergent and relational event in social studies curriculum. This is also an example of Helmsing's attention to how new materialist theory allows social studies to "wonder" (p. 141) about events relegated to the past (e.g., Hurricane Katrina). It is no longer a flat event, in that Katrina cannot be boxed in and stabilized. With Helmsing's theorization, there are a multiplicity of sites of social studies inquiry.

*Events.* Gunnarsson (2021), an educational scholar at Stockholm University, also theorized social studies curricular events for the purpose of “explor[ing] how to enact a teaching practice in social studies concerning questions of equality” (p. 34). Gunnarsson conducted research alongside a teacher and fifty-two, 16-year-old students in two Swedish secondary social studies classrooms, utilizing a feminist posthuman analysis. With Gunnarsson’s participatory methodological approach, she theorized events as, “a set of entangled material-discursive moments” (p. 39), within a posthuman conceptual framework.

In this piece, housed in *Gender and Education*, Gunnarsson identifies Braidotti as their chief theorist (p. 37), though she also cites Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, a feminist, continental philosopher at Stockholm University. She theorizes three events from her research with Swedish high school students, which included: 1) watching Swedish television show, *The Best Man*, and discussion in class, 2) an exercise on gendered privileges, and 3) school materials and analytical questions about norms. Gunnarsson argues that the purpose of this work is to “address sexism, racism, classism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia in ways that work toward the inclusion of difference and diversity in education and in society as a whole” (p. 34). Put differently, Gunnarsson attends to power (e.g., sexism), positioning the isms as negative and aims for a positive conception of difference.

Gunnarsson theorized the events, showcasing how norms were ruptured and reinforced. For instance, in relation to the third event, students took note of the inaccessibility of stairs for some bodies (p. 44). Students, studying the concept of equality in the lessons, recognized “how the organization of the school produced unequal access to spaces within the school” which led to student discussion of “how embedded inequality and injustice were in the fabric of everyday life in school” (p. 44). In this way, Gunnarsson connotes that students identified norms that

privileged students that are able bodied and marginalized students are that disabled. Gunnarsson specifically noted that:

This gives a shift from considering events only either as part of reproducing and fixating or as challenging and transforming displaying how gendered, sexualized, racialized and classed embodied doings and norms are always inflected by moving patterns. (p. 46)

In this quote, Gunnarsson recognizes the rhizomatic qualities of events as sites of inquiry for issues of equity in social education.

*Affects.* Affect was also an important facet of curriculum theorizing in the new materialist and posthuman social studies literature (Gunnarsson, 2020; Romano, 2019; Varga & van Kessel, 2022). Affect, in the context of new materialism and posthumanism, tends to be described as bodily intensities, feelings, and emotions (Braidotti, 2006). Each of the following pieces of scholarship theorizes these embodied responses as sites of inquiry in social studies.

In a different manuscript, Gunnarsson (2020), the previously mentioned scholar, theorized her collaborative ethnographic work beyond the three events, instead writing through her collaborative ethnographic methodology in the two Swedish secondary social studies classrooms over the course of six lessons (p. 2-3). Each lesson was planned around the concepts of norms and equality. In this manuscript, Gunnarsson used the methodology and her theoretical framework, feminist posthumanism, to investigate tensions, or “interdependent contradictions and frictions co-producing affective qualities,” (p. 4) and choreography, the “exploring the teaching practice (bodies and spaces) in terms of relational frictions and movements” (p. 5), with interviews from focus groups. She organized her piece by examining affectivity in relation to notions of uncertainty, transformation, and silence in the interviews. Additionally, Gunnarsson (2020) wrote:

Silence, listening, speech and engagement are all produced within the multiple relational movements of students, teacher, instructions, classroom, computers, gender formations and recognition. Altogether, they create affective qualities and embodied choreographies potentialising what the teaching may become. (p. 12)

In this quote, Gunnarsson offers how relationality produces bodily responses (I.e. intensities and emotions) that can be generative for understanding how social studies curriculum moves beyond cognitive functions, which destabilizes the mind/body dichotomy. She advocated this disruption as a site of “critical and careful sensibility” (p.13) in classrooms. Again, languaging this as a “sensibility” positions affect as a site of curriculum, something that teaches.

Likewise, Romano (2021), a fine arts scholar at Cape Peninsula University of Technology, researched the generative possibilities of affect in their university art history course through a case study. In this case study, Romano (2021) was preoccupied with the norms, specifically engaging with the Other (which is usually positioned as marginalized by norms). In this piece, Romano theorized the case study with a myriad of concepts, including: Donna Haraway’s situated knowledges, response-ability, and diffraction, Barad’s agential realism and agential cuts, post structural and postmodern philosopher Jacques Derrida’s hauntology, and Israeli artist and philosopher Bracha Ettinger’s matrixial theory (p. 67-69). This case study involved critical arts-based pedagogical encounters’ affective impact (e.g., Winged Victory of Samothrace, Sethembile Msezane’s performance entitled, Chapungu – the day Rhodes fell, and the removal of the Cecil Rhodes statue from campus) (p. 73). The students and the scholar engaged in extended writing about these encounters, which the scholar analyzed, and argued that both relevancy and the ability to “identify with the artist and her performance” (p. 83) supported a decolonizing methodology. Specifically, Romano proffered that:

the aesthetic encounter activated a matrixial rapport through which the relationship between ethics, epistemology and ontology were enacted as students and I engaged issues of decoloniality, social justice both within the academy and beyond. (p. 84)

Romano's quote refers back to the notion that the "aesthetic encounters" were curriculum, in that they taught, and led to affective shifts, by attending to power structures (e.g., affective responses of encountering the removal of an imperialist figure's statue, such as Cecil Rhodes, from campus). Romano participates in social studies discussion of matter being in relation (encounters), producing effects and affects, which are positioned as teachable moments in art history. Though the main unit of analyses of Romano's case study is affect as art history curriculum, this work positions affect as implicated the becoming of the students and herself, which could be a ripe site to explore possible forms of responsibility and accountability as stakeholders in their ecologies.

Similarly, Varga and van Kessel (2022) attend to violence and its affective qualities in social studies curriculum in their review of Wozolek's (2020) book, *Assemblages of Violence in Education Everyday Trajectories of Oppression*. They specifically highlighting its theoretical underpinnings (poststructuralism and new materialism) and contents (discussion of violence and related affects within the context of a middle school and women that have experienced abuse) and what this might offer social studies education.

Varga and van Kessel (2022) discuss Wozolek's (2020) text, theorizing her book with new materialism. For instance, Varga and van Kessel (2022) wrote that Wozolek's conception of assemblages of violence may help attend to violence in social studies curriculum in how violence is "made, unmade, and remade through historical, social, and educational contexts" (p. 500). Put differently, violence is relational, unstable, and can be iterative, if thought as an assemblage.

Furthermore, Varga and van Kessel argue that “Wozolek’s book can help social studies teachers and teacher educators begin to see the ordinary components of assemblages of violence, including the part that they play” (p. 502). In this way, Varga and van Kessel’s book review takes up new materialism and Wozolek’s use of assemblages of violence, proffering that social studies (curriculum and educators) would benefit from conceiving violence as always already interwoven (p. 502) with a myriad of affects, even those that seem oppositional (I.e. pain and joy). Varga and van Kessel’s review complicates social studies curricular engagements with violence, offering space to recognize how violence is not synonymous with negativity, particularly negative affects.

The reviewed literature offers new materialist and posthuman theorizations of social studies curriculum, bringing to the more-than-human, relationality, and what is produced by relationality (e.g., affect). In doing so, traditional humanist (I.e., centering of the rational individual) conceptions of social studies are sidelined in curriculum. However, this also sidelines the humans that are accountable and responsible for participating in the conceptualizing the social studies curriculum (I.e. preservice teachers, practitioners), (inadvertently) shifting accountability and responsibility.

### ***Theorizing Social Studies Research in Higher Education with New Materialism***

Beyond curriculum, several scholars theorized the generative qualities of new materialist and posthumanism for social studies research wholistically (Varga & Shear, 2020), and in reference to particular method(ologies) (Durham & Bronstein, 2020; Cho et al., 2021; Varga, 2022). The following section explores each of these in turn.

**Research Wholistically** Departing from empirical work, Varga and Shear (2020) used posthumanism in a book review to address research and methodology in the academy, for the

purpose of broadening what constitutes social studies research (e.g., more-than-human matter). Reviewing Kuby and Christ's book (2019), *Speculative Pedagogies of Qualitative Inquiry*, Varga and Shear (2020) highlighted how the book expanded their thinking around research and methodology and its implications for social studies. For instance, Varga and Shear wrote:

Relating to social studies education(al) (research), Kuby and Christ remind us that everything around us (i.e., materialities of the world, texts, ideas, and histories) has traces (upon traces) of histories that deserve to be acknowledged and interrogated. (p. 462)

In other words, Varga and Shear (2020) theorize Kuby and Christ's (2019) text as an invocation for inquiring about (the histories of) the material world. Varga and Shear (2020) position the multiplicitous histories of the material world as warranting legitimate attention in social studies research.

Furthermore, in the book review, Varga and Shear (2020) appreciate the experimental nature of Kuby and Christ's (2019) text. Varga and Shear (2020) wrote, "When we enter into territories that support and promote liminality—ambiguity or disorientation—we can begin to (re)imagine (re)new(ed) approaches seeking to rupture normativity and rigidity" (p. 462). Here, Varga and Shear support strangeness, in an effort to rupture "normativity". This seems to be in response to their concern, which seems to be their belief that traditional research in social studies is closing off potential opportunities for new thought and ways of being to form. Though writing this review, Varga and Shear center the posthuman work of Kuby and Christ to push the boundaries of social studies research.

**Methods of Research.** Varga and Shear's theorization of social studies research mapped in the preceding paragraph is in relation to the field of social studies, more holistically. However,

some scholars theorized specific method(ologies) of research with posthumanism or new materialism (Cho et al., 2021; Durham & Bronstein, 2020; Varga, 2022).

For instance, geography scholars Cho et al. (2021)'s research utilized photovoice as a method in a Korean geography course. They described photovoice as a "community-based, participatory qualitative methodology in which participants take photographs in order to interpret or tell a story" (p. 82). The focus of the photovoice was feral cats in Daegu, Korea. Cho et al. utilized grounded theory to analyze the images and captions that the students produced. By coding the photovoice submissions with grounded theory, the scholars found multiple themes and theorizations, because grounded theory is an iterative process of analysis. For instance, when the feral cats were described as inferior, Cho et al. drew on Descartes (p. 87). However, the scholars also theorized other photovoices using posthumanism, citing Badmington, Braun (p. 88), Haraway (p. 89), and Braidotti (p. 90). Cho et al.'s engagement with photovoice offered visual representations of relations between more-than-human matter and humans, offering insight about posthuman theorizations of place for social studies.

Differently, Durham and Bronstein (2020), utilized self-study when working with preservice teachers in a field-site in Midwest in the United States. The scholars aimed to:

investigate how our experiences as K-12 teachers and then university methods instructors were informed by and through the relationships between ourselves, our students, our partner mentors, and even the space in which we practiced. (p. 1)

In other words, the scholars used self-study to attend to relationality. Specifically, the scholars used assemblage as the theoretical foundation of their self-study as teacher educators, attending to how the space and bodies were in relation during analysis of weekly reflections. They focused on the field classroom assemblage (i.e., classroom, teacher educator, mentor teacher, students,

preservice teachers). Durham and Bronstein wrote, “Our classrooms were ‘a machinic assemblage of bodies, of actions and passions, an intermingling of bodies reacting to one another’” (p. 3). In other words, the space and bodies were seen as co-constituting each other. The scholars theorized this site-based classroom assemblage as offering different outcomes than a conventional course located at a university. For instance, Durham and Bronstein wrote, “The place a methodology class is taught impacts the development of skills and dispositions needed to manage and instruct in an actual classroom in natural and authentic ways” (p. 5). In other words, the scholars appear to argue that through self-study, the social studies teacher educators found that being in schools (site based) is reflective of the actual work done by teachers, and thus is a better space (and assemblage) to learn methods as preservice teachers. The implication of this self-study attends to the importance of place and space in social studies teacher preparation.

Varga’s (2022) article highlights the possibilities of (re)photography, a method that brings together different photos in the same context, place, or space. Varga uses the lens of hauntology and posthuman concepts, such as assemblage, rhizome, and spacetimemattering to theorize (re)photography (p. 4) and its implications for social studies. Varga argues that “engaging with (re)photographs highlighted the complex and distinctly nuanced way that historical consciousness/thinking is experienced” (p. 17). This is evidenced in Varga’s discussion of his methodology with high school students in Florida, and their encounters with three different (re)photographs (e.g., a high school used and abandoned, a modern street, juxtaposed as a place during WWII, land now versus in the Civil War). Varga wrote that “by bringing to light the intra-connected-ness of temporality and materiality within the context of change,” students thought about the past in a more “nuanced” manner, than had they simply looked at a photo that did not stretch across space and time (p. 17).

Varga argues that he is particularly interested in interrupting “humanist framings of social studies education” by attending to material relation, which in this context is space, time, and matter of (re)photographs (p. 3). In this context, (re)photography offers social studies research and practice the opportunity to disrupt the notion that an image is totalizing (I.e., ‘capturing’ a photo or looking at a photo already ‘taken’ photo and believing the contents as fact).

Photovoice (Cho et al., 2021), self-study (Durham & Bronstein, 2020), and (re)photography (2022) were theorized with posthuman and new materialist concepts to showcase relationships between bodies. For example, Cho et al. (2021) attended to cats and people, cityscapes, and stigma in their use of photovoice. As noted, Durham and Bronstein (2020) attended to relationship between bodies in a site-based classroom (assemblage). Finally, Varga (2022) attended to relationships between photographs, history, memory, and students. Therefore, the methods employed in social studies, theorized with posthuman and new materialist concepts, were generative for attending to relationships between bodies, but again, the focus was not on accountable bodies (I.e., social studies practitioners or preservice teachers).

### ***Theorizing Social Studies Stakeholders with New Materialism and Posthumanism***

A couple pieces of scholarship explicitly theorized social studies stakeholders, in comparison to including them as ancillary components of the research. In particular, Errázuriz (2021) theorized Chilean high school students’ subjectivity with new materialism and posthumanism. Additionally, Isbell et al. (2020) engaged in research with young children, utilizing posthumanism to theorize their subjectivity as citizens. I will unpack both studies next.

Errázuriz (2021), a research associate at the Center for Educational Justice in the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, engaged posthumanism and new materialism in their critical ethnographic dissertation research in Santiago, Chile. Errázuriz’ research addressed “how

affects work in the production of gender/political subjectivities and the intersection of history education and historical narratives” (p. 33) with two teachers and five students, symbols, and historical narratives at a high school. There were two facets: 1) A focus on ethics, and 2) how narratives produce affects.

In the theorization of subjectivity, Errázuriz (2021) cited Braidotti’s conception of affirmative ethics, focusing on Braidotti’s conception of subjectivity as emergent (p. 30). Errázuriz also leaned on feminist scholar, Sara Ahmed, sociologist and social work scholar, Nick Fox and Pam Alldred, and affect scholar, Michalinos Zembylas, in her discussion of new materialism, the affective turn, and in her analysis of research with the students and teachers. Errázuriz positioned the narratives as agentic (new materialist), producing difference in the subjectivities (posthuman). This positions more-than-human matter as acting on the high school social studies students and teachers. For instance, Errázuriz (2021) wrote:

The historical narratives present in this school and the affects that crossed these narratives had several effects. I believe that the affects flowing through teachers, particularly Paula, were aggregative ones which tended to territorialize traditional hegemonic assemblages regarding youth inexperience and girls’ need to be protected and formed to be responsible future citizens. (p. 46)

Put differently, Errázuriz is highlighting how historical narratives (more-than-human entities) produced urges in the teacher, Paula, to shield students, primarily women, and help mold students into citizens. Further, Errázuriz theorized how students negotiated their subjectification:

I have also analyzed the students’ gender/political subjectification, and I understand the affects that changed them as working to territorialize the assemblage of certain historical

narratives and symbols from the Left but also deterritorialize the hegemonic gender and political school assemblage in which they were immersed. (p. 46)

In other words, Errázuriz analyzed how students codified leftist ideologies, primarily through the narratives and symbols of those discourses, while simultaneously challenging how they were positioned as youth and girls/women. Errázuriz theorizes these negotiations with Braidotti, articulating them as an ‘ethics of joy’ (p. 46).

Specifically, Errázuriz shined a light on social studies teachers’ production of negative affects in relation to hegemonic discourses (“youth inexperience and girls’ need to be protected and formed to be responsible future citizens”). Like former pieces in this literature review, Errázuriz (2021) highlights the agency of the more-than-human (narratives and discourse), but Errázuriz (2021) takes the theorization further by specifically focusing on how that agency affected humans’ (high school students) ethics, mapping relationality between bodies (I.e., hegemonic forces, teachers, and students).

Isbell et al.’s (2020), literacy scholars at Tennessee Tech University, also disrupted hegemonic forces that tend to marginalize children, in their posthuman theorization of a social studies space. The scholar’s article focused on how seven elementary students engaged with citizenship in a summer literacy program. The scholars drew on literacy scholars Kuby et al. (2019), as well as Critical Theorist Paulo Freire’s (p. 1) conception of critical consciousness (p. 2) and sociocultural theories of learning, citing educational philosopher and reformer John Dewey (p. 2), to theorize the elementary students as agents of change, in becoming, as they interact with children’s literature and their playground.

This attention to agency came to the fore in Isbell et al.’s (2020) discussion of their interviews. For instance, they wrote, “Interview data indicated that while participants struggled

with the concepts of democracy and citizenship, they recognized that they were part of a community and could act as citizens in that community” (p. 8). In other words, the scholars noted that the children conceived themselves as community members, even if they are not traditionally positioned as such. This was evidenced by “painting the ship, participating in trash pickups or school cleanups, or planting trees” (p. 8). The scholars unpack how the children did not necessarily language citizenship in the same manner as social studies scholarship, but that the children’s actions reflected their agency (“painting the ship, participating in trash pickups or school cleanups, or planting trees”) as citizens. In this piece, Isbell et al.’s (2020) posthuman theorization highlighted how children, who are not always considered fully human, showcased an ethical responsiveness to their communities. Their work shines a light on children as becoming citizens, in comparison to tired concepts of citizenship that are relegated to voting.

In both Errázuriz (2021) and Isbell et al. (2020) social studies scholarship, there was an attention to relationality, with a specific focus on how relationality impacted students’ becomings. Social studies practitioners were cited as part of the relationality in the production of subjectivity and subjectification of students, but they were not the main unit of analyses.

### ***Situating My Work***

The current social studies scholarship is productive in helping social studies practitioners and researchers reconceptualize social studies with new materialism and posthumanism, attending to explicit and implicit curriculum as well as the tools social studies practitioners use to teach curriculum and research the field. Further, social studies scholars accounted, at moments, for the effects and affects in social studies. Finally, a couple pieces engaged with posthuman subjectivity of social studies students.

However, the current social studies literature that theorizes with new materialist and posthumanism does not appropriately account for the perceptions and beliefs of the professionals entering the field or already in the classroom, as they are almost entirely missing in the discussion of the literature. The subjectivity, in relation to beliefs and perceptions, of social studies stakeholders that are accountable to and with social studies spaces should be included in the research. Further, it is imperative –amidst all of the aforementioned complexities (e.g., teacher attrition, curricular surveillance, climate change, a global pandemic, etc.) -- that becoming social studies teachers’ (preservice teachers) perceptions and beliefs, which are important tenets of preservice social studies subjectivities, are engaged in social studies research.

In this way, subjectivity of these particular bodies (preservice teachers) is an important site to query, as subjectivity is not separate, but enmeshed in the material world. According to Braidotti (2019), subjectivity is “an expanded self, whose relational capacity is not confined within the human species, but includes non-anthropomorphic elements” (p. 42). In other words, subjectivity is more than the human body, which Western humanism attempts to codify (I.e., based on race and gender). However, a Critical Posthuman interrogation of subjectivity attends to power and recognizes that identity markers, roles, and other constructions are but facets of subjectivity that can change, instead of totalizing constructions. In other words, these constructions are processual and emergent. Again, my research queries what preservice social studies teachers in Georgia believe matters and what an attention to material relation does in social studies.

Next, I will introduce my specific theoretical underpinnings, bring in to focus the method(ology) for how I came to research the two aforementioned questions (*What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia? What is produced through an attention*

*to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*), briefly highlight the complexity of subjectivity in relation to essentialized identity markers (e.g., race and ethnicity), as well as roles (e.g., teacher and coach), and offer possible implications for the work. For the purpose of this project, I turn to critical new materialist and feminist, Rosi Braidotti, and her theorization of a Critical Posthuman knowledge to theorize my work with preservice teachers in Georgia.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

In Chapter 2, I will extrapolate on my theoretical orientation, Critical Posthumanism. Critical Posthumanism challenges humanist epistemologies (I.e., individualism) by assuming relationality. Furthermore, Critical Posthumanism is concerned with the politics of location, and therefore attends to embedded and embodied locations (Braidotti, 2017, 2019). For the context of this project, Critical Posthuman knowledge offers an ethics of becoming, in relation with humans and the more-than-human, even when relation is messy or difficult. This becoming is affirmative, open-ended, and process oriented. It is not essentializing, nor totalizing.

Indeed, this framework “assist[s] us in the process of learning to think differently about ourselves, in response to the complexity of our times” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 34). In other words, Critical Posthumanism attends to the specificity of geopolitics and time, articulating how power operates within context. Further, Critical Posthumanism assumes creativity as a necessary response in the context(s) of late-stage capitalism, climate change, globalization –and all the other “complexities” that may be at work and play.

Critically, Braidotti’s Critical Posthuman knowledge offers power as simultaneously producing potentia and potestas. Potentia sustains and affirms, and potestas oppresses and constrains. These theorizations of power are productive tools for articulating how power is fluid

and at times, contradictory. This framework is helpful amid cybersurveillance and attempted codification (e.g., standardizing the standards) of social studies education in Georgia.

Further, Critical Posthumanism assumes the need for accountability and imagination (Braidotti, 2017, 2019) to address these complexities. With that in mind and matter, my research question and methodology (posthuman sound and listening), I theorize events during the data generation attend to this ethical sense of, and need for, creative opportunities (I.e., collage and photography) to attend to what preservice teachers in Georgia believe matters and how that matter is in relation in social studies in Georgia.

## **Methodology**

In Chapter 3, I unpack my methodology. Based on my theoretical commitments (Critical Posthumanism), I turned to feminist qualitative researcher Maureen Flint's (2021a, 2021b) conception of posthuman sound and listening to query preservice social studies teachers' beliefs and attention to material relations in social studies. Flint (2021a) wrote that:

posthumanism turns... inquiry toward the methodological possibilities of sound to decenter hegemonic ways of knowing and being in the world. Thought with posthuman theories, the compilation of sound and resonance... offers a starting point for exploring the relational, embodied, and material web of affects that characterize the nomadic subject. (p. 8)

Here, Flint (2021a) highlights how sound can attend to power ("decenter hegemonic forces"), because sound, as a facet of sensorium, can offer knowledge about the relationship(s) between the human and more-than-human. For instance, when critically listening to the preservice teachers that participated in my research, I learned about how their embodied locations (e.g., Ron identified as a white passing Latinx man) impacted his beliefs and perceptions of what matters in

social studies. In this way, posthuman sound and listening oriented me to what I could literally hear in relation to other bodies, human and more-than-human, as well as is usually constituted as inaudible, such as memories, affects, and legal systems. Listening to Ron led to an exploration of the affect of familial relationships, legislation that determines citizenship, and white supremacy (human and more-than-human entities) and its attachment to his mapping of social studies. Utilizing a posthuman sound and listening, I analyzed the audio, wrote through these relations, and even collaged, as part and process of exploring my research questions. I will discuss this more in depth in my methodology chapter. Next, I offer further discussion of what bubbled up from that data generation.

### **Complexity**

In Chapter 4, I discuss the complexity of essentialized notions of race and ethnicity, attending to the importance of the relations between place, time, and bodies. In attending to complexity, my aim is not to argue that race and ethnicity do not matter. *Race and ethnicity matter, and come to matter, in very particular ways.* Listening to my participants, attending to their mappings, and engaging with their photographs helped me hear --and see--when, where, and how race comes to matter. This, disrupts how race and ethnicity get coded onto some bodies (and not others), foreclosing complexity. The research with participants allowed me to theorize the utility in social studies teacher education of approaching essentialized notions of race and ethnicity as complex, as contingent upon the geopolitical locations and temporal landscapes of given bodies, rather than as essentialized constructs. This construction of race and ethnicity diverges from current social studies literature, which I argue, codifies race and ethnicity into fixed identity markers. Recognizing the specificity of race and ethnicity is generative for teacher

education, and social studies more generally, as it offers space to rupture essentialized racial and ethnic histories and becomings.

### **Complexity via Sound**

In this micro-chapter, I extend my argument from the last chapter to include sound. In Chapter 5, I expand my argument by depicting how sound from audio clips offered another entry point to analyze participants' contributions to what matter matters in social studies, using an audio clip of sound and a spectrogram (visual) of sound. Using sound from one of the participants, I continued to theorize how attending to the fractures in essentialized notions of race and ethnicity are useful in social studies education, via a posthuman sound and listening, which foregrounded an attention to power, memory, and affect.

### **Slipperiness**

Similar to Chapter 4, in Chapter 6 I map the slipperiness of social studies education and Sport. I chart how preservice social studies teachers had mixed reviews on the how Sport operates in social studies (e.g., social studies teacher coach) and its effects and affects. In particular, I showcase how Sport slipped into the conversation, sometimes operating as potestas and sometimes operating as potentia. This attention to power, thought with Critical Posthumanism, offered insight about the effects and affects of the slipperiness of Sport in social studies.

### **Slipperiness via Sound**

Again, I wanted to extend this argument to the sonic element in Chapter 7. In this chapter, I theorize how the sonic qualities of the preservice teachers' conversations highlight the potentia and potestas of Sport's relation to social studies education. Via audio and a spectrogram (visual of sound over time and decibel level), I showcase how the social studies teacher coach

constrained some of the participants' engagement with social studies, while other participants recognized social studies teacher coaches as generative subject positions. In this sonic microchapter, I begin to tease apart how the participants' voices mingle with other matter (e.g., memories, loathing, relations, defensiveness), sounding out the complexities of their embodied experiences and their (many) roles in social studies classrooms in relation to Sport.

### **Significance**

Paying attention to sites of rupture in the data generation, particularly in relation to essentialized and codified subjectification of bodies (race and ethnicity) and relations (Sport and social studies), could offer avenues for more sustainable practices in social studies. It is important to note that race and ethnicity matter --and become material—in particular ways, for particular bodies. Returning to the introductory paragraph, the Black Lives Matter movement sheds light on the ways race matters in the United States. Thus, I do not wish to misrepresent the idea of complexity and rupture, equivocating it with being color-blind or race neutral. Instead, using terms such as complexity and rupture is meant to shed light on how power moves through particular configurations of bodies, temporalities, and places. This contingency is an important component of my theoretical assumptions, which I discuss next.

Critical Posthumanism offers alternatives to stale locations of identity by articulating subjectivity (preservice teacher) as embodied and embedded as well as emergent, processual, and relational. Further, posthuman subjects engage in a nomadic ethics, a process of becoming (in comparison to the static location of being). Thinking with Braidotti, these becomings are sustainable, moving in multiplicitous directions in comparison to static locations.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Becomings are assumed to be affirmative and sustaining, allowing that movement and process to occur. If there is movement, there is becoming; if there is becoming, there is movement. If there is not movement, there is being, as being is codified and inert.

Amidst policing and codification of social studies education in Georgia, preservice social studies teachers could benefit from engaging with non-universalizing subjectivity, embodying a nomadic ethics that is open to taking accountability for how power is operating in space and time on particular bodies. In doing so, a nomadic ethics offer preservice teachers a mode of thought that conceives their social studies spaces, and students, as dynamic and unpredictable. Thus, moving from subjectivities (i.e., identity markers, roles) as fixed and determined, to posthuman subjectivities, which are open-ended, is generative for being response-able to our time(s) within social studies teacher education.

In the next chapter, I will explain further how Braidotti's Critical Posthuman knowledge was productive for theorizing when, where, and how preservice social studies teachers discussed, collaged, and photographed fractures in the nomos of social studies education.

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORY: CRITICAL POSTHUMANISM

Now that you have an introduction to what you will traverse across this dissertation, I would like to begin this chapter, which elaborates on my theoretical orientation, by inviting you to listen to and read a partial rendering of the conversation from my collage focus group. This audio includes the participants, myself, and other more-than-human elements (e.g., papers, chairs, air conditioning, audio recording devices). In this excerpt from the focus group, I ask Sydney, one of the preservice social studies teachers that participated in my study, about her mapping of what matters in social studies. After listening and reading, I will bring this audio into context of my theoretical orientation. For now, please listen and read (Figure 2):

**Link to Audio:** [Sydney Social Studies Teacher as Cartographer.wav](#)

#### **Figure 2**

*Transcript of Sydney's Discussion of What and How She Mapped Social Studies*

Sydney: Um. So, I kind of did mine so that I had a lot of things layered on top of each other. [the sound of shifting papers layered in the background] Um. When we did our teaching philosophy statement, I kind of did my metaphor as a teacher as cartographer. [the sound of paper tearing and Morgan writing field notes quickly]. So like kind of setting out the, the [Ron sniffs] the learning, right? But it's still the student that has to do the work and that has to like do the discovery kind of thing [more writing and shifting paper]. So I didn't want any like one teacher thing I just wanted it to be more, um, like just a means [something like a pencil drops on the table] of moving about the page [Ron sniffs again] and discovering what's there. [the

sound of writing] Uh. I did the guy with the accordion here. He's-- he's supposed to be like, European white culture. [laughter from others in the room] But in retrospect, I probably wouldn't have put him in because then I started putting, like, *I like the kids climbing up the tree and you know, the bird flying and just supposed to be like, things bleeding into each other, rather than just one like distinct unit or subject* [emphasis added].

Morgan: Wait, so can-- one-- Why do you feel like it's important that they like bleed into each other? Like, what does that mean for you?

Sydney: Um, because *I don't really see them as that separate* [clunky sound] like, *I think each different part of social studies sort of informs the others* [emphasis added]. Like it's really hard to understand government without understanding the history that comes with it. [sound of chair wheels moving on carpet] Like why is it's hard to understand history without understanding the government. And same thing for, um, like geography and. Uh, I feel like geography is just like all of it together on a map. And, um, what's the other one I'm missing? Oh, economics. I don't know anything about economics. [laughter] But I'm, I'm assuming that it also involves all of the other things [Ron sniffs again], what I do know.

Here, Sydney offers that she conceives her role as a cartographer, and she explains what this means for her role and the students' role in social studies classrooms. She noted that in her mapping, "I like the kids climbing up the tree and you know, the bird flying and just supposed to be like, things bleeding into each other, rather than just one like distinct unit or subject." When I listened to her articulation of social studies, I became excited; you may notice this excitement in each shift I make between possible follow up questions ("Wait, so can-- one-- Why do..."),

struggling to make a decision about which possible question to pose. In this excerpt, Sydney seemed to be challenging the logics of disciplinary thinking, which tends to individuate and segregate (McKittrick, 2020). Sydney seemed to be pointing out how social studies is relational. But I wanted to make sure. So, I asked her what she meant, and she said that she did not “really see them as that separate” in that “each different part of social studies sort of informs the others.” Sydney’s comments mirrored some of my own inklings about social studies that I felt as a preservice and practicing social studies educator. And now, I have formal language to theorize this relationality in social studies, which I will attend to throughout the rest of the chapter. Next, I explain what I mean by social studies.

### **Introduction**

I theorize preservice *social studies* teachers, like Sydney, throughout this research project. As such, I want to draw some coordinates for where I land with social studies. To do so, I put myself in conversation with the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), an important body of sound studies stakeholders within the United States. NCSS defines social studies as the:

*integrated* study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence [*emphasis added*]. Within the school program, social studies provides coordinated, systematic study drawing upon such disciplines as anthropology, archaeology, economics, geography, history, law, philosophy, political science, psychology, religion, and sociology, as well as appropriate content from the humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences. *The primary purpose of social studies is to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a*

*culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world [emphasis added].*

(n.p.)

Similar to NCSS, I believe that social studies is “integrated.” However, my conception of social studies diverges from NCSS’ in relation to the purpose of social studies and who –and what—it serves.

Like Sydney alluded to in the audio and transcript above, I follow social studies scholars Adams and Kerr’s (2021) conception of social studies as *intradisciplinary*, in that disciplines are immanent to each other (“history, law, [and] philosophy” co-constitute each other). This undermines the individuation of the disciplines and their codifications as separate, discrete entities. Instead, being *co-constituted*, geography, history, and philosophy (as well as other knowledge) offers social studies an attention to relation.

Furthermore, keeping in with my preoccupation with relation, I extend the purpose of social studies to *all* citizens of our world, not just “young people” in our classrooms. Social studies matters for me, as a social studies teacher educator and researcher, as well as preservice social studies teachers, community members, and other stakeholders.

In that same vein, I believe the *more-than-human* is a part of social studies, as it is immanent to “the interdependent world.” The more-than-human world is more than utility for humans in social studies (Sonu & Snaza, 2015). As I, Sydney, and the scholars noted in the introduction argue, more-than-human matter is very much imbricated in social studies education.

Next, I unpack my theoretical orientation, shining a light on some of the ways in which matter can come to matter in social studies education. To begin, I will briefly introduce Braidotti. Then, I will zoom out to elaborate on new materialism. Afterwards, I will zoom back in to delve into the specific theoretical orientation, Critical Posthumanism, highlighting concepts and

language used to theorize my work with preservice social studies teachers.<sup>12</sup> As I do this work, I will elaborate on which Critical Posthuman concepts were most helpful in theorizing my research with preservice social studies teachers, focusing on power (potentia and potestas), becoming, and nomadic ethics.

### **Rosi Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism**

Rosi Braidotti, a feminist, continental philosopher, offered my research project language and tools that I needed to query what and how matter matters for preservice social studies teachers in Georgia. Even as Braidotti is situated as a critical posthuman scholar, her work also falls in the realm of critical new materialism will offer some common tenets of new materialism.<sup>13</sup>

### **New Materialism**

New materialism articulates the human as embedded in nature (van der Tuin & Dolphijn, 2010). With this theorization, humans and the more-than-human are agentic and affective, particularly in relation (Barad, 2007). New materialism's attention to the agency of matter (Coole & Frost, 2010) contrasts with Humanist philosopher, Emmanuel Kant's conceptions of matter as passive (Bennett, 2010). Furthermore, new materialism offers ample discussion on process and material relation, and therefore, becomings, for the human and the more-than-

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<sup>12</sup> An important note before we move on: Critical Posthumanism is not the only, nor the first, framework to critique Western humanism. As Bhattacharya (2022) notes, Eastern traditions as well as Indigenous knowledge offer alternatives to Western humanism. Again, I chose new materialism, not because Indigenous knowledge is inadequate, but because of the politics of my own location. As a white settler, I am unsure if it is appropriate for me to 'implement' Indigenous knowledge, as I was not raised with the holistic notion of body, mind, heart, and spirit, which is a foundational assumption within much Indigenous knowledge. Instead, I cite Indigenous scholars when it becomes pertinent in my research.

<sup>13</sup> The term critical specifically denotes an attention to power and its relationship to ethics. Some posthuman and new materialist scholarship is not vested in power. Thus, I denote the difference by adding the term critical.

human. To summarize: new materialism tends to focus on the material, how material is in relation, and its effects and affects. Braidotti (2022) writes that critical new materialism is “about the complexity of being embodied, embedded, relational, and affective” (p. 1). I unpack each of these facets below.

### ***Embodied and Embedded Matter in New Materialism***

By material, I am referencing the material world, which is made of matter. Matter is living (e.g., dog) and non-living (e.g., rocks). Further, Braidotti posits that matter is “intelligent and self-organizing... [which] means that matter is not dialectically opposed to culture, nor to technological mediation, but *continuous with them*” (Braidotti, 2013, p. 35). Here, by “intelligent and self-organizing,” matter is recognized as having agency *in relation*. For instance, some social studies educators in the southeast United States (e.g., Florida) are facing increased scrutiny of their classroom libraries. Nonliving, tangible matter, such as books, become important in the relation to right-wing surveillance and policing in social studies classrooms (embedded location) and children's bodies. In new materialism, attention is focused on the specificity of bodies and context of those bodies' relations.

Additionally, matter can become material. For instance, fear can materialize as words or actions (e.g., laws) that have effect and affect. As noted, the book banning has created extra labor and stress for educators, as they have to comb through their libraries or risk punitive actions (Hall, 2023). In this way, fear can be theorized as materiality. Coole and Frost's (2010) conceive materiality as “an excess, force, vitality, relationality, or difference that renders matter active, self-creative, productive, and unpredictable” (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 9). Put differently, Coole and Frost (2010) conceive of materiality as mobile and dynamic.

Let me bring these terms in conversation and relation with social studies in Georgia. The Social Studies Standards for Excellence (Georgia's state standards) are matter, sometimes printed on paper, written on white boards, or uploaded as a document on a computer (I.e., PDF). Thinking about the standards, sometimes they are the basis of curriculum. The standards become lessons, enactments, and memories; they have materiality, as they co-produce the social studies classroom. Materiality is more slippery in relation to form and description of boundaries, as it tends to move beyond the form. As Whitehead (1934) wrote, "This change of view, occupying four centuries, may be characterized as the transition from space and matter as the fundamental notions *to* process conceived as a complex of activity with internal relations between its various factors [emphasis added]" (p. 45). In other words, Whitehead (1934), like Coole and Frost (2010) highlighted the *dynamism* of space and matter. This dynamism is an essential foundational assumption throughout the course of my dissertation and Braidotti's scholarship.

### ***Relationality in New Materialism***

Moreover, new materialism's attention to matter is relational (Coole & Frost, 2010). This conception of matter differentiates new materialism from humanist paradigms, as it disrupts the subject/object binary and decenters the human as the universal measuring stick. In this way, the humans are not in a hierarchy over the more-than-human (e.g., Jeff Bezos is not more important than Earth's Ozone layer).

Additionally, critical new materialism, like many frameworks that are 'post' or in response to structural theories (i.e., post structuralism, postmodernism), are also vested in deconstructing oppositional binaries and assumes there is no one universal truth. For instance, new materialism and post-structuralism share an attention to the fluidity of power. Where these two paradigms tend to diverge is that post structuralism seems to focus on discourse

linguistically. So, for a post-structural project, a scholar may engage in a discourse analysis of power. Alternatively, critical new materialism makes an ontological shift towards recognizing the importance of materiality, and thus discourse is not simply linguistic, it becomes material-discursive. Thus, in my project words reverberate beyond their linguistic capacity, also becoming material. For instance, when Blair, one of my participants, highlighted how power was operating in a class discussion on Confederate monuments, theorizing the discussion of the monuments beyond the linguistic discourses of race/racism allowed me to think about *how* the physical monument mattered for students and how it mattered for Blair's becoming as a social studies teacher. Its existence produced affects for students and for Blair.

### *Affect in New Materialism*

The attention to material relations matters in social studies, and in this example, because it draws attention to how the more-than-human has capacity to affect. Returning to the example with Blair, the Confederate monument mattered in relation to the geopolitics of that classroom. This classroom was located in a Southern city with students who embodied different races. Understanding that the Confederacy sought to maintain white supremacy, a monument, which is a tangible, physical symbol, produced different degrees of affective responses. As I will discuss further later in Chapters 4 and 5, on the complexity of essentialized notions of race and ethnicity, some students felt uncomfortable, and some students (prior to hearing about their peer's discomfort) felt ambivalent. In this way, a monument, something usually considered inert and passive, produced an affective response in (and beyond) the social studies classroom. And Blair, the preservice social studies educator, had to navigate those responses. In this way, the material-discursive recognizes that discourse and matter co-constitute each other, which I discuss further in the subsection on power.

## **Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism**

Rosi Braidotti conceived of Critical Posthumanism, which is a transdisciplinary theoretical orientation to the posthuman predicament(s). Specifically, Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism deconstructs Western Humanism and attempts to navigate the Anthropocene.<sup>14</sup>

### ***Deconstructing Western Humanism with Critical Posthumanism***

Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism affirmatively critiques Western Humanism, as we (humans) are co-implicated in it, or the effects of it. Braidotti (2006) wrote that:

as the poststructural left has been arguing in the aftermath of colonialism, Auschwitz, Hiroshima, and the Soviet Gulag, we need to be historically accountable both for the promises of Enlightenment as an ideal and for its shortcomings. (p. 255)

Enlightenment, particularly in relation to Western humanism, propelled advancements in representational government and even feminist and anti-colonialist movements.

Yet, Enlightenment also produced a normative conception of the human: the rational individual. And only some people were entitled to being human during the Enlightenment. As Braidotti (2022) noted:

The 'human' never was a universal or neutral term to begin with. It is, rather, a normative category that indexes access to privileges and entitlements. Appeals to the 'human' are always discriminatory: they create structural distinctions and inequalities among different categories of humans, let alone between humans and non-humans. (p. 35)

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<sup>14</sup> Our current epoch, the Anthropocene ("anthropo" meaning man and "cene" being new) is named after the negative effects of human activity on Earth (Rafferty, 2020). This reference is not congratulatory; it is evidence of an unethical relationship with Earth—evidence that is and has material consequences (i.e., the death and degradation of the human and more-than-human).

Here, Braidotti highlights how Enlightenment, and Western humanism, normed ideals of who has reason and is rational. This tends to uphold the “white, wealthy, male, heterosexual, youthful, [and] able-bodied” (St. Pierre, 2000) as the normative subject, perpetuating notions of the Other (Braidotti, 2002).

Returning to that ideal human in Western humanism, Othering, in this context, is how Western humanism “create[s] a sense of belonging, identity and social status by constructing social categories as binary opposites” (Zevallos, 2011), such a Man/woman or Human/animal. Braidotti (2013) critiques this binary, offering a continuum in its place. This continuum offers a non-hierarchical relation between matter (human and more-than-human), in the aim of producing affirmative relations towards sustainable futures, which I will elaborate on further in the discussion of nomadic ethics. Until then, I move to discuss what new materialism offers my research with preservice social studies teachers.

### ***Navigating the Anthropocene with Critical Posthumanism***

Critical Posthumanism is concerned with navigating the Anthropocene.<sup>15</sup> The “Critical” component orients me to its feminist roots. Vested in sustainable futures, I, like Braidotti, write to humans, *and* I write for the ecological flourishing of matter –human and more-than-human. In reference to flourishing, I sit with the idea of social and ecological sustainability, or “how much a body can take in pleasure or enhancement of its potentials” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 129). Bodies can be human, and they can be more-than-human (i.e., Earth as a body). Thus, when I say ‘our’ or ‘we,’ I am referencing the human and the more-than-human, in the aim of participating in

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<sup>15</sup> Our current epoch, the Anthropocene (“anthropo” meaning man and “cene” being new) is named after the negative effects of human activity on Earth (Rafferty, 2020). This reference is not congratulatory; it is evidence of an unethical relationship with Earth –evidence that is and has material consequences (i.e., the death and degradation of the human and more-than-human).

conversation that leads to more sustainability. As Braidotti (2020) noted: “‘We’ Are In This Together, But We Are Not One and the Same” (p. 465). For instance, I may be a white, cis woman, which is materially different than the middle aged, pecan tree in my backyard, and yet, our flourishing is mutual. The tree provides valuable infrastructure to my community of birds, insects, and squirrels, and selfishly it offers me important infrastructure, such as better oxygen and shade. Differently, I advocate for the flourishing of marginalized matter in my research and daily life. Therefore, this attention to ‘we’ is an important underpinning of Braidotti’s Critical Posthumanism, which challenges some humanist epistemologies (I.e., individualism) and attends to embedded and embodied locations (Braidotti, 2017, 2019). Furthermore, Critical Posthuman knowledge offers an affirmative ethics of being in relation, even when relation is messy or difficult. In this way, the “Critical” engages the fluidity of power<sup>16</sup> and how we are accountable to it in our situated locations amidst our navigation of the Anthropocene.

### **Critical Posthumanism and Preservice Social Studies Teachers in Georgia**

Furthermore, as I write in a global pandemic, experiencing late-stage capitalism, witnessing climate crises (IPCC, 2022) and anti-Blackness, the framework “assist[s] [me] in the process of learning to think differently about ourselves, in response to the complexity of our times” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 34).

Keeping those systems and discourses in mind, I engage with Critical Posthumanism, both because it helps me make meaning of my embedded and embodied location *and* out of necessity to sustain myself in community. I utilized the approach to theorize power, ethics, and becoming in my work with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia, questioning:

1. *What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*

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<sup>16</sup> I will discuss power further later under “Power: Potestas and Potentia.”

2. *What is produced through an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*

In the next section, I will offer description of concepts I utilized when generating, analyzing, and disseminating my research on power, ethics, and becoming.

**Power: Potestas and Potentia**

Braidotti thinks with Michel Foucault, a French philosopher and literary critic, to theorize power in her *Critical Posthuman* approach (2013, p. 26). From Foucault, Braidotti (2002) draws the idea that power is “a situation, a position, not an object or an essence” (p. 6). This is productive for understanding power does not exist in one location. Power is fluid and dynamic, in comparison to being totalizing. Further, Braidotti draws on Foucault to understand power as both a “restrictive (potestas) and productive (potentia) *force*” (p. 26). Understanding power as a force recognizes the processual aspects of power as well as its complexity.

Thinking with Foucault, Braidotti writes that power is “a circulation of complex and dynamic, albeit contradictory, effects” (2006, p. 264). Power is fluid. Because power is on the move, power does not sit in one location, which also means that power is not complete. Braidotti (2013) further explains:

This means that power formations not only function at the material level but are also expressed in systems of theoretical and cultural representation, political and normative narratives and social modes of identification. These are neither coherent, nor rational and their makeshift nature is instrumental to their hegemonic force. The awareness of the instability and the lack of coherence of the narratives that compose the social structures and relations, far from resulting in a suspension of political and moral action, become the

starting point to elaborate new forms of resistance suited to the polycentric and dynamic structure of contemporary power. (p. 26-27)

I take this to mean that power circulates beyond the material, to include the material discursive. For example, a flag can be material. Maybe you have seen a United States' flag on the back of a pickup truck or the front of an Old Navy t-shirt. Or maybe, your mind conjures up a United States' flag made of cloth, with white and red stripes and white stars on a navy square. You might think back to your own memories of schooling; maybe you see an image of a flag attached to a wooden dowel hanging in a classroom on the left side of a whiteboard. You stand up and begin to recite, "I pledge allegiance to the flag.." The flag is constituted as important because of its relationships to other things, particularly the narratives and ideals of a given context. For instance, I talked about it in relation to the United States and schooling. The flag is always already wrapped up in discourses because we *make meaning* of it in relation to discourses. Orlikowski and Scott (2015) write that "the relationship between the material and the discursive is one of mutual entailment. Neither is articulated/articulable in the absence of the other; matter and meaning are mutually articulated" (p. 4). This, the material-discursive is that co-constituted relationship. In thinking about the flag, discourses such as nationalism and citizenship are woven into the fabric of the flag -and power is very much operating. Further, like poststructuralists, in this excerpt Braidotti highlights how power is slippery and unstable, instead of totalizing. Specifically, Braidotti conceives of power as having the potential to be affirmative (potential) and oppressive (potestas), which I turn to next.

### ***Potentia***

Braidotti pulls on Baruch Spinoza's *conatus* to further theorize Foucault's conception of power. Spinoza, a Dutch philosopher during the Dutch Golden Age and Enlightenment,

conceived *being* as power. Specifically, Spinoza utilized the term *conatus* to articulate a person's capacity or "degree of power" (Large, 2017). Braidotti (2002) also articulates *conatus* as the "desire to become and to increase the intensity of one's becoming" (p. 135), and links it to *potentia*. Braidotti (2002) wrote:

The selection of the forces of becoming is regulated by an ethics of joy and affirmation which functions through the transformation of negative into positive passions. These imply the repetition of pleasure and the avoidance of sadness and of the relations that express sadness. The selection of the composite positive passions constitutes spaces of becoming or corporeal affects. These are essentially a matter of affinity: being able to enter a relation with another entity whose elements appeal to one produces a joyful encounter. *They express one's potentia and increase the subject's capacity to enter into further relations, grow and expand.* This expansion is time-bound: the nomadic subject *by expressing and increasing its positive passions empower itself to last, to endure, to continue through and in time.* By entering into relations, nomadic becomings engender possible futures, they construct the world by making possible a web of sustainable interconnections. This is the point of becoming: a collective assemblage of forces that coalesce around commonly shared elements and empower them to grow and to last [emphasis added]. (p. 135)

Unpacking this passage, Braidotti's is conceiving *potentia* as nourishing; *potentia* is life sustaining. Further, *potentia* is the affirmative aspect of power, as it "empower and enables" (Braidotti, 2002, p. 21). It is the ability for a subject to "express" freedom (Braidotti, 2006, p. 148). In this way, freedom is understood as ethical relations with the world. Differently, power as *potentia* is sustainable, producing futures that are more equitable (i.e., socially, ecologically,

economically), instead of limiting them. For example, *potentia* might affirmatively challenge anti-Blackness. It could cause affective qualities similar to discomfort (I.e., discussing racism with white preservice teachers), but its fluidity produces sustainable relations (I.e., teaching Black histories of empowerment).

Attending to *potentia* in my work with preservice teachers, particularly in the context of teacher preparation in Georgia, is generative, because it reminds me of the necessity of creativity and hope, in comparison to nihilism. Preservice teachers in Georgia's perspective and beliefs can, and I will argue later, did produce a myriad of effects, including *potestas* and *potentia*, at different points and with different intensities. I will extrapolate on that further in the chapters on complexity and precarity.

Thus, Braidotti takes this up in her theorization of power as *potentia* and *potestas*. *Potentia* is affirmative and *potestas* is restrictive (Braidotti, 2006, 2011, 2019). For instance, in the case of social studies education in Georgia, the content standards in the Social Studies Standards of Excellence may be a site of *potestas* for people that are deemed Other. By Other, I am specifically referencing Humanist dialectics of self and other. As Braidotti's writes (2013):

Central to this universalistic posture and its binary logic is the notion of 'difference' as pejoration. Subjectivity is equated with consciousness, universal rationality, and self-regulating ethical behaviour, whereas Otherness is defined as its negative and specular counterpart. (p. 15)

Other, within Humanism, is lesser, "reduced to the less than human status of disposable bodies" (p. 15). For example, in the context of Georgia's Social Studies Standards of Excellence, Black women's contributions are generally not highlighted. For instance, in the discussion of the Civil Rights movement for racial equality in United States' history, there are zero Black women

included in the standards. Rosa Parks, Gloria Richardson, Coretta Scott King and many other Black women are absent in the storying of the Civil Rights movement. In this way, the United States history content standards are potestas.

Differently, the skills standards in the Social Studies Standards of Excellence may create sites for potentia, even as potestas operates. For example, standard L9-10RHSS1, “Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information” (p. 10) might offer space to study the work of Black women civil rights leaders and other important Black women, such as Daisy Bates, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Angela Davis, and Shirley Chisolm via primary and secondary sources. In this way, power is dynamic in the standards, even when the standards tend to exclude the Other (i.e., women, Indigenous people, people with disabilities, Asian folx, and the list goes on). There is still room for difference, though it may not always appear so, if educators (i.e., preservice social studies teachers) are not given space and opportunity to look for the gaps. This tenuousness is productive in listening and analyzing the audio and transcription from my work with preservice teachers in Georgia.

Because power is not totalizing, because it is on the move, it opens space for difference, a common tenet of post structural thought. For the context of Braidotti’s Critical Posthumanism, this difference is generative for thinking about power as multifaceted, which offers space to intervene. For me, as a social studies teacher educator, this offers the affective qualities of hope.

### ***Potestas***

Thinking with Braidotti, power has the potential to be oppressive. Leaning on Spinoza and Foucault, Braidotti (2002) uses the Latin term potestas to give language to the dominating coercive effects that power can have. Braidotti (2006) writes that potestas is a “centralized,

mediating, transcendental force of command” (p. 147). Potestas operates as a restrictive force (2013, p. 164). Let me return to the example of the flag. Since the summer of 2020 and the uptick in the momentum of the Black Lives Matter movement, which highlights racial inequality experienced by black people, there has been binary opposition and more fervent ‘Back the Blue’ symbolism, such as “clothing, flags, hats, bumper stickers, jewelry, coffee mugs, license plates, light bulbs, and home décor” (Wall, 2020, p. 320). For instance, there are U.S. flags that are black and white with a blue bar as one of the stripes (aka the ‘thin blue line’). Sometimes these flags say, “Blue Lives Matter.” Keyes and Keyes (2022) write that these flags have “been displayed at white supremacist gatherings, conservative political rallies, worn by police officers on face masks while policing Black Lives Matter protests and more recently were carried by insurrectionists at the U.S. Capitol on January 6” (p. 3). In this way, policing, nationalism, and white supremacy become tied to this variation of the U.S. flag. Power is wound up in the material discursive quality of the flag. I identify this power as potestas, or limiting and oppressive power, as it has roots in white supremacy and the suffering of Black and Brown bodies. Therefore, this form of power is not affirmative or sustainable. Potestas’ effects “mark, police, sustain and repress the subject's inner freedom” (p. 150), hindering sustainability of relations, whether with other humans, or the more-than-human.

It is also important to consider Foucault with Deleuze when conceiving potestas. Braidotti weaves together Foucauldian conceptions of potestas with Deleuzian conceptions of “the Molar Line,” which is “that of Being, identity, fixity and potestas” (p. 345). In this iteration, molar means homogeneity and sameness. For instance, how whiteness operates within schooling (i.e., which literacies are valued, who and what is represented in curriculum) could be considered the Molar Line. Returning to the flag, the Molar Line might be thought as being patriotic by

standing and saying the Pledge of Allegiance. The recitation of allegiance to a symbolic piece of cloth upholds and fixes nationalism. In relationship with Foucault's conception of power, potestas becomes more obvious when this 'fixed' identity is transgressed. For instance, let me return to the example of Colin Kaepernick kneeling during the United States' national anthem. Kaepernick was protesting racial and ethnic inequality in America. Following Kaepernick's decision to kneel, white rage (potestas), reared its head (Agosto et al., 2019). For example, white rage was exemplified when Kaepernick received death threats for kneeling during the national anthem (Constantine-Simms, 2019). Even a year later, white rage continued. For instance, on September 22, 2017, former president, Donald Trump said, "Wouldn't you love to see one of these NFL owners, when somebody disrespects our flag, to say, 'Get that son of a bitch off the field right now, out, he's fired. He's fired!'" during a rally. In this way, potestas is the effect of whiteness and offending whiteness.

### **Nomadic Ethics**

Critical Posthumanism offers a non-universalizing subjectivity (Braidotti, 2006, 2013a). By non-universalizing, I mean that the subject is not relegated to sameness, in comparison to a universal subject, which participates or is subject to nomos. By nomos, I am specifically referencing the Greek word for custom, taken up by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to theorize how sameness becomes entrenched. Nomos tends to squash difference, alienating context and nuance. Bodies that cannot conform to nomos become Other, the subject positioned as lesser (i.e. women in comparison to men).

Alternatively, a key notion within Critical Posthumanism is that subjectivity is an emergent process, not a static location. Instead of operating within Cartesian binaries (i.e., human/non-human), posthuman subjectivity conceives humans alongside the more-than-human,

on a continuum (Braidotti, 2013b) as kin in kind (Haraway, 2016). This presupposition is beneficial, as a non-universalizing subjectivity creates a broader net for inclusivity, which in turn offers more possibilities for the ways in which we can address the many, emergent contexts of our times. As Albert Einstein famously said, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.” Thinking this quote with Critical Posthumanism, multiplicity is valued in comparison to the violence of nomos, and therefore there will be a variety of “results.” For instance, let us think about nomos in a social studies classroom in Georgia. As noted, the curriculum (almost) exclusively centers white men, which is not beneficial to students (though it could be argued it is beneficial to white men) who live in a diverse and interconnected society. This includes diversity among humans and the more-than human. Many scholars have noted how powerful diversity of human representation is (Cerezo & Bergfeld, 2013; Graham, 2018; Villarreal, 2014). Recently, scholars in social studies (Nelson et al., 2021) have also started to highlight how vital matter is in social studies education, offering representation of the more-than-human. With this example in mind and understanding the world as connected, power (i.e., potentia and potestas) is operating, producing effects, which also means that subjectivity is in flux as it attempts to navigate the Anthropocene. In the next paragraph, I will delve into how the relationship between subjectivity and ethics.

This emergent subjectivity within Critical Posthumanism has a nomadic ethics. Braidotti’s (2013) conception of nomadic ethics builds from Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of nomadism. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write that nomadism is characterized by its 1) “hydraulic model,” or flow, 2) “becoming and heterogeneity,” 3) “formation of spirals and vortices,” in comparison to striated spaces, and 4) affective, in comparison to the rationalism of the state (p. 361-362). Put differently, Deleuze and Guattari’s nomadism is dynamic. Like a preservice social studies

teacher working switching practicum to afternoon classes, they become nomadic, as their roles change and shift depending on where they are embedded. For instance, a preservice teacher may experience nomos in a practicum or student teaching placement. Junie notes that she had to constantly worry about her mentor teacher's unconscious racist remarks. Junie felt the affective qualities of discomfort. With the support of her field instructor, Junie's discomfort led her to subversively contest racism in the classroom, which she coined her "truth tellings." Those changes, sometimes transformations, are always inextricably intertwined with ethics. Choosing whether to implement culturally responsive and sustaining lessons is an issue of ethics, as it may challenge nomos and produce unknown affects and effects.

Thus, Braidotti takes Deleuze and Guattari's notion of nomadism, pushing the theorization towards an explicit engagement with ethics (Braidotti, 2010). Braidotti (2006) wrote:

Nomadic ethics is not about the avoidance of pain, but rather about transcending the resignation and passivity that ensue from being hurt, lost and dispossessed. One has to become-ethical, as opposed to just applying moral rules and protocols as a form of self-protection. Transformations express the affirmative power of Life as the vitalism of 'bios/zoe', which is the opposite of morality as a form of life insurance. (p. 84)

In this iteration, nomadic ethics is articulated as a process, a becoming, that could be in service of affirmative ethics. Returning to Junie's experience with her mentor. It would have been easier to stay silent and comply, committing to sameness. Instead, Junie noted that she chose to incorporate "truth tellings," even noting she downloaded videos and uploaded them to her PowerPoints to circumvent school firewalls. She did not avoid the possibility of repercussions. Thinking with Critical Posthumanism, she chose to become-ethical. Zigzagging back to the

concept nomadic ethics, Braidotti contests morality that is based on mechanic rule following. Nomadic ethics is affirmative and actionable, pointing “towards fruitful paths of qualitative transformation,” (Braidotti, 2013a, p. 359) based in an ontology of creatively and continually pushing doing/being/knowing to the edges, de-centering Western humanism, flattening hierarchies, with a multitude of non-linear or systematic (Braidotti, 2013, p. 348) manifestations. For Critical Posthumanism, a nomadic ethics assumes that there are many ways to be, many moves to make, many matters to engage, and so many possibilities unfolding –if we so desire. Nomadic ethics assumes that there is not one universalizing way to be and do and know (van Heerden, 2016).

A nomadic ethics is in service to sustainability. Braidotti (2006) writes:

What 'sustainability' stands for, therefore, is a regrounding of the subject in a materially embedded sense of responsibility and ethical accountability for the environments she or he inhabits. What is at stake is the very possibility of the future, of duration or continuity. (p. 137)

Within the context of my research, Braidotti’s concept, nomadic ethics, allows me to theorize how preservice social studies teachers, and myself –as a social studies teacher educator and researcher, are ethically accountable within the context of our social studies communities.

Grounding myself, in being accountable, is critical for a nomadic ethics. For instance, in the process of becoming-ethical, it is imperative that I query how I plan lessons with sustainability in mind as well as what is produced by those lessons. For instance, this may include questioning whiteness and its effects and affects. Further, I might query sustainable processes of building rapport and how to model mutual flourishing, in the aim that participants can create their own versions of mutual flourishing in their own becomings as social studies

teachers. Though offering engagements attuned to ethics does not guarantee becoming ethical, it does open space and opportunity for this becoming.

We are woven into the relations of our embedded locations (i.e. classrooms, conferences, government bureaucracy), and if we want them to endure, then we have to help them endure. Understanding the ethics as nomadic, this will likely look different, but a nomadic ethics imbues potentia, or more freedom for all matter. It is an ethics of affirmation which steps out of the nihilistic gloom.

### **Becoming**

Braidotti (2013) draws from Deleuze in her theorization of becoming (p. 33). Deleuze (1994) takes on Spinoza's monism, the idea that everything is one, and therefore connected. For Deleuze (1994), when theorizing *becoming*, this monism as an ontology is important, as the *immanence* of the connections continually produces new relations and figurations. Deleuze and Guattari wrote:

A becoming-minoritarian exists only by virtue of a deterritorialized medium and subject that are like its elements. There is no subject of the becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of the majority; there is no medium of becoming except as a deterritorialized variable of a minority. We can be thrown into a becoming by anything at all, by the most unexpected, most insignificant of things. You don't deviate from the majority unless there is a little detail that starts to swell and carries you off. (p. 292)

Becoming, based on this quote, is produced through an interaction that creates change from the norm (Man/woman). Becoming is active, as the "-ing" signifies, and becoming-minoritarian is implicated in a process of difference. For instance, within a codified space, such as a mentor's social studies classroom, a preservice social studies teacher might bring something new to the

figuration of place, time, and bodies. This newness could trigger becoming minoritarian for other bodies in the social studies classroom. Yet, amidst this becoming-minoritarian, the bodies are still dealing with power that aims to territorialize –or codify—for the majority, or norm.

Additionally, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) note that there is no way to become major, writing:

For the majority, insofar as it is analytically included in the abstract standard, is never anybody, it is always Nobody... whereas the minority is the becoming of everybody, one's potential becoming to the extent that one deviates from the model. There is a majoritarian "fact," but it is the analytic fact of Nobody, as opposed to the becoming-minoritarian of everybody. That is why we must distinguish between: the majoritarian as a constant and homogeneous system; minorities as subsystems; and the minoritarian as a potential, creative and created, becoming. The problem is never to acquire the majority, even in order to install a new constant. There is no becoming-majoritarian; majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian. Women, regardless of their numbers, are a minority, definable as a state or subset; but they create only by making possible a becoming over which they do not have ownership, into which they themselves must enter; this is a becoming-woman affecting all of humankind, men and women both. (p.

106)

Breaking down this quote, Deleuze and Guattari argued sameness cannot become. This is because sameness = reinforces what already is. Becoming, in comparison, must include newness or difference. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) wrote, “Majority implies a state of domination, not the reverse” (p. 291). Becoming major would produce sameness, or striation, reinforcing violent norms (I.e., patriarchy). That is not to say that some preservice social studies teachers all become

feminists; it just means that becoming is affirmative in this conceptualization, and therefore, homogeneity and oppression would not be an effect of becoming.

Thus, becoming is understood as an ongoing process, constantly in flux, in comparison to a static location (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Braidotti draws on this conception of becoming, particularly in the context of subject-formation. Whether tadpole, caterpillar, or baby, Braidotti's conception of subject-formation is that of evolution. Further, Braidotti takes this conception of becoming and adds "nomadic", conceptualizing a sustainable subject position. A nomadic becoming has no particular end; the becoming is sustained by *potentia*, leading to affirmative, but varying paths. Braidotti (2006) wrote:

Becomings are the sustainable shifts or changes undergone by nomadic subjects in their active resistance against being subsumed in the commodification of their own diversity. Becomings are unprogrammed as mutations, disruptions, and points of resistance. Their time frame is always the future anterior, that is to say a linkage across present, and past in the act of constructing and actualizing possible futures. (p. 137)

In other words, for nomadic subjects, or "material and semiotic signposts for specific geopolitical and historical locations" (I.e., the cyborg) (Braidotti, 2019, p. 33), means constantly *being in relation* with the material world, in such a way that becoming allows a subject to "feel, sense, process and sustain the impact with the complex materiality of the outside" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 145). It is becoming as the process of existing with the world, instead of an autonomous separate, unfeeling entity.

In the context of working with matter and preservice social studies teachers throughout the research process, Braidotti's conception of becoming allows me to grapple with how different configurations (I.e., field instructors, sites, students, mentors, discourses, resources)

produce different futures. This is fruitful in theorizing the maps, photographs, audio, and transcript, attended to the candidates' embedded locations.

### **How are these concepts mattering in social studies teacher preparation?**

Currently, Western humanism features strongly in social studies education (Snaza & Weaver, 2014). Though humanism of the Enlightenment may have allowed more divergent thought than the Christian Church, Western Humanism has also constructed gatekeeping mechanisms that maintains white, male power (St. Pierre, 2000). As previously noted, Western humanism privileges human exceptionalism, reason, and normativity. If humans' ethics are based in these principles, then it can lead to exclusionary ethics, such as binary thinking (i.e., Human/Other). The binary, Human/Other, assumes that humans have something (e.g., reason) that the rest of the material world (i.e., mountains, rivers, air) do not, sometimes leading to humans believing that they are entitled to be at the top of the hierarchy of the material world (anthropocentrism). Furthermore, even within binary thinking, some humans (i.e., Caribbean women) are constituted as less than human (Wynter, 2003). In this way, binary thinking of Western humanism is problematic for humans and the more-than-human. Therefore, the dualistic nature (Human/Other) of Western humanism that centers Man (usually the white, hetero man) does not offer an appropriate ethics for social studies education in the Anthropocene (Adams & Kerr, 2021; Errázuriz, 2021; Helmsing, 2016; Nelson & Durham, 2021; Nelson et al., 2021; Romano, 2021; Sonu & Snaza, 2015; Sundberg, 2014). And yet, we (i.e., myself, preservice social studies teachers) do not exist outside of these discourses, which means we are co-implicated.

## **Cutting, Splicing, Marking, Mapping, Zigzagging**

Being concerned about how social studies is co-implicated in Western humanist discourses, I query what preservice social studies teachers in Georgia believe matters and what that mattering is doing. In this study, I seek methods that offer preservice social studies teachers an opportunity to attend to material relation, such as collage and photo-voice (which I discuss extensively in my methodology) in an effort to understand what that attention produces, particularly in comparison to Western humanist' conceptions of individualism. I argue that working with material is an important part of this work. I discuss this methodology further in the next chapter. Please follow me and listen to the cutting, splicing, marking, mapping, zigzagging.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY: POSTHUMAN SOUND AND LISTENING

In the last chapter, I identified my theoretical commitments, as I researched what matters in social studies with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia. In this chapter, I will explain how my theoretical and methodological choices are interwoven and responsive to the complexities that social studies teacher education in Georgia is immersed in (political polarization, climate crises, a global pandemic, anti-Blackness). This responsiveness, theoretically bound, informed the choices I made for data generation, analysis, and dissemination. As Braidotti (2006) wrote:

A nomadic post-anthropocentric philosophy displaces the primacy of the visual. The process of becoming-animal is connected to an expansion or creation of new sensorial and perceptive capacities or powers, which alter or stretch what a body can actually do. Nomadic thought actualizes different potentials in and of a body. In so doing, it is again attuned to our historical condition. (p. 103)

In this quote, Braidotti orients the posthuman subject towards sensorial projects in and beyond the ocular (eyes/seeing). In doing so, she challenges the posthuman subject to attend to power through other senses (e.g., hearing and touching) as well. The aim: “alter or stretch what a body can actually do” (p. 103). Returning to this idea of sustainability (affirmative ethics), Braidotti’s words challenged me to think about how I could stretch myself and my participants throughout the process of this research, which I will discuss for the rest of this chapter.

## Context of the Study

As noted in the introduction, this qualitative study was designed to better understand what preservice social studies teachers (i.e., practicum students, teacher candidates) in Georgia believe matters (which matter holds value or importance) in social studies and what is produced by an attention to material relation (relations between matter). Again, with all of the complexities (white supremacy, COVID-19, ecological precarity). that preservice social studies teachers are encountering, it is important that social studies teacher education is responsive to preservice teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and experiences, as they are responsible and accountable in social studies classrooms, as we are to them as social studies teacher educators and researchers.

As a reminder, when I use the term mattering, I am sitting in multiple meanings of this term. I literally mean holding importance and value, as that mattering can produce potentia (empowerment) and potestas (oppression) (Braidotti, 2002, 2006). Further, matter is tangible (e.g., a map) and intangible (e.g., discourses infused by colonialism). Matter has materiality, or the ability to affect when in relation with other matter (Coole & Frost, 2010). For an example of materiality, you might think of a Mercator map. A Mercator map is a common map (tangible matter) in social studies classrooms. But the Mercator map also “matters” in other ways. For instance, a Mercator map disproportionately represents Europe and North America as larger than they actually are in comparison to other continents, such as Africa or South America in proportionality to Europe and North America. Size, in many situations denotes importance, and as such I argue that the Mercator Map materializes imperialist ideologies (intangible) by marginalizing Africa and South America in proportionality. This “matters” because it impacts the ways that students view places in relation.

But what matter does preservice social studies teachers think matters? And why does it matter? Based on my queries, my research questions included:

- *What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*
- *What is produced through an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*

With those questions, I utilized feminist continental philosopher Rosi Braidotti's *Critical Posthumanism* (2017, 2019) to attend to the power and ethics of those material relations, and employed feminist qualitative methodologist Maureen Flint's (2021a, 2021b) conception of posthuman sound and listening as my methodology. *Critical Posthumanism* and posthuman sound and listening offer an attention to what matters through sensorial experience (e.g., touching, hearing, seeing). This sensorial experience is relational and emergent. As Braidotti (2006) noted in the quote above, this expanded (beyond just seeing) sensorial experience "actualizes different potentials" (p. 103). To unlock those "potentials" in my work with preservice social studies teachers, I utilized a variety of methods, including: focus groups, collage, photovoice, and sound. I will unpack those "potentials" throughout the rest of the chapters, as they relate to each component of the research: generation, analysis, and dissemination.

For now, I will briefly discuss methods that engage the senses and review scholarship that utilizes sound studies to situate my own work with posthuman sound and listening. Then I will explicitly delve into *how* posthuman sound and listening is being operationalized in the research design. Afterwards, I will discuss participation in the research, and extrapolate on the methods, instruments, and procedures for data generation and analysis for posthuman sound and listening throughout the research process.

## **Research Design**

In what follows, I will delve into how I come to the sonic and how it shows up in my work. I will begin broadly in my description of sound and funnel down to exemplars from social studies. Then, I will contextualize how my theoretical commitments impact my methodological choices and orientations to sound and listening.

### **Engaging the Senses through the Visual**

The written word and other mediums of the ocular (seeing through the eye) can offer meaningful insight. Whether we are discussing painting, drawing, sculpture, film, carving, collage, photography, comics, writing, or another mode of the visual, each offers something to the sensorium. For example, Bangladeshi photojournalist Ismail Ferdous (2014) wrote about some of the profound effects of the ocular:

Since the camera was invented in 1826, it has been used to document everything from social injustice, inequality, famine, war, and human rights abuses to uplifting scenes of humanity, brotherhood, victory, love, and hope. Because photography has the power to visually reveal the truth, throughout history photographs have made huge impacts on social consciousness and ultimately shaped public opinion on many destructive government policies. (p. 22)

Though I contest Ferdous claim that “photography has the power to visually reveal the truth,” as truth is local and always partial (Haraway, 1988), Ferdous (2014) quote, thought with Braidotti’s (2017, 2019) *Critical Posthumanism*, highlights how photography can produce *potentia* and *potestas*, when utilized for “social consciousness” (Ferdous, 2014, p. 22). For instance, within a social studies classroom, I think about what it does to show the image of Napalm girl or a video of Sister Rosetta Tharpe singing. Though we, as social studies educators, cannot guarantee that

students glean our intentions for the use of such visualizations, the visual has great potential for sparking affects (i.e., discomfort, fear, concern, sadness, empowerment, joy, hope).

Understanding the potential of the visual, I use the visual within my own research, as I ask participants to engage in collage and photography, which I will discuss further later in each subsection.

### ***Activating the Sensorium through Sound***

Furthermore, understanding the limitations of engaging *only* to the ocular (seeing through the eyes) facet of the visual, alongside other scholars (McKittrick, 2020; Campt, 2017; Daza and Gershon, 2015; Gershon, 2013), I also conceptualize the notion of the visual to attend a fuller sensorium, such as hearing, listening, and feeling. As Tina Campt (2017) notes in her archival work of photographed black subjects in the diaspora, seeing does not occur *only* with your eyes. In her archival work, Campt challenges her readers to listen to images. Campt (2017) notes that sound is “an inherently embodied process that registers at multiple levels of the human sensorium” (p. 6). In this way, sound is not out there, separate from us; sound is relationally apart of us, and moves within, through, and beyond bodies.

Attending to this idea of movement, sound’s multifaced sensorial affects and effects are powerful. Daza and Gershon (2015) wrote:

Sounds underscore the impossibility of singularity and binaries and of incompleteness of the ocular; they interrupt the overly sighted metaphors that govern our understandings about qualitative research. In this way, sound method/ologies engage justice, politics, ethics, cultural differences (gender, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, (dis)ability, etc.), ownership, and criticality differently, opening new im/possibilities. (p. 642)

In other words, sound offers different ways of seeing, complicating the ‘visual’ as more than what we see through our eyes. Seeing, in this context, is more nuanced than simply what your eyes can take in, and includes the literal and abstract ability to see. For instance, a person without the literal ability to see (i.e., person that is blind), still has capacity to visualize, which is a different engagement with seeing. They might engage in seeing by utilizing their senses to produce their own visualization, in the way they see the effects of sound (i.e., words of affirmation producing smiles) or feels its affects (i.e., the impact of hearing traumatic histories in the images of colonized peoples). To recapitulate, seeing is more conceptual than literally looking through the eyes; it is the ability to visualize. Likewise, sound is more than hearing; it conceptually encompasses the sonic qualities of being embodied and embedded (Braidotti, 2002), which means that hearing is physiological and affective.

***Listening*** For the context of my research with preservice social studies teachers, listening was generative. For instance, it was a different relation and experience as a researcher to read responses from a survey than to hear participants discuss their identities. Gershon (2013) wrote:

The ability to represent and otherwise coconstruct participants in/as/through sound simultaneously removes a layer of translation while adding important affective and sensual information. For example, representing sounds sonically allows participants give voice for/to themselves while retaining information lost when translated to text—from the tone and tenor of prosody to the combined sonic stories of spaces and places. (p. 259)

Here, Gershon highlights how listening to audio in comparison to reading transcript offers “the tone and tenor of prosody,” or relation to speech patterns. Hearing inflection, stutterings, and pauses can produce an entirely different listening than *only* reading. For instance, reading the introductory demographic survey results from my participants, alone, felt much more sterile, in

comparison to the quality of actively listening to my participants introductions during the first focus group and even when (re)listening to their recorded voices during analysis.

Participant's responses, mired in and with the other sounds in the focus groups and photovoice images, offered a plethora of stories, told differently. For instance, Ron noted in his survey that he wrestled. For me, this seemed like a rather random addition. However, coupled with his discussion of wrestling in college and coaching students on how to wrestle, and also wanting to be a wrestling coach at the school he planned to teach social studies, wrestling began to resonate in his sounding as very much mattering for his becoming as a preservice social studies teacher. This became audible through the repetition of his utterances (talking and photographic submissions). Further, within the utterances, you could hear his passion (inflection, amplitude, and speed), which was not as apparent when read.

This sonic difference created potential for other nomadic ethical becomings, as increasing conceptions of the visual offers more entry points and locations within my research. It challenged me beyond that which is seen only through the eyes, to draw knowledge as well as to be accountable as a researcher. For instance, there is a long history of the primacy and prejudice for written text (Abdi, 2007; Khan, 2021), which has historically centered European men (Daza & Gershon, 2015; Moten, 2003; Shannon, 2019). Some scholars (McKittrick, 2020; Shannon, 2019) believe it is a feminist practice to include the sonic world (i.e., oral traditions) in research, as some bodies (human and more-than-human) have been excluded from the production of written texts. I will attend to nomadic ethical becomings further later in the discussion of each chapter. Scholars in other contexts have also found sound to be fruitful, which I will discuss next.

## **Exemplars of Sonic Research in the Social Sciences**

Establishing that sound is multimodal, here I offer a review of literature that utilizes sound<sup>1</sup> within the social sciences, situating my methodology: posthuman sound and listening. Sonic methodologies have been used by various fields, including: psychology (Baker et al., 2020), educational studies (Chadwick, 2020; Daza & Gershon, 2015; Gershon, 2013; Mazzei, 2004, 2013; Shannon, 2019; Wargo, 2015, 2020), geography (Anderson, 2004; Duffy et al., 2016; Gallagher, 2015, 2016; Lamb et al., 2019; McKittrick, 2020; Reville, 2016; Simpson, 2009; Waitt et al., 2020), higher education (Flint, 2021a; Flint, 2021b), and cultural studies (Camp, 2017; Cox, 2011; Goffe, 2020). Next, I will discuss how these scholars operationalized sound and listening in their research to highlight the insights that sound offers.

Across the diverse contexts, there is an attention to space and place, affect and embodiment, identity, and relationality. Some of these pieces engage *multiple* facets (e.g., Duffy et al. (2016) studies affect, space, and relationality), which I will attend to in my discussion of the scholarship.

### ***Space and Place***

In this review, many scholars attended to the sonic quality of space and place, and inversely, how space and place are immanent to sound production. For instance, geography scholar, Gallagher (2015), utilized field recordings to highlight how sound is relational and produces space. Gallagher wrote that field recordings “generate three-dimensional vibrational spaces—dynamic, fluid, and temporary but spaces nonetheless” (p. 561). For instance, Gallagher highlights how playing back field recordings create “new composite space, suffused with an additional layer of vibrations” (p. 572). In this way, Gallagher attends to the agentic capacities of sound to affect space.

Similarly, another scholar in geography, Revill (2016), utilized Rancière's conception of the distribution of the sensible to theorize the political agency of sonic material relationality more generally. For instance, Revill (2016) wrote that the agency is "distributed within practices, processes, objects and entities not necessarily or readily definable by the qualities of sound alone" (p. 241). Put differently, sound (just as a vibration) is not agentic. It is agentic in relation. In this way, Revill argues that there are "multiple processes of mediation which shape and inform the sonic" (p. 253). Understanding how sound is mediated by space offers an attention to complexity, such as "depth, distance and proximity" which he argues can suggest "feelings of clarity, delicacy and intimacy" (p. 247).

Some scholars' sonic research was about specific spaces (e.g., cities). For example, Waitt et al. (2020) engaged in ethnographic research in a city. In doing so, Waitt et al. (2020) utilizes Deleuze and Guattari's notion of territory and Greimas' semiotic square. The city then becomes a site of theorization, wherein it is heard and felt. For instance, the researchers had participants keep diaries of how sounds of the city made them feel (p. 2138). The scholars argue that they "advance conceptual thinking of urban liveliness by illustrating how attending to embodied experiences of sound has the potential to enrich understandings by drawing attention to the affective politics of sound" (p. 2144). Here, Waitt et al. (2020) highlight how sounds of the city affect bodies.

Goffe (2020), a cultural historian, utilized digital cartography to unmap imperialism, as decolonial practice. Goffe, and their team, mapped complexity through digital audiovisual maps of Caribbean spaces (i.e., New York) with Esri's ArcGIS Story Maps. For instance, Goffe wrote that "the New York group showed gentrification by contrasting the sounds of bodegas and people playing dominos on the street with markers of sonic colonialism—notably, the idle

chatter of gentrifying hipsters” (p. 14). Here, Goffe elaborates on how students in her class juxtaposed sounds to highlight how power was fluid through the audio. Further, Goffe showcases space as transnational, using sound to highlight imperialism.

### ***Identity***

Some scholars also attended to identity in their work with sound. For instance, the same educational scholar, Mazzei (2004), theorized silence in relation to race. Drawing on Spivak and Derrida, Mazzei (2004) use deconstruction as deconstructive practice with “White teachers in a non-White environment” (p. 26) to focus on the silence in research and how it was telling about the participants’ attention to white culture. Mazzei argued:

By engaging in a purposeful process for listening to the voices of our participants, and specifically listening to the silences uttered in the breaths and the pauses, we encounter a fascinating discourse often unnoticed that will surprise us and to which we must attend.  
(p. 31)

Mazzei orients us to pay attention to silence. This silence can offer space to hear what participants are offering, as silence is its own utterance.

Like Mazzei, Black feminist theorist, Campt (2017), is also interested in the lower frequencies of sound. In Campt’s (2017) book, *Listening to Images*, she uses archival photos of the Black diaspora to listen to images, which “requires an attunement to sonic frequencies of affect and impact. It is an ensemble of seeing, feeling, being affected, contacted, and moved beyond the distance of sight and observer” (p. 42). Here, Campt orients to the audience to listen more closely to the visual, to the “sublimely expressive unsayability... toward a deeper understanding of the sonic frequencies of the quotidian practices of black communities” (p. 4). In

this way, Camppt attends to the quiet frequencies of images of Black communities,engaging in a “politics of prefiguration” (p. 17), or Black futurity.

Baker et al. (2020) also used sound to attend to identity, and, how power circulated in relation to identity, becoming an “aesthetic of interruption – for making the unheard or silenced voices heard by inserting those stories into the public realm” (p. 906). To produce sound as an “aesthetic of interruption,” Baker et al. (2020) produced sound portraits of participants, highlighting the complexities that South African migrants face between where their current locations (nonnative) and their homes. These sound portraits were brought to a public space (“university-community gallery space”) (p. 903), in an attempt to make the research accessible to the public. In this way, the scholars attended to the power imbued in identity.

Also speaking back to oppressive power, out of critical geography, McKittrick (2020) conceived black storytelling and stories as a rebellious methodology. This includes the sonic, attending to relationality within sound (i.e. storying through sound), as liberatory practice. For example, McKittrick discusses Clyde Wood’s text, *Development Arrested: The Blues and Plantation Power in the Mississippi Delta*, and argued that:

...in this text the way of being black, or the way of black humanity, is to recognize music and soundscape as the way of, rather than external to, the self and the social world. In this sense black is a sound is a way of being black and black being is an aurally aesthetic way of life. (p. 65)

Put differently, McKittrick conceptualizes sound as identity because it is embodied in being Black, within the context of Wood’s book. This example shines a light on the ways in which sound is theorized as immanent to identity, and in particular to place (Plantations) and space (Mississippi Delta), Black identity and resistance.

## *Affect and Embodiment*

Some scholars also theorized sound in relation to affect and embodiment. For instance, Gershon (2013) engaged in sonic ethnography in educational spaces, specifically attending to sound as resonance and knowledge. Gershon's (2013) work offers generative conversation around the affective qualities of sound and how an attention to sound disrupts mind/body dualism.

Likewise, literacy scholar, Wargo (2020), highlighted the affective capacity of sound. Wargo wrote that participants used sonic digital technologies, such as Audacity and VoiceThread, "to comment and critique instructional approaches, to categorize and curate possible solutions and technologies, as well as to amplify the successes or perceived failures of their projects" (p. 232). Through these sound technologies, affect was produced in the reflections. As Wargo (2020) noted about a participant:

When Anna described how motor detectors brought positive changes to her students' learning (e.g. students designed real-life action projects to create their own line graphs to understand relationships), music with rising intonation and volume amplified connotative feelings of excitement. In this instance, Anna's mood of exaltation was conveyed to the listener vividly through sound. (p. 227)

Wargo offers an attention to affect in the reflections, proffering that these tools enable hearing reflection, which offers a different window than reading reflection.

Wargo (2015) also engaged in research with technology at the nexus of spatiality, embodiment, and Queer identity. Pulling from ethnographic research, Wargo (2015) theorized the process of a student using Snapchat to compose embodied experiences with queer phenomenology. Wargo offered evidence of Snapchat stories (usually images and video, layered

with sound and text) from one of his participants, Ben, to theorize the “ephemerality” of Snapchat (p. 57). Wargo wrote, “Often, these narrative cartographers are like the sand he cites, blown not by wind but by the affective intensities that incite coinciding spatial stories to be taken up, composed, and felt” (p. 57). Wargo offers an attention to the “visions, voices, and experiences” produced and how they are felt through Snapchat (p. 61).

Affect also became important in relation to space for other sonic scholars. Duffy et al. (2016) conceives of visceral sonic mapping, bringing conversation together at the nexus of sound, emotions, society, and space. For this study, participants drove to work, and sound from this quotidian activity was analyzed. Visceral sonic mapping focuses on the “gut” responses of participants (p. 52), particularly how space, bodies, and affect are interwoven, in the aim of better understanding the lived experience.

Geographer, Gallagher (2016), was also interested in affect and space. In moving from embodiment to emotionality, Gallagher (2016) theorizes with affect to conceive sonic affect. Gallagher (2016) wrote that “sound itself is also a kind of affect --an oscillating difference, an intensity that moves bodies, a vibration physically pushing and pulling their material fabric” (p. 43). Here, Gallagher reconceptualizes sound as affect. Again, this attention to affect asserts a sense of agency in relation to sound. Further this sonic affect is relational, between human and more-than-human bodies (p. 47).

### ***Relationality***

Gallagher’s (2016) attention to relationality is foregrounded in sonic research by other scholars. Educational scholar, Mazzei (2013), theorizes voice, thinking with Deleuze and Guattari’s bodies without organs to theorize voices without organ. This concept is

operationalized to theorize how their data are immanent to each other, in comparison to singular subject positions, producing a non-unitary location to hear.

Moving from theorizing the immanence of data (voice), Cox (2011) offers an attention to sound as relational, writing that “sound is not a world apart... sound and the sonic arts are firmly rooted in the material world and the powers, forces, intensities, and becomings of which it is composed” (p. 157). Cox (2011) reifies the notion that sound is bound up in matter, co-constituting it.

Differently, Flint (2021a), a scholar of higher education, constructed sound compilations to attend to ethics and relations, thought with posthumanism, with particular attention to racism, slavery, and white supremacy. This research occurred with students at the University of Alabama, a university campus in the southern United States. Flint’s engagement with sound compilations was critically oriented towards recognizing how power was operating on campus, imbricated in the student’s sense of relation. In particular, Flint (2021a) argued that the sound compilations offer “entangled and relational examination from differential and situated starting positions” (p. 15).

### ***Situating Posthuman Sound and Listening in Relation to these Exemplars***

Like these scholars offer, sound offers an attention to space, place, identity, affect, embodiment, and relationality. As noted in the previous chapter, an attention to embodiment (identity) and embeddedness (space and place) is an important tenet of Critical Posthumanism. Further, it is productive for theorizing affect and relationality. As these scholars highlight, sound methodologies can be faithful to these preoccupations.

Indeed, listening to sounds, to resonances, in the responses and relations (I.e. intellectual, bodily, affective) also offered me new insights, and pathways, in comparison to solely reading

words on a page. What does it do to hear about preservice-mentor relations? For me, listening to the affective responses from the focus groups (i.e. Junie’s frustration and Sydney’s gratitude) offered a richer engagement, producing a better visual in my social imaginary of what was mattering and how that was producing the participants’ becomings as preservice social studies teachers. These questions about sound, that listening –that relation—seem(ed) important for social studies education. I thought about moments across space and time in my own becoming as a social studies educator, be it engaging conversations during a Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS) about colonization, fun simulations of the 1996 Olympics, the chaotic sound of working with materials on projects, my nervous chattering juxtaposed with awkward pauses. Some of the sounds were caught like time capsules in my brain, but what would I have done to listened to them, to critically hear and reflect on my ethical becomings, as I navigated how I showed up in the space in relation to my students, the school, the community. This led me to scour scholarship in social studies for sound, thinking about its possibilities for teacher preparation.

### **Sound and Listening in Social Studies**

In the field of social studies education, scholarship on sound and listening has been published. This attention to sound, within published social studies literature, began around the 1930s and continues to the current day. However, sound –particularly as music—is still an important part of social studies research. I survey some of this research in what follows.

#### ***Sound in Social Studies***

Moving into the archives of social studies, I found publications on the introduction of sound. In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the advent of sound machines created conversation about using film (Gray, 1932) and slides (Smith, 1942) with sound in classrooms. In *The Historical Outlook*, a magazine for history teachers, Gray (1932) wrote that “a recent report of

the Department of Commerce indicates that in 517 representative public school units in the United States the motion picture is coming to be used more widely in the field of social science than in any other branch of instruction” (p. 282). This led me to think about the advent and its affects (i.e. excitement and sense of novelty) produced by *recorded* sound in social studies. A decade later, Smith (1942) was offering tips for including visual aids and using sound effects in social studies courses.

Additionally, music, as sound production, has also been highlighted in social studies research. For instance, Pellegrino et al. (2018) utilized classical music for historical thinking. Specifically, Pellegrino et al. (2018) research included listening to “Shostakovich's 7th Symphony” to enhance “students’ engagement with, and comprehension of, the plight of Leningraders throughout the German siege of the city and amidst the time of Stalin” (p. 341). The scholars found that students who listened to the symphony produced projects that included “actual, humanizing photographs, which showed the city and Leningrad's citizens struggling and living during the siege” in comparison to students who did not listen to the symphony; the students who did not listen included “far more textual explanations, caricatures, and slogans on their posters... designed to capture more idealized and archetypal depictions of good and evil” (p. 341). The scholars argued that listening offered a different layer of intimacy and appeared to lead to more historical empathy. Branscombe et al. (2017) also used music in their research. Specifically, they built and used drum circles with students to learn about Kenyan culture, particularly forms of communication. For instance, Branscombe et al. (2017) wrote that “after the students explored the sounds that they could make when playing the drum, they tried to use those sounds and rhythms to send messages and represent different experiences” (p. 58). Branscombe et al.’s research attended to the “nonwordness” of sound (McKittirck, 2020, p. 14)

and communication. Indeed sound is mentioned in scholarship in social studies, though sound tends to be a byproduct in the discussion of each topic (i.e. film or classical music).

### ***Listening in Social Studies***

Likewise, there is some research on listening in social studies. For instance, there is work in social studies about empathic listening (Andolina & Conklin, 2021). Andolina and Conklin (2021) offer empathic listening, a listening that “requires and allows for vulnerability, builds relationships, engenders empathy, and develops a sense of connection among individuals” (p. 395). For these scholars, empathic listening is a tool for engaging in democratic practices as citizens.

Additionally, listening appears in social studies in the context of methods for curriculum instruction, such as in discussion (Cleveland, 1980), poetry (Bagwell, 2021), and cultural observation (Diem, 1977). These scholars generatively tap into how these sonic methods offer practitioners, and students, different ways to learn through hearing, though these scholars do not appear to be theorizing sound as much as the specific method’s positive effects. Thus, blips of sound and listening have been discussed in scholarship in social studies.

However, in reviewing the premier refereed journals for social studies education (*Theory and Research in Social Education*, the *Journal of Social Studies Research*, and *The Social Studies*), there is a dearth of research on sound and listening *as methodology* for social studies researchers. Literacy scholar Jon Wargo’s (2021) work in civics is the main contribution of sound as methodology in social studies.<sup>17</sup> Wargo (2021) worked with elementary school students

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<sup>17</sup> There may be more work using sound as methodology in social studies. However, it is not being positioned as ‘social studies’ and/or is not being or is not able to be published in those three premier journals. This could be true for a myriad of reasons (i.e., sound is considered experimental, and therefore less rigorous, visual culture is valued over sonic culture). I will speak to some of this later in my discussion of posthuman sound and listening.

as they produced digital creations that focused on producing just alternatives in the face of injustice. Wargo argued that sound was “a resource young children think with in social studies inquiry” (p. 365). Wargo (2021) articulated sound as both a modal resource and a critical literacy tool in social studies education. Thus, there is substantial room to think about how sound “offers distinct ways of understanding and knowing the world” in social studies education (Wargo, 2021, p. 365). I agree with Wargo, and in community, I also utilize sound and listening in my research.

The aforementioned sound scholarship, from within and outside of social studies education proper, challenged me to reconceived the power of sound and listening as an alternative to prose as a medium for data generation, analysis, and dissemination. In the next section, I discuss the specific methodology used in my research: posthuman sound and listening.

### **Posthuman Sound and Listening**

Based on my theoretical commitments and Critical Posthuman approach, I turn to feminist qualitative researcher Maureen Flint’s (2021a; 2021b) conception of posthuman sound and listening to query preservice social studies teachers’ beliefs and attention to material relations in social studies. Flint (2021a) wrote that:

posthumanism turns... inquiry toward the methodological possibilities of sound to decenter hegemonic ways of knowing and being in the world. Thought with posthuman theories, the compilation of sound and resonance... offers a starting point for exploring the relational, embodied, and material web of affects that characterize the nomadic subject. (p. 8)

As Flint notes, posthuman sound and listening offers a different entry point in qualitative research. Furthermore, Flint orients this entry as critical, noting that it has the potential to

“decenter hegemonic ways of knowing and being” (p. 8). I read this attention to hegemony as an attention to power and ethics, which I unpack next.

### ***Posthuman Sound and Listening: Power and Ethics***

Posthuman sound and listening, in its exploration of power, is bound up in ethics. In Flint’s discussion of listening to a leaf blower down her walking interview with a student at the University of Alabama, she wrote (2021b):

...a shift to listening to more-than-human voices, frequencies, and patterns makes possible considering sounds and resonances that are otherwise or have historically been unheard.

This is an ethical move. (p. 7)

Here, Flint shines a light on the marginalization of more-than-human sound at the intersection of “sound, race, place, and space” (p. 7), arguing that resisting marginalization (which is coursing with power) *through listening* is an issue of ethics.

Flint (and the participant) could have easily accepted the leaf blower as a normal intrusion into their conversation and picked back up after the leaf blower's sound was beyond their earshot. Yet, Flint attunes the reader to power and ethics by recognizing what the more-than-human leaf blower is entangled with in the context of the Southern university campus. Flint (2021b) wrote:

This constant maintenance and movement to maintain pristine grounds [with such tools as a leaf blower] is also tied to systemic inequities, settler colonialism, white supremacy, the maintenance of property rights, and the stratification of jobs and low-paid (or unpaid) labor. (p. 13).

In other words, the leaf blower is implicated in a human and more-than-human history of control. Therefore, Flint offers posthuman listening as a methodology that orients researchers to power

through the possibilities of that which has been taken for granted within our sonic (research) worlds.

Turning to my own research, listening to the more-than-human —be that collaged mappings of social studies or assemblages of sound in the audio transcripts-- allowed me to analyze how power operates in ways that are tangible and intangible. For instance, in my research with the preservice social studies teachers, every map of what mattered in social studies included women. Yet, participants recognized that women are not always in the curriculum of social studies. For instance, Blair, one of the women preservice social studies teachers, talked through the lack of women in their social studies classes as a student. Critically listening to the more-than-human —juxtaposing what I heard in the maps of social studies and the audio from the first focus group—allowed me to recognize power. In this case, this posthuman listening allowed me to hear desire and marginalization.

**The Ethics of Representation** Furthermore, Flint’s posthuman sound and listening attends to the ethics of representation in qualitative research. Flint (2021a) wrote that when she was trying to disseminate her research, she struggled to “represent and tell... histories and encounters in ways that honored their multiplicity and non-linearity” (p. 3). This led Flint to make audio compilations “to explore... contradictions, layerings, and congealings... [and as a] way to think with the students who took part in my study” (p. 3). Flint intentionally curated her audio to produce a sense of complexity and affectivity. In doing this, Flint specifically crafted the audio compilations to:

...provoke embodied responses and resonances to engage the listener (and provoke me as the creator) to examine how histories of racism, coloniality, and white supremacy are

carried into the present, and our complicity and ethical response-ability to imagine the future differently. (p. 3)

Flint made the compilations as provocation to attend to oppression in the past as well as more ethical futures.

Reverberation also appeared to occur in Flint's work, being an impetus for the use of sound. When discussing research with university students, Flint (2021a) wrote:

Listening through the audio generated from students' experiences in white institutional space, the sound of the voices of the students in the study pulled and tugged at me, exceeding the notations and memos I made, exceeding the transcripts. Specifically, I was pulled both by the resonance of the vibrations of the student's voices – the pitch, tones, inflections, and patterns of their speech, as well as the resonance of the stories told – the patterns, connections, and divergences in encounters and experiences. (p. 9)

Returning to the idea of representation, sound seemed to better offer Flint a way to curate relation from her data generation. Flint noted that “listening through the audio... exceeded the transcripts.” Here, Flint highlights that sound offers a different richness, as an audience would necessarily engage differently with audio. Reading about changes in “pitch, tones, inflections, and patterns of speech” is literally a different relation to the research because it is another sensorial engagement.

This led me to methods that would allow a practice of listening. Specifically, when choosing methods for posthuman sound and listening, I chose engagements that would produce opportunities to work with matter, as the participants (preservice social studies teachers) elaborated on what they believed matter and what the material relations offered. I chose to implement a collage during a focus group, a photovoice exercise, and debrief the focus group

during data generation, in service of producing sonic relations. I audio recorded the sessions and photographed data generation. The purpose was to engage in multiple rounds, and reverberations, of my original sonic engagements during my analysis of the data generation. In addition to asking participants to collage, I also engaged in collage. My theoretical commitment to matter informed my desire to work with matter as I studied what the preservice social studies teachers believed mattered. In the dissemination of this research methodology (this dissertation), I will offer tastings of these relations and creations across the chapters that follow.

In order to better contextualize sources of sound and who and what I was listening to, I will now highlight the human participants and some of the more-than-human participants.<sup>18</sup> Afterwards, I will discuss the sources of posthuman sound in the data generation and analysis.

### **Participants**

This study was carried out with five preservice social studies teachers<sup>19</sup>, who were enrolled in a Master of Teaching (MAT) degree program in Social Studies Education at the University of Georgia, which is located in the southeastern United States. As I alluded to earlier, my desire to work with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia stems from my work as a

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<sup>18</sup> There is always more than meets the eyes and ears (and other senses), so my attention to the more-than-human is always already partial (Lather, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> When I reference preservice teacher in this piece, I specifically mean a student in a teacher education or preparation program. Eligibility for the social studies program from which the participants came is determined by having already completed a bachelor's degree in one of the following emphasis areas: history, economics, geography, or political science. Upon entry, candidates must complete a research seminar, take three electives, problems of teaching secondary social studies, curriculum planning in social sciences, social science curriculum in secondary schools, methods of teaching social science in secondary schools, secondary social studies teaching and learning, secondary social studies teaching and learning seminar, senior field experience in social science education, student teaching in social science education, and student teaching seminar. This study was carried out during the final portion of the preservice teacher's program, during the last month of their student teaching placement and student teaching seminar.

student and teacher educator in a social studies teacher preparation program. I began to question whose beliefs and feelings were accounted for when programming in social studies teacher education and what an attention to preservice social studies teacher could offer social studies teacher education.

Programming, for me, appeared to be more structural within my department. After being assigned a course, I would immediately begin to think about the necessary knowledge that students would encounter, and hopefully acquire, in the course(s). When building my syllabi, sometimes I pulled from departmental syllabi, literally copying and pasting, as I trust the expertise of my colleagues and did not see the point in attempting to recreate the wheel. This trust was compounded by the fact that I went through and studied under the people that I was now working alongside. Further, when I did have autonomy to be more creative in building my own course, I usually thought about my course objectives in relation to my experiences in my teacher preparation as well as my experience in classrooms across the state of Georgia. Moreover, I attended to current events and phenomena that I believe(d) to be circulating in social studies classrooms (i.e., anti-Blackness). However, I did not ask *my students* what they thought they needed when I constructed syllabi. It is not to say that asking them would have dramatically changed what or how I taught, but it could have informed what and how I taught.

The idea that I would teach based on my own experience is not new. In 1975, Lortie published a sociological study on the ways in which educators relied on prior experience as knowledge for how to teach. Further, according to Oleson and Hora (2014), this trend (teaching based on one's own educational experience) continues.

Upon reflecting on the ways in which I was teaching within a social studies teacher education program, I wondered about the ethics of attending to preservice social studies teachers'

knowledge and how it impacts their becomings *and* social studies' becomings. The subject position of a preservice teacher is liminal (I.e., student for the university, teacher for the students in the classroom, and mentee to the mentor teacher). These locations offer a variety of perspectives, due to the different *spaces* that preservice teachers occupy.

Due to the participants subject position(ings), their (potentially) evolving perceptions and beliefs are pertinent to their own teacher preparation. For instance, if the orientation of a program is critical, it may be important to invite discussion around what a becoming social studies teacher candidate values in and as social studies education. Being raised, myself, in whiteness in Georgia, I can imagine that some of our preservice teachers in Georgia were also raised in whiteness. This matters for how I teach them. I have to constantly calibrate how to be ethical in my teaching (i.e., How much rapport do I have to build before potentially challenging norms they have been raised in and around? How much can I challenge them within a given class? From what angles can I challenge them? What if they are not receptive to being challenged? How do I negotiate their norms and values if they are violent? How do I teach, mentor, and coach students that are hungry for more ethical forms of social studies education?). Reading more, listening more, witnessing powerful forces that oppress (e.g., horrendous policy under Presidents Biden and Trump, Governor Kemp, and some of my state congressional leaders), as well as beautiful grassroots movements that empower (e.g., Georgia Youth Justice Coalition, Black Lives Matter, and Athens Mutual Aid), I have had more space and time to reflect on the aims and goals of the work of teacher preparation and its potential for being a space that might produces engagements with affirmative ethics.

This led me to my current project. Upon approval of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I requested the opportunity to visit courses in a Social Studies teacher preparation

program to recruit participants. I visited a social studies Master of Teaching (MAT) course, explained the purpose of the research, outlined participation, explained that completion of the study came with a \$50 gift card, and left consent forms for interested parties. Five of the MAT preservice social studies teachers consented, via paper, that they would like to participate in the research.

Then, participants were invited to an informational session on Zoom, a web-based video platform, where they determined if they would like to participate in the following sequence of research engagements: focus group collage exercise, photovoice exercise, and focus group debrief of the photovoice exercise. Upon completion of the informational meeting, the same five participants consented to continuing research. Next, I will offer a note on the consent process.

### **Consent**

Consent was an ongoing process. I acquired consent via a paper document prior to the informational meeting on Zoom. I also asked for consent throughout the research process. For example, I verbally asked for consent after the informational Zoom, the beginning of the collage focus group, at the end of the collage focus group, and the beginning of the photovoice debrief focus group. Though it may be conventional to only ask for consent once, ethically, I, like other scholars (Prentice et al., 2007) believe ongoing consent is imperative to remind participants of their rights and their ability to set boundaries around their participation.

Additionally, once participants verbally agreed and consented to participation in the research at the end of the Zoom information session, I asked that they complete a survey that would better inform me of about how they showed up in the world and perceived themselves in the world (e.g., gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status). This information helped me better know them as complex people, beyond being preservice social studies teachers, as their

embedded and embodied locations impact their subjectivities. This commitment is drawn from the politics of location, which is a “method [that] accounts for one’s locations in terms both of space (geo-political or ecological dimension) and time (historical memory or genealogical dimension), thereby grounding political subjectivity” (Braidotti, 2019, p. 34). For example, I am a white, cis-woman social studies teacher educator in Georgia. If attending to the history of place, my whiteness is sometimes conceived as invisible, or normed (referring back to the discussion of Western humanism in my elaboration of Critical Posthumanism). Braidotti (2006) writes that “the politics of location is both materialist and immanent and it provides the grounding for political accountability” (p. 93). Thinking with Critical Posthumanism and attending to the politics of location in my posthuman sound and listening challenges me to interrogate my own location as well as others within a given context (e.g., social studies teacher education in Georgia from 2022-2023).<sup>20</sup> It becomes important to reflect on how my locations show up in the work, how it is leading me to think about demographics, about my participants’ identifiers, and what this all means for social studies teacher education. Knowing my participant’s locations may help me better theorize how power was operating in our work together in the research and in their becomings as social studies teacher educators. Additionally, having the participants locate themselves in the world, instead of making assumptions about their locations, seemed more ethical as well, as it shifted the power to them to delineate how they constituted themselves. Moreover, it helped me theorize implications for social studies teacher preparation, which I discuss later in the conclusion.

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<sup>20</sup> 2022 is when my IRB was accepted. I aim to graduate in 2023 and do not know if I’ll have the opportunity to continue research in social studies teacher education in Georgia.

For now, I turn to my participants (see Table 1) and describe each participant’s self-identified locations<sup>21</sup> (self-identified race or ethnicity, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic class, income, religion or spirituality, political orientation, age, first language, preferred language, highest educational attainment, geographic location where they spend the most time, and positionality as a social studies stakeholder) at the time of research (Spring 2022). I utilize their chosen pseudonyms (which was the first prompt on the survey) here and throughout the rest of the research.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, at the end of each “profile,” I include extra notes that the participants offered, if they had anything else they wanted me to know about them prior to engaging with research.

## **Table 1**

### *Participant Profiles*

#### Ron’s Profile

Ron self-identified as a Hispanic and White, straight male in the middle class, without an income. Ron also self-identified as a Christian and Liberal. Ron was 24, and his native and preferred language is English. Ron identified as having a master's degree. Further, Ron self-identified as geographically attached to Chicago. Ron positioned himself as a social studies stakeholder as a Teacher, Teacher Candidate, and Citizen. Further, he wanted me to know that he “wrestled during [his] undergraduate degree in Canada as a college athlete” in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

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<sup>21</sup> When responding to the survey, participants could choose “Prefer not to answer” or self-identify. Ethically, I felt it was important to honor each participants’ autonomy to share, reiterating their right to consent however they chose at each point in the research process, which is why I included the “prefer not to answer” option. For responses that participants wanted to offer information (“self-identify”), participants had to type out what they self-identified as instead of choosing from pre-determined identity markers and positionalities. I did include possible examples, beyond the archetype of the Humanist ideal. For example, when identifying their sexuality, the survey read, “Self identified sexuality (i.e. pan, bisexual, gay)”. I purposefully decided to have participants self-identify, as I wanted them to think through how they language their identity, instead of reproducing exclusionary norms (Hughes et al., 2016).

<sup>22</sup> All artifacts generated by participants are associated with the pseudonym. After identifiers have been removed, generated data may be used for publication of written materials or conferences. Every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure the effective use of available technology; however, confidentiality during online communication cannot be guaranteed.

### Stevie's Profile

Stevie self-identified as a white, straight female of the middle class. She did not have an income at the point at which she participated in the research. She identified as atheist and a democratic socialist. She was 22. Her native language was English, and she preferred to speak English. She had completed some graduate work. She located herself in relation to Athens, Georgia. Stevie positioned herself as a social studies stakeholder as a Student and Teacher.

### Junie's Profile

Junie self-identified as a straight, Asian woman of the middle class. Specifically, she noted falling within the income of \$41,001-\$120,400. She identified as Christian. She preferred not to share her political orientation. She noted she was 25 years of age. Her native language is Korean, though her preferred language is English. Junie identified as having completed some graduate work. She located herself in relation to Atlanta, Georgia. She positioned herself as a social studies stakeholder as a Student and Teacher Candidate.

### Sydney's Profile

Sydney self-identified as a white, hetero woman of middle class ranking. She noted that her income exceeded \$120,401. She also identified as Atheist, a liberal Democrat. She noted that she was 46 years of age. Her native and preferred language is English. She identified as having a master's degree. She located herself in Alpharetta, Georgia. Sydney positioned herself as a social studies stakeholder as a Teacher Candidate and parent. She also wanted me to know that she has "two teenage children both of whom identify as LGBTQ+" which makes her "intensely interested in those issues even though [she is] a heterosexual ciswoman."

### Blair's Profile

Blair self-identified as a White, Woman, that is Straight and Working class. She noted her income is falls between \$12,881-\$41,000. She identified as Agnostic and a Democratic socialist. She was 28 years of age at the time of research. Her native and preferred language is English. She had completed some graduate work. She geographically located herself as being in Athens, Georgia. Blair positioned herself as a social studies stakeholder as a Teacher Candidate.

## **Methods and Instruments for Posthuman Sound and Listening**

### **Methods for Data Generation**

To better understand what the five preservice social studies teachers believed mattered in social studies as well as what an attention to material relation offered, I utilized methods of data generation that engaged the participants in artistic material relation. Though artful methods are researched for K-12 spaces (Colley, 2012; Garrett & Kerr, 2016), there is a dearth of research on artful method(ologies) in published social studies education research practices. For instance,

social studies education's premier journal, *Teaching and Research in Social Education*, does not have any pieces in the past five years that explicitly theorize arts-based research or arts based educational research. Even when searching the term art from the last *ten* years, there were few manuscripts that theorized the impact of art and artist method(ologies). For instance, there is the theorization of aesthetic texts in social studies (Garrett & Kerr, 2016). Additionally, Hall (2023) theorizes how Hip Hop disrupts and contributes to conceiving citizenship. However, there is not salient discussion of how and why participants or researchers engaged in art-making/artful method(ologies) in social studies educational research.

Thus, I turn to my own circle of colleagues for inspiration as well as other fields in the social sciences. For instance, social studies scholar, Amelia Wheeler (2022), constructed a zine to analyze her participants experiences and the martyr teacher myth. Wheeler noted that making a zine, in comparison to simply writing prose, allowed her to “conduct [her] cartographic analysis... about participating teachers' labor to advance the alternative figuration of the social educator” (p. 55). Thus, creation (via a zine) honored Wheeler's theoretical and methodological commitments. Likewise, as qualitative scholar, Maureen Flint (2020), notes in her discussion of artful pulp making as nomadic ethics, “...the process of artmaking provides the possibility for nuance to linger, to resist the pull toward sameness, toward neat and packaged themes and categories...” (p. 5).

Because my research questions were interested in matter and matter in relation (material relation), and because my work takes a critical orientation in attending to the fluidity of power, I wanted participants to engage in artful practices (e.g., collage and photography) as part of the data generation. Braidotti (2006) wrote that “this emphasis on complexity and relationality, which facilitates cross-border connections and alliances among differently located

constituencies, is a political position” (p. 67). In this quote, Braidotti inspires me to engage in artful methods, as choosing artful methods for data generation is one critical way I found to create “cross border connections.”

Therefore, I intentionally designed enactments in the aim of producing “complexity and relationality.” For instance, I was interested in listening via audio, image, writing, and even “nonwordness” (McKittrick, 2020, p. 14) of sound. In this aim, participants collaged during a focus group, completed a photovoice exercise, and then discussed their photovoice exercise in a debrief focus group. In the following section, I highlight and substantiate why and how these methods of data generation were fruitful in the context of Braidotti’s Critical Posthumanism and Flint’s posthuman sound and listening for my research inquiry and how, theorized with posthuman sound and listening, they produced complex sonic worlds.

### ***Focus Group***

After the initial informational Zoom and survey, Blair, Junie, Ron, Stevie, Sydney, and I met for our first focus group. The aim of the focus group was to learn more about my first research question: *What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?* During the focus group, I facilitated the discussion and collaging by beginning the conversation, leading introductions, and explaining how we would be spending the session together (I.e., goals and expectations) (see Appendix A for the procedures in the Collage Focus Group Guide).

Though I facilitated the group, I chose to use a focus group (twice), in comparison to individual interview, in the aim of participants feeling comfortable to “make sense of” what matters in social studies in Georgia and discuss what is “relevant” to the participants, based on their location as preservice teachers (Roulston, 2010, p. 37). The desire towards multiple perspectives aligned with my theoretical and methodological commitments, which values

multiplicity (Braidotti, 2013b). Further, I hoped a group discussion would “deliberately upset the asymmetrical relationships usually assumed” because I would be outnumbered and participants may have rapport because they have the commonality of all being preservice social studies teachers from the same cohort (Roulston, 2010, p. 39). I wanted participants to be able to hear multiple perspectives, possibly leading them to think more reflectively about what was mattering for them from their subject positions as preservice social studies teachers in Georgia.

(Re)listening, attending to the material relations and matterings in the focus group, I used multiple audio recording devices. I will discuss the recording devices further under instruments. Additionally, I took photographs of the materials before, during, and after the focus group, as I wanted to engage with the becoming material relations. When I say becoming, I am specifically referencing Braidotti’s conception of becoming as a *process* of “empathic proximity and intensive interconnectedness” (2002, p. 8) “between the ‘no longer’ and the ‘not yet’” (2006, p. 128). Becoming is transitive and potentially transformational; it is not static. Thus, within the focus group, I assumed that material relations would be on the move, which was most obvious in the collaging, which I discuss next.

### ***Collage***

During the focus group, I chose to incorporate collage. Collage is a “provocative practice” that offers space to think about what is produced by engaging with a prompt in material and abstract ways (Hanawalt, 2019, p. 22). In the context of my research, collage functioned as an opportunity to create an understanding of what preservice social studies teachers in Georgia are preoccupied with in social studies *through* artful methods. Collage literally puts material in relation. For example, participants are asked to imagine a map of social studies and to construct it with the materials on the table (see Figure 3).

### Figure 3

*Table of Materials for the Collage Focus Group*



Participants came into relation with many materials during the collage. For instance they cut paper, tore magazine pages, glued, stapled, and stuck material together, as they mapped out social studies. These relations to the material offered a different vantage point for conversation. These materials prompted different knowledge production than sitting at a table void of materials. For instance, a participant, Ron, noted his attention to a magazine with a flag; this prompted a discussion on flags and nationalism, which may not have occurred if he had not come into relation with the magazine. Holbrook and Pouchier's (2014) scholarship substantiated this as well. The scholars (2014) wrote that collaging attends to "how artifacts (objects, memories, dreams, texts) mingle and coalesce to form new texts, frames, articulations... Collage allows us to create data and re-create knowledge..." (p. 758). In other words, reassembling materials may open space among the focus group to think about what social studies is

preoccupied with in Georgia in ways that are different than conventional conversation without materials.

Further, I was interested in inquiring as to what materials and how materials come in relation in the collaging of what is centered in Georgia, and if it produced (new) knowledge for myself and for participants. To better understand what is produced through collage for each participant, I asked questions (Appendix A) based on their engagements with each other in the focus group and with the materials. This led to critical conversation about who and what seems to be mattering, which I will discuss in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7.

### ***Procedures for the Focus Group Collage Exercise***

The five MAT preservice teachers gathered around one conference table in a conference room in a building familiar to them. I brought snacks (e.g., cheese, crackers, hummus, pita chips) and water for participants, and I told them to help themselves to the food (which they did). After all the participants arrived, I explained the purpose of our focus group, asked for their consent to be audio recorded and to keep their artifacts. After all the participants consented, I moved around the room, starting the audio recording from my computer, recorder, and phone's Otter application. I prompted them by offering, "Imagine a map of social studies. How would you construct it with these materials?" I specifically chose the word "a," as maps are not totalizing, and I wanted to remind participants that there was not a right or wrong way to map social studies. Further, I noted "from these materials" to highlight that the materials mattered. I also prompted, "And so, you might think about stories, points of connection, values, uh, tenants of social studies, what have you, to do that. Feel free to use whatever you want, cut up, mark out, make new compositions with any of this stuff." Different materials would offer different maps. The materials on the table included: paper, *Teaching Tolerance* (now *Learning for Justice*),

*National Geographic*, and *Social Education* magazines, glue sticks, sticky notes, yarn, markers, colored pencils, embroidery thread, staplers, tape, crayons, gold lettered stickers, printed social studies standards, an old social studies textbook, and scissors. I chose magazines that had a wide array of representation of both humans (*Teaching Tolerance*) and the more-than-human (*National Geographic*) as well as content specific magazines (*Social Education*). I chose the content specific magazines to attend to their embedded locations in a social studies education program and the prompt. Additionally, I chose *National Geographic* and *Teaching Tolerance* to open space beyond traditional conception of social studies that may be represented in *Social Education*. I told the participants they would have approximately 15-20 minutes to collage before we would discuss their maps of social studies, though they were welcome to work on them as we discussed finished maps. Additionally, I reminded them to get food use the restroom as needed. Participants seemed excited to collage, based on their immediate movements to take materials and map with them.

Once participants started collaging, Stevie asked if she could talk, and thus conversation was fluid amongst the participants and myself. I mostly listened to the participants, handed materials to participants, and asked for elaboration and information based on their discussions. Though I had intended to take field notes, I chose instead to pay attention to the matter in front of me (collaging materials and people). After 17 minutes, I realized the participants needed more time to collage; I told them that they had ten minutes before we would start talking about the collages. After ten minutes, I realized that four participants (all those that identified themselves as women) still seemed in the midst of their collaging. Only Ron seemed finished, as he stopped working on his collaging of his social studies map. Ron kept up with conversation, fidgeted with materials, and looked around the room while the other participants continued to collage. They

also talked and kept up conversation. I gave the other four participants approximately 20 more minutes, at which point I noted that they had a couple minutes. After two minutes, I asked participants to share, and Ron opted to begin explaining his social studies map. The process was dialogic, as I asked questions and so did other participants of one another. Sometimes, participants made comments. This continued with Blair, Junie, Stevie, and Sydney.

Additionally, I asked questions about their choices of what materials to use, how they understood the mattering, and what they were using the materials to represent (see Appendix A for variations of those prompts). I asked these questions to better understand what they believed mattered in social studies in Georgia. The debrief took approximately an hour.

Paying attention to time, I reserved the last ten minutes to discuss whether the participants wanted to participate in the photovoice exercise and debrief. The participants agreed and consented to the photovoice exercise (I will discuss this further in the next section). Afterwards, I asked participants what gift cards they would like upon completion of the research study, and they all told me their preferences. Afterwards, I thanked the participants and told them to contact me if they had any questions about the photovoice exercise.

### ***Photovoice Exercise***

I also chose to engage participants in a modified photovoice exercise. Photovoice, a method that was popularized in the 1990s in health studies (Seitz & Orsini, 2022) has roots in Critical Theorist' Paulo Freire's conception of critical consciousness, feminist theory, and documentary photography (I.e., Dorothea Lang's work) (Wang & Burris, 1997). Photovoice engages participants in photographing a community issue and discussing the issue as a group in the aim of making change (I.e., with policymakers) (Wang & Burris, 1997). In this research, the

preservice teachers in Georgia were, and are, a part of the social studies community, and the focus was material relations in/of social studies education.

For the context of this research, photovoice allowed preservice social studies teachers to photograph and caption what they believed were social studies material relations (see Appendix B Photovoice Guide). Because I was concerned with what they were preoccupied with in their embedded locations as preservice teachers, photovoice was fruitful in generating their knowledge through photographs (I.e., in comparison to me choosing visuals for photo elicitation). As Flint (2021a) described in her work of creating sound compilations, “this is a project of creating multiple plans, multiple starting positions, acknowledging how we are each situated and therefore both grounded and partial in our knowings of the world” (p. 4). In the same vein, the purpose was to have the participants begin from their locations, and then come together in the debrief to put their photographs of material relations in conversation.

Additionally, asking participants to add a caption put the photograph in relation to text, which like the collage, producing another material relation (I.e., photograph and discourse). As Garrett and Kerr (2016) wrote, “Existing literature in social studies education seems to acknowledge the degree to which aesthetic texts can help aid in seeing the world from new vistas and locations from which students and teachers can choose different modes of understanding and interaction” (p. 506). Thus, I aimed to integrate aesthetic texts, such as photography, in my research data generation to give participants the opportunity to interact with material relations in ways that could be fruitful for new knowledge production in social studies in Georgia.

### ***Procedures for the Photovoice***

The photovoice exercise occurred after the collage focus group. Prior to participants leaving the focus group, I asked participants to engage in an individual photovoice exercise on

their own time. I asked the five participants to take 1-5 photos of material relations that they thought were relevant to social studies education in Georgia. I then asked participants to create a caption for the photo(s) they took. There are no parameters for what they can photograph or how they should caption the photographs, as I did not want to constrain potential connections. I did ask participants to submit the photographs and captions to this [form](#) by April 22<sup>th</sup>, 2022, prior to the photovoice debrief focus group.

### **Focus Group Photovoice Debrief**

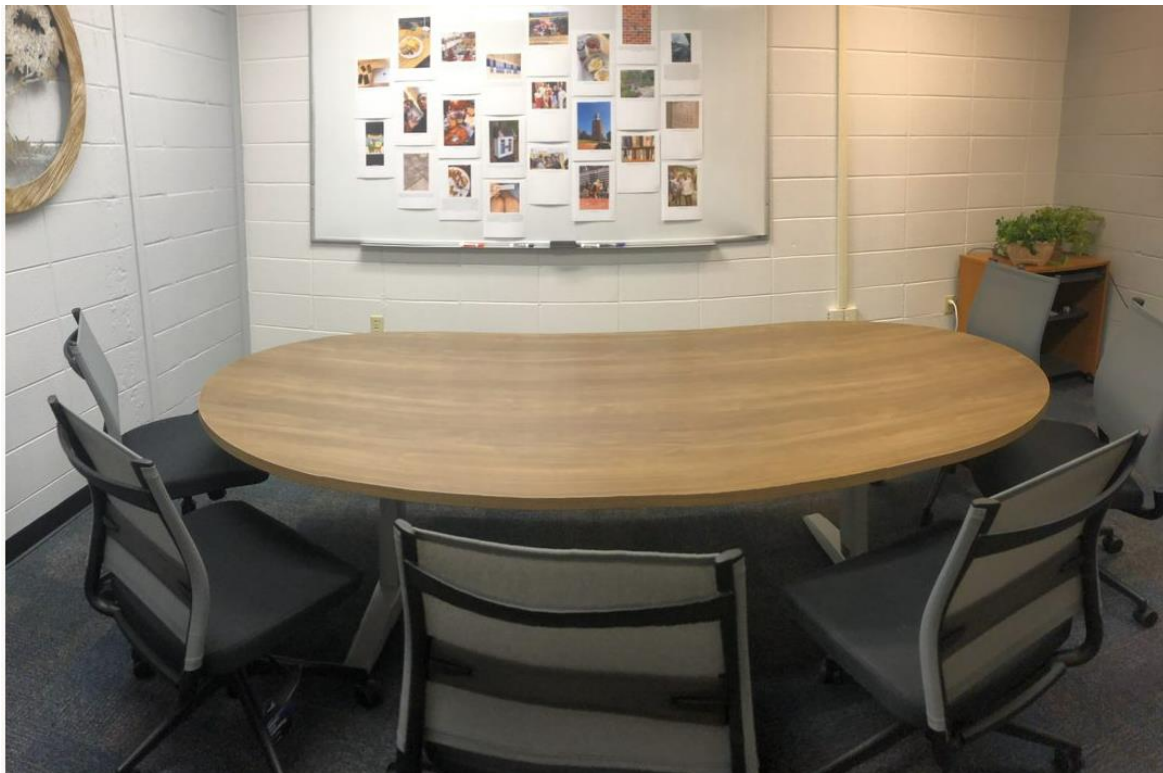
For the aforementioned reasons (I.e., power dynamics, sense making), I chose to use a focus group to debrief the photovoice exercise with the participants. This focus group had the potential for insights about the second research question: “*What is produced through an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*” The participants took photographs, and it also produced conversations, points of connection, and points of departure. The debrief focus group exposed norms, individual, and collective matterings and relations in social studies, which I will speak to later, particularly in Chapters 6 and 7.

### **Procedures for Focus Group Photovoice Debrief**

When participants came to the debrief (see Appendix C), we sat at the conference table. However, this time, we sat in a semi-circle facing the white board on the wall. I printed and hung all the pictures submitted for the photovoice exercise, numbering them for reference in conversation (see Figure 4).

## Figure 4

### *Photovoice Exercise Submissions, Printed and Hung*



There was no particular order or reasoning behind how I hung them, beyond making sure there was not linearity. I wanted to create what Braidotti calls a “non-linear logic of motion” (p. 133). I specifically chose to avoid linearity, because I did not want participants feeling like there was a starting point or center.

Once we were all together for the debrief focus group, I began by thanking them, explaining that there was not an order to the photos, and why they were numbered. I encouraged them to talk to and across each other about the photos. I also noted that I had questions that I would pose as well. I reminded them there was not a right or wrong answer, in the aim of lowering the stakes of conversation.

I explained that we would spend approximately 40 minutes discussing their approach to the photovoice exercise and 40 minutes about what these material relations produced for social studies. I also asked for ongoing consent. Afterwards, we discussed approach, but the conversation trailed in many directions. Participants explained their photos, looked for repetition, and asked clarifying questions. The times passed very quickly. After 45 minutes, I intervened and noted that wanted to know more about how these relations made them feel. I asked them to jot down how this exercised made them feel, and they offered their initial responses on sticky notes. I also noted they could put the sticky notes on specific photovoice artifacts if they wanted to. The purpose of this was to attend to the affective qualities of the material relations and conversation in the debrief. Once participants completed this, we discussed their sensorium, talked through some of the submissions and then came to a close. Afterwards, I thanked participants and gave them their \$50 gift cards for completing the study. Then they went to their final seminar for the semester, prior to graduation.

### **Instruments for Recording Audio during Focus Groups**

I utilized three different instruments to record the focus group sessions (both the collage and the photovoice debrief). As theoretical physicist Karen Barad notes, the use of an instrument, such as the computer, phone, and recorder, is agentic. Barad (2007) wrote, “apparatuses are not passive observing instruments; on the contrary, they are productive of (and a part of) phenomena” (p. 142). In other words, an instrument (such as a recording device) co-constitutes the production of sound. The audio recording devices are not “innocent and mute tools” (Nordstrom, 2015, p. 398), as they come into relation with other bodies (human and more-than-human) during data generation, helping produce sound(s). In the context of sound, the computer recording device produces a different sonic relation than the recorder than the phone. A simple

listening test makes this more obvious, as the recorder picks up more details in the sonic quality, while the computer offers a grainier quality. Each instrument, or apparatus, produces something different in the phenomenon, making it active.

### **Instruments for Generating Photos**

In relation to the photovoice exercise, I did not stipulate what participants could use as an instrument to photograph material relations. In the guide and in person, I told them they could use whatever instrument they wanted, and I offered assistance for accessing an instrument to photograph with. No participants requested an instrument for the photovoice exercise. I did not request information about their instruments prior or during submission of the photographs. Participants submitted the photographs via a Microsoft Office form, which is a web-based form that allowed them to upload files and enter their captions (see Figure 5

**Figure 5**

*Partial Screenshot of Submission Form for Photovoice Exercise*

**Photo-Mission Form for Morgan Tate's Research Study: Material Relations in Social Studies**

Hi, Morgan. When you submit this form, the owner will see your name and email address.

\* Required

1. Name

Enter your answer

2. Please upload one photo by clicking "upload file" below. Then add your caption in the next question. (Non-anonymous question) \*

Upload file

File number limit: 1 Single file size limit: 1GB Allowed file types: Word, Excel, PPT, PDF, Image, Video, Audio

3. Caption for photo 1.

Enter your answer

4. Please upload one photo by clicking "upload file" below. Then add your caption in the next question. (Non-anonymous question) \* [📷]

Upload file

File number limit: 1 Single file size limit: 1GB Allowed file types: Word, Excel, PPT, PDF, Image, Video, Audio

5. Caption for photo 2.

Enter your answer

6. Please upload one photo by clicking "upload file" below. Then add your caption in the next question. (Non-anonymous question) \*

Upload file

File number limit: 1 Single file size limit: 1GB Allowed file types: Word, Excel, PPT, PDF, Image, Video, Audio

At different points in the debrief, I did learn about some of the participants' instruments (I.e., Ron used a phone, which he used to screenshot some of his submissions.). However, it was not purposeful. It did lead me to wonder how it would be fruitful to offer multiple instruments for future photovoice exercises. Next, I will move to discuss how I analyzed my engagements with preservice teachers (survey, focus groups, transcripts) and their artifacts (collages, audio, and photographs).

### **Analysis of Data Generation**

In what follows, I explain my methods of analysis. In particular, I explain how listening, writing, and creation are imbued by my theoretical commitments. Further, I offer an exemplar from the research, leading you through an example of this analysis. I turn to the specifics next.

#### **Methods for Analysis**

As noted, formal data generation came from the survey, collage focus group, photovoice exercise, and photovoice debrief focus group. With posthuman sound and listening, I utilized several methods for analysis: writing, collage, and (re)listening and splicing audio. The following sections discuss how these modes of analyses are imbued by posthuman sound and listening.

#### ***(Re)Listening and Writing***

Using a posthuman sound and listening methodology, I attended to sound through the medium of listening to a variety of texts, including: audio from conversation in the focus groups, participant collage creations, and photography from the participants. This began by memo-ing before and after each encounter with participants. Memo-ing included writing, collaging, and Otter voice memos.

I listened intently for what was/is produced by an attention to material relations by preservice teachers in Georgia. In my listening, I specifically listened for sonic frequencies of the sensorium, paying attention to sticky points (i.e., complex moments in the audio and artifacts that produced intensities). The stickiness was heard in the repetition of themes from human and more-than-human bodies. Sticky moments were color coded on the transcript, as I (re)listened to recordings of the various configurations of human and more-than-human bodies. These human and more-than-human bodies (i.e., histories, memories, experiences, feelings) produced the complexity and questions for social studies teacher preparation. For the purpose of this project, I chose two themes that were sticky throughout the course of the data generation: complexity of race and ethnicity as well as the slipperiness of Sport.

These sticky themes also left residue. Some of the residue is imbued in my own relation to the research (e.g., affective responses, ponderings). Further, the repetition of themes produced duration across time, bubbling up in relation to particular bodies, temporalities, and places. As Flint (2021b) wrote:

...we are co-implicated and entangled in the production of space, place, and time... time is understood not in a linear, cumulative sense (as in clock or calendar time), but as the multiplicitous, folded, layered time of duration and intensity. (p. 524)

Put differently, listening is co-constituted by the politics of my own location; I bring much to the listening, based on my context and the context of the sound. It is a marriage of sorts, a collaboration in the production of meaning.

This collaboration produces an analysis that attends to sonic qualities. In *Listening to Images*, Black feminist theorist Campt (2017) writes, “I theorize sound as an inherently embodied process that registers at multiple levels of the human sensorium” (Campt, 2017, p. 6).

As Campt points to, sound is not a static object; it affects and produces affects. In the context of working with my participants' artifacts, which continue to produce knowledge, including affects beyond the focus groups, I attempt to practice "looking beyond what we see and attuning our senses to the other affective frequencies through which photographs [and collage] register" (Campt, 2017, p. 9). In other words, when engaging with these artifacts, I pay particular attention to what is being attended to in the artifacts and how I see preservice social studies teachers in Georgia making sense of material relation in social studies. Again, my analysis is not linear, in the sense that I will be coming back to these engagements over and over, which will produce iterations of listening, reading, writing, creating, listening, creating, etc.

### *Audio Clips and Compilations*

Analysis also included the creation of audio clips, as noted earlier, as I attempted to put the artifacts in relation in ways that writing and collage did not offer. As Flint (2021b) wrote in "Listening to the Leafblower":

The sensory configurations of sound indicate the ways that you can hear a sound and suddenly be pulled back to a specific and particular configuration of time and place, perhaps feeling, momentarily, the warmth of the sun on your hair, the smell of cut grass.

Sound, because of its physical vibrations and synesthetic configurations... (p. 2)

In other words, sound has the capacity to transport you, bringing you into relation with particular moments and feelings. For me, sound produced by an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia. Creating sound compilations that attended to the human and more-than-human qualities of our engagements also enacted my theoretical commitments that there are multiplicities produced in any encounter and there are endless

becomings (potentia), in comparison to pre-determined outcomes and linear notions of time and progress (potestas) (Braidotti, 2019).

***Example of Using Sound as Analysis*** Yet, sound is not innocent, and my sound production is not innocent. There were moments when (re)listening to sound highlighted the effects and affects of power that circulated through the initial focus group. I will offer an example here, to model what you will encounter in my microchapters later.

For instance, when I think about sound within my own research, I sit with Stevie's storying of her high school experience of gaining extra credit for visiting a white supremacist's museum in Kennesaw, Georgia ([click to listen](#)). The story was situated near the beginning of our first focus group (mapping what matters in social studies via collage) and lasted less than three minutes, but for me, time stretched (returning to the concept of *duration*, mentioned earlier). Attending to the idea of duration, there was an intensity that I felt when hearing and (re)listening to Stevie as well as the responses to Stevie's story. I remember feeling uncomfortable (re)listening to Stevie's story, particularly in relation and space with my other participants. They were also bearing witness to this story, a memory of white people's racist actions, artifacts, encounters, and histories. Though these histories are common in our geographic region<sup>23</sup>, selfishly, I did not want to taint our time together by starting with racism (potestas), though it is always already there. I wanted to *start* affirmatively, recognizing how social studies could be sustainable. (Re)listening and putting together audio helped me see how I was mired in whiteness, wanting to avoid discomfort and also avoid quotidian violence (white people talking about white supremacy from a [seemingly] distant location temporally and geographically).

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<sup>23</sup> This is not to say they are not common other places, but I am attending the politics of location here. Georgia was a state in the Confederacy, which actively fought for the enslavement of other people.

In relation to that mundane violence, I was worried about the effects and affects of the story for participants, even as I was sitting there listening to Stevie. For instance, I heard Junie, a Korean American woman, laugh at Stevie's comment about not wanting to call the space a museum. The laugh did not seem to come from a place of joy, based on the amplitude and brevity of her laugh. As linguistic scholars Myers and Lampropoulou (2016) noted in their research of laughter in transcription, laughter is not linked to humor, but can function as an effect of humor. In this audio I offer, laughter seemed to come from a place of knowing. It made me reflect on Stevie's story and this idea of insider/outsider. In my critical (re)listening, the laughter looped in my head. Its brevity and pitch produced a sense of anxiety in me. I created an audio compilation to mimic this: Click to [listen](#). In this audio, I repeated the nervous laughter in quick succession, creating a sense of brevity. The repetition and brevity were meant to create an oddness, or anxiety, reflecting the affective qualities I perceived and felt.<sup>24</sup>

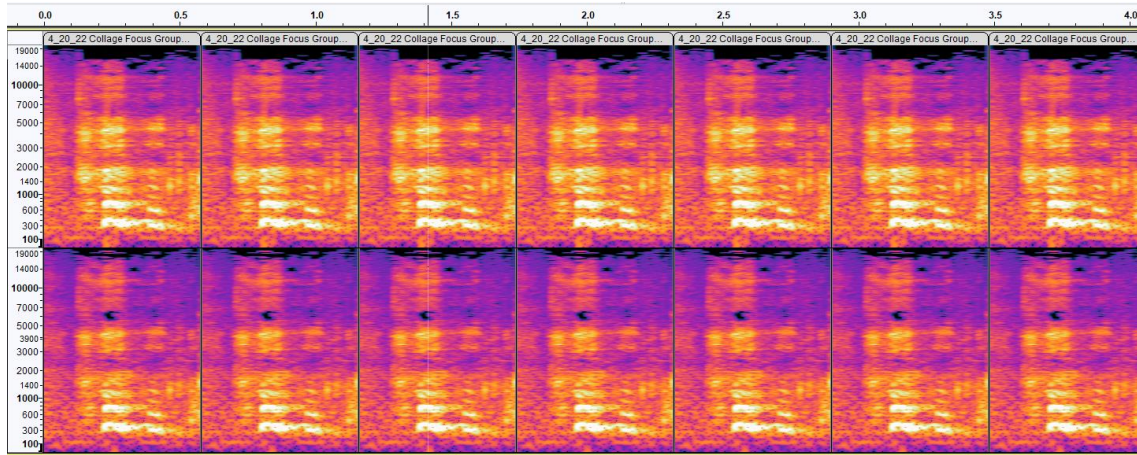
Additionally, below, I offer a Spectrogram, a visualization of the frequency of sound as it changes over time in this spliced and repeated (looped) audio clip of Junie. Like sociologists Cottingham and Erickson (2020), I find sound, accompanied with spectrograms, to be generative for attending to emotion, in the listening to "speed, pitch, and pauses" in ways that transcript cannot by itself (p. 560). Below I explain how to listen to and 'read' this texture, this anxiety, in sound.

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<sup>24</sup> It makes me cringe, still, that the focus group could lead to negative affects for participants. This is very reflective of my own desire to avoid discomfort and believe that I can somehow control a situation, simply because I am the researcher. It is also likely mired in my own whiteness and the desire to distance myself from this memory of explicit and implicit racism.

**Figure 6**

*Spectrogram of Junie's Laugh*



*Note.* The vertical axis displays frequency in Hertz and the horizontal axis represents time.

Across the spectrogram, amplitude is represented by brightness (the orange color being the most intense). The black background is silence, which you may notice is almost nonexistent here. In this second, noise fills up the space. The fucia and orange showcase the shifts in sound. This depicts a range of frequencies (lowest at the bottom of the display, highest at the top) and how loud events at different frequencies are. Loud events will appear bright and quiet events will appear dark.

Indeed, this anxiety welled about my own concerns with ethics and sustainability as a researcher working with participants. Though *I*, as a white person, personally felt the story was “weird,” I wondered what other participants felt. Did Sydney and Blair feel odd listening to Stevie? How did Ron and Junie feel in hearing about a museum that contested their humanity? The immanence and inescapability of sound (while playing audio) forces me to contend with the possibility that I produced a situation wherein some participants were re-reminded that their worth is contested by human and more-than-human histories.

I wondered about the effects and affects of listening for the other participants. For me, it was, and is, extremely uncomfortable. However, posthuman sound and listening allowed me to confront my inadequacies as a researcher, to identify how I allowed whiteness to operate (i.e., in my memo I wonder about my response to Stevie about her mom allowing her to go to the museum). Thinking with educational scholar Mazzei's (2008) discussion of silence in relationship to whiteness, I wondered if I noted this for fear of loss, privileged by being positioned as the seemingly kind and objective researcher (which I am not, because of my own politics of location) that is only listening to these human and more-than-human histories and experiences. In this way, posthuman sound and listening generatively challenged me to critically listen and attend to power and my own becoming as a social studies researcher. Hopefully, it will lead to better, more sustainable, praxis in future engagements with participants.

Thinking with Critical Posthumanism and attending to sound from the audio of nervous laughter also brought me into relation with the histories of white supremacy, the survival of marginalized peoples and bodies, the bodily responses to anxiety and fear, and the materiality of a white supremacist museum. Further, sound charted bodies in the process of mapping social studies, while verbally highlighting the violence of quotidian practices of social studies education, schooling in Kennesaw, Georgia, and this research. Do not let the list fool you; these were not easy, linear reflections. The reflection feels like being in a pinball machine, as I am shot back and forth. This nonlinearity will show up in my sonic microchapters as well. In my discussion of nomadically zigzagging, I will speak more to the lack of linearity in the dissemination of this research.

## **Nomadically Zigzagging**

Like some educational scholars (Bright, 2017; Cannon & Flint, 2021; Flint, 2021a; Flint, 2021b; Flint, 2021c; Flint, Melchior, Guyotte, & Shelton, 2022; Guyotte & Flint, 2021; Guyotte, Flint, & Latopolski, 2019; Mazzei & McCoy, 2010; Semetsky, 2013), I think with Braidotti's (2006; 2011) nomadic subjectivity and zigzag. As Braidotti (2006) wrote in her discussion of the transpositions as transformations, the nomadic subject zigzags in a non-linear, accountable, and creative process of relational knowledge production (p. 5). The zigzag allows me to move between scholarship, my experiences, and research with participants. Like Guyotte, Flint, and Latopolski (2019) wrote, zigzagging occurred across "temporalities (events, memories, and histories), while simultaneously considering the interplay between the local and global productions of space and place" (p. 546). The movement to connect to different geo-spatial moments helps me elucidate context and attend to the preservice social studies teachers' becoming at different moments in and beyond the research.

## **Sonic Becoming**

With the methods, procedures, participants, and other matter in mind, I move to the theorization of data generation, thought with Critical Posthumanism. In the following chapters, you will encounter artifacts from the participants, collaged and sonic, as well as corresponding written analysis of my posthuman sound and listening of those artifacts in relation to the preservice social studies teachers' matterings and what their attention to material relations produced. The chapters are but a slice of the work, always already partial (Lather, 1999).

## CHAPTER 4

### “IT'S NOT JUST WHITE AND BLACK”: THE COMPLEXITY OF ESSENTIALIZED CONCEPTIONS OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

Based on the Bradottian assumptions that structure this dissertation, race and ethnicity cannot be seen in linear, nor generalized, terms. Leaning on Lucius T. Outlaw, a philosopher and professor of African American and Diaspora Studies, Braidotti (2006) wrote:

Outlaw's call...reasserts the positivity of a notion of race that is deprived of essentialist attributes and recognized in its singularity.... The political economy of invisibility means that the only notion of 'race' that our culture has produced is in the mode of a minority. Race is synonymous with inferiority, or pejorative difference. Outlaw's strategy is to introduce a dose of pure positivity into the notion of 'race', so as to disengage it from this pernicious and murderous logic. (p. 64)

What Braidotti is writing here is that race is currently only visible for minorities (i.e., Black, Asian, Latinx bodies), and those racialized bodies are considered inferior. Framing race and ethnicity as essentialized categories reproduces a “pernicious and murderous” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64) othering logic. Braidotti argued with Outlaw that instead, race and ethnicity can be reinterpreted as a positive notion when viewed as contingent on bodies, space, and time because it opens up new, malleable constructs. Braidotti’s understanding of race and ethnicity as shifting and complex resonates with my own body’s journey through space and time.

For instance, being a white woman raised in a mountainous, rural portion of northern Georgia, known as Blue Ridge, where [for me] race and ethnicity felt like distanced concepts. I

only consciously “became” white, when filling out forms for high stakes testing. Whiteness hid in plain sight of our everyday norms and routines. Whiteness appeared as our high school mascot, the (Confederate) Rebels, which was stitched on jerseys, woven into AstroTurf, and paraded throughout campus. Whiteness operated as an almost exclusively white body of students, with only a handful of students of color. Being a dominant racialized location, in comparison to my peers of color, race operated as a “political economy of invisibility” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64).

Yet these contours of race, in my experience, shifted once I left my hometown. I moved to larger city and began bearing witness to non-dominant racialized people’s experiences in my undergraduate courses. Suddenly race and ethnicity took on more distinct meanings based in their experiences of marginalization and violence. Now race and ethnicity meant being followed in a store. It was consciously choosing to wear khakis instead of sweatpants because of the politics of respectability in relation to Black bodies. It was white (passing) boys in car with fraternity decals yelling, “Black bitch,” while my peer, a Black woman, simply walked to class. Her embodiment was produced as “pejorative difference” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64). Yet at the same time, my whiteness remained positioned as a lesser interrogated position. Race was the informal Black section of the student center that I did not stop in, as a white person, because I did not need refuge from whiteness in the same ways as some of my peers. It was reading Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World* and bearing witness to sadness, fear, and rage.<sup>25</sup> Reflecting on Braidotti’s (2006) engagement with *Outlaw*, I return to query how the “political economy of

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<sup>25</sup> I still have many questions and concerns about bearing witness as a white person. I think place, bodies, politics, and temporality matter. Did I really need to hear, see, and read pain to be critically conscious? Can I become critically conscious? How is whiteness operating, even as I am trying to be ‘better?’ These are questions, which I assume have many answers, that will surface at a different moment.

invisibility means that the only notion of 'race' that our culture has produced, is in the mode of a minority” (p. 64). The logic of race as stationary leads me to constitute my peers in relation to whiteness, as other. In this way, I keep circling white supremacy. These experiences positioned whiteness and blackness as pejorative. However, Braidotti (2006), leaning on *Outlaw*, challenges the notion that race is “pejorative other”; race instead, becomes “pure positivity,” (p. 64), because difference is delinked from inferiority. Difference is divergence or the decentering of the norm. In this way, the binary of white supremacy (white/Black) is left behind as an essentializing logic. Further, this “pure positivity” is constituted as a “collective reappraisal of the singularity of each subject in their complexity” (Braidotti, 2002, p. 11), delinking race from stable ground as a flat, essentialized concept. Instead, race and ethnicity are situated and relational.

Becoming a high school history teacher in Rossville, Georgia, located near Chattanooga, Tennessee, race and ethnicity became material for me in a different way, as race operated as pejorative and positive. I watched, and at moments resisted, Black and Brown bodies being disciplined and expelled –bodies from across district borders and national borders, beautiful bodies that needed love and sanctuary, bodies that received one-way tickets to juvie, jail, and anywhere but ‘our’ school –our being steeped in the invisibility of whiteness, with a white administration and almost exclusively white body of teachers. The impact of pejorative difference was not invisible to everyone (i.e., students of color). I also watched some of those beautiful bodies step up, resist, love, and advocate for themselves –and other beautiful bodies.

Now, as a doctoral candidate, race and ethnicity appear once again to be constituted as theoretical. As a scholar, I read pieces using Black methodology (McKittrick, 2020), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), Indigenous scholarship (Kimmerer, 2013), and endarkened

feminism (Dillard, 2018). Ironically, in some ways it feels like circling back to high school, as race and ethnicity are sometimes framed as part of theoretical frameworks, conceptually triangulating why race and ethnicity matter. In other ways, theory allows me to turn back to moments in my undergraduate work and in my teaching, helping me reinterpret how race and ethnicity were operating in the curriculum (i.e., multiple standards on Europe and one standard on the Middle East) and in my own teaching (i.e., heavily critiquing enslavement, but never teaching about Black liberatory practices beyond the Haitian Revolution). It has helped me think through the politics of location to see how racial and ethnic locations were produced in time and place by particular bodies and embodiments.

What my experiences, read through Braidotti, help me see is that race and ethnicity are complex, produced at the nexus of bodies, space, times. Languaging this tension, that race and ethnicity matter, but race and ethnicity are *not* fixed locations, became easier upon working with my participants, five preservice social studies teachers in Georgia. Taking a line from one of my participants, Junie, a Korean American woman, “social studies is much more than essentialized histories of “white and black.” For Junie, race and ethnicity have always already been more complex than the binaries often proffered in her own journey to becoming a social studies educator.

With Junie’s words in mind, as well the insights of my other participants, I argue in this chapter for the utility in social studies teacher education of approaching race and ethnicity as complex, as contingent upon the geopolitical locations and temporal landscapes of given bodies. This construction of race and ethnicity stands in stark contrast to a trend in social studies literature, which I argue, codifies race and ethnicity into inert identity markers. Thus, to make

visible this trend, I turn to a few illustrative examples of codification in the social studies literature, followed by my own findings, which depict the complexity of race and ethnicity.

### **Codifying Race and Ethnicity: Illustrative Examples from the Literature**

When I argue that social studies literature tends to codify race and ethnicity, what I am arguing is that such texts function by a process of reduction. Codification takes complex phenomena, such as identity (e.g., race and ethnicity), and flattens them into markers. These markers can then become generalizations: “White teachers should..., Black students are..., Latinx people will..., Asian students do... Indigenous peoples were...” Bracketing identifiers can be helpful to have critical conversations about harmful, concerning, exciting, and even hopeful trends in social studies education, producing potentia. Yet, simultaneously, codifying race and ethnicity may *also to produce potestas*, constraining preservice social studies teachers’ ability to recognize context, nuance, and complexity and thus open up possibilities for new interpretations. In other words, by relying on closed concepts of race and ethnicity, the literature may also, paradoxically, be foreclosing difference and liberation from sameness in the mind of future social studies educators.

In the midst of becoming social studies teachers, preservice social studies teachers spend time learning the ropes of what to teach and how to teach it. In this way, preservice social studies teachers may engage with literature on content (i.e. curriculum) and skills (i.e. engagements with students). As such, I wanted to pull some illustrative examples to depict how this codification process is at work in journal and books that preservice social studies teachers may encounter explicitly in a course, or through the curriculum produced by a social studies teacher educator.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Social studies teacher educators bring their own curriculums to social studies, based on their own engagements with texts, even if we never explicitly discuss where our ideas stem from. For example, as a social studies teacher educator, I may not assign a theoretical journal article, but

I chose to look at popular journals, such as *Social Education* and *Theory and Research in Social Education*, searching for examples that explicitly attended to identity markers. Additionally, I sought volumes, including books, that address race and ethnicity. For instance, I searched with the keywords *race* and *ethnicity* to find the examples that follow.

Overall, I argue that these illustrative examples demonstrate that there is a trend in social studies literature to codify race and ethnicity by using generalizations without in depth attention to the specificity to location, place, and politics impact on the production of race and ethnicity. In what follows, I will highlight a few pieces that discuss curriculum and social studies teachers, pulling examples from the texts to examine how codification is at work, leading to essentialized constructs of race and ethnicity.

### **Codification in Curriculum**

Race and ethnicity can become codified in discussions of curriculum. Within *Social Education*, a popular practitioner-oriented journal, sponsored by the largest social studies association, the National Council for the Social Studies, there are a multitude of pieces<sup>27</sup> that help social studies practitioners think about what one of my participants, Blair (a self-identified white woman), might call “forgotten perspectives,” or people, place, and events that have been erased from social studies education (i.e., Cherokee peoples’ forced removal from Georgia).

Again, doing that work is critical and it matters. However, it can also gloss over and flatten the

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my reading of a theoretical piece could impact my teaching of preservice social studies teachers. Thus, I include theoretical pieces that are tied to curriculum in my illustrative examples.

<sup>27</sup> For more examples from just 2022 alone, see Brillinger, M., & Soroko, A. (2022). States of Denial: What Social Studies Curriculum Documents Don't Say About Poverty. *Social Education*, 86(1), 22-33., Loh-Hagan, V., Kwoh, J., Chang, J., & Kwoh, P. (2022). Excluded From History: The Page Act of 1875. *Social Education*, 86(2), 73-78., Fabionar, J. O. (2022). "Unhiding" the Impact of US Imperialism in the Pacific. *Social Education*, 86(2), 113-121.

textures of difference in relation to race and ethnicity. As critical geographer Katherine McKittrick (2021) wrote:

... disciplinary thinking disciplines how we study identity as though identity is anachronistically and biologically fixed to corporeal matter, splitting (split genera) otherwise collective black and indigenous struggles against empire, while also financially and geographically organizing studies of race by putting a merit-value on *differentiated descriptions* of premature death and misery that, inadvertently or explicitly, reify a system of knowledge that cannot bear black and indigenous life (and black and indigenous relationality)... Description is not liberation... Identity is often conflated with flesh. Identity has biologic traces. Identity is corporeal. Studying identity so often involves demonstrating that biology is socially constructed, not *displacing biology* but, rather, empowering biology-the flesh-as the primary way to study identity. (p. 39)

Here, McKittrick (2021) shined a light on how codification of identity, sometimes seen in description in social studies literature and disciplines (government, history, economics), is not freeing. It can be flattening, as race and ethnicity become static poles to reference, instead of facets of sites of exploration.

For instance, in 2022, *Social Education* published a special issue that focused on “Teaching and Learning about Asian American History.” Within the special issue, Virginia Loh-Hagan contributed a piece entitled, “Historical Timeline of APIDA History.” This article was set up in columns, with dates and events streaming down vertically, in chronological order (See Figure 7). It begins, “1587: The first recorded Asians in the Americas are Filipinos who landed in Morro Bay, California, as part of the Manila galleon trade” (p. 104) and ends, “2021: Illinois passes the TEAACH Act, becoming the first state to mandate Asian American history in K-12

curricula” (p. 107). Loh-Hagan includes an activities page at the end to facilitate engagements with the bulleted histories of Asian Pacific Islander Desi Americans (APIDA) such as analyzing significant moments, examining historical doppelgangers, and making timelines (p. 108).

## Figure 7

*Excerpt from Loh-Hagan’s article*


Social Education 86 (2)  
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**Asian American History**

### Historical Timeline of APIDA History

Virginia Loh-Hagan

- 1587: The first recorded Asians in the Americas are Filipinos who landed in Morro Bay, California, as part of the Manila galleon trade.
- 1635: An “East Indian” named Tony is documented to have arrived in Jamestown, Virginia as “property.”
- 1763: Filipinos, fleeing from mistreatment on Spanish galleons, establish the first Asian American settlement in the bayous of Louisiana. These were called “Manilamen.”
- 1778: Chinese sailors first arrive in Hawai‘i. Many settled and married Hawai‘ian women.
- 1785: Three stranded Chinese sailors arrive in Baltimore, Maryland. This marks the first record of Chinese in mainland United States.
- 1806: The first known Japanese arrive in Hawai‘i. They were shipwrecked and rescued by an American trading ship that took them to Hawai‘i before returning to Japan.
- 1820s: American missionaries arrive on the Hawai‘ian islands. Eventually, Hawai‘ian native language and culture is banned in an effort to “americanize” the indigenous people.
- 1826: The United States signs a treaty with the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, indirectly recognizing Hawai‘ian independence.
- 1830s: The earliest documented arrivals of Chinese immigrants in New York City are sailors and peddlers.
- 1843: A 14-year-old fisherman named Manjiro becomes the first official Japanese immigrant in the U.S.
- 1847: Three Chinese students arrive in New York City for schooling. One of them, Yung Wing, becomes the first Chinese American to graduate from a U.S. college (Yale University).
- 1848: Following the discovery of gold in California, Chinese laborers immigrate in large numbers and face much discrimination, including riots and massacres.
- 1863-1869: Chinese laborers help build the Transcontinental Railroad.



Chinese workers on the Central Pacific Railroad in the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

- 1867: About 5,000 Chinese railroad workers go on strike for a shorter workday and higher wages. Although the strike was unsuccessful, it demonstrated agency and resistance.
- 1868: The Burlingame Treaty, an international agreement between China and the United States, allows Chinese immigrants to enter the United States to fill a labor shortage.
- 1868: The first official group of Japanese immigrants arrive in Hawai‘i to work on sugarcane plantations.
- 1875: The Page Act of 1875 is the first restrictive federal immigration law in the United States.

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I argue that framing race and ethnicity in such terms may inadvertently reproduce the “pernicious and murderous” qualities of fixed categories to which Braidotti alluded at the start of this chapter. I am *not* arguing with this claim that Loh-Hagan’s work is detrimental for the development of preservice social studies teachers. What I am arguing is that such a list visually reduces the complex and rich histories of people who fall within the confines of ‘APIDA,’ while relying on a logic that assumes APIDA is something solid and unwavering. In other words, attending to APIDA as a list of dates and names could nullify the multifaceted nature of bodies,

reducing people to an identity marker. What is lost is a deeper understanding of the processional and situated nature of race and ethnicity and thus conceiving of someone *as* a race, instead of understanding someone as complex, dynamic, and relational in relationship to many different ‘markers,’ such as gender, desires, sexuality.

For me, the list is an urgent attempt to infuse social studies education with APIDA history, as representation is important, *and* its affect feels a bit additive and hurried. It feels hurried like a social studies' multiple-choice test about people who are APIDA. However, what becomes possible for preservice social studies teachers, when thinking with Braidotti’s Critical Posthuman approach, is that people are deemed complex and in process. Preservice teachers are allowed to conceive of people as dynamic, race and ethnicity are produced in relation, as a co-constituting facet of becoming. Returning to the first event on the list, and thinking with Braidotti, a Braidottian exploration of race and ethnicity might wonder what was produced by coming to California for the different peoples on board, based on other markers of the politics of location, whether that is their gender, familial location, age, disposition, values, etc. This foils the notion that race and ethnicity solely anchor identity. Braidotti articulates these intersections as co-constituting a subject, in comparison to segregated facets of personhood, which marked singularly can lead to codification.

I found a similar trend towards codification of race and ethnicity in *Theory and Research in Social Education*, a premier scholarly journal in social studies. For instance, in Brittney Jones’ piece “Feeling Fear as Power and Oppression: An Examination of Black and White Fear in Virginia’s U.S. History Standards and Curriculum Framework” (2022), she examined how white bodies are privileged with emotion (e.g., fear) in Virginia’s curriculum framework. Her overall

argument centered on the need to include Black emotionality in social studies. An example of such an argument can be found when she wrote:

Where U.S. history curricula tends to diminish racial violence, and subsequently any emotions that Black people felt because of that violence, the literature on Black fear revealed that Black fear is not only real, but a pervasive emotion that has always been associated with being Black in the United States. (p. 435)

Jones powerfully contests the ways in which Virginia's curriculum gaslights and erases Black emotion.

Yet, at the same time, I argue such thinking could also reproduce a stable notion of Blackness rooted in fear and violence, making race “synonymous with inferiority, or pejorative difference” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64) for preservice social studies teachers. In other words, if new practitioners read that Black fear has always already been tied to the United States' history curriculum, a linear trajectory, as well as a totalizing picture of the future, then the relationship between Blackness and fear in the United States may appear as self-evident and unchangeable. Reading and engaging with discourses that are totalizing might produce potestas, such as affects of hopelessness.

As I have depicted in Loh-Hagan (2022) and Jones' (2022) work, race and ethnicity are essentialized identity markers. For instance, as noted, Loh-Hagan's resource list in some ways flattens APIDA history into a roll call of chronological events. Further, Jones' work concretely tethers fear to the humanity of Black peoples, reducing the broad range of emotionality that Black folx have experienced in the United States, potentially stabilizing pejorative conceptions of race and ethnicity in curriculum for preservice teachers. Next, I look specifically at teacherly bodies in the social studies literature.

## Codification in Teacher-Based Literature

I also found social studies research on teachers' practice tended to codify conceptions of race and ethnicity. For instance, Boucher (2020) writes about white social studies teachers' "conundrum" in attempting to stay allied to whiteness and to teaching students of color. Boucher (2020) used Mill's racial contract:

to show that within the structures of white supremacy and anti-Blackness, there are contractual obligations *that white teachers must uphold* if they wish to remain in the community of whites. There may be social consequences but, due to America's lurch toward violence and white nationalism, also bodily danger to whites who step outside of that community. *The racial contract demands that white people owe their solidarity to other whites.* That becomes complicated in teaching social studies as teachers have loyalties to whiteness, but also a charge to care for, include, and represent in curriculum Students of Color. This causes the conundrum for caring educators who work with them. *The current climate has forced teachers to choose between solidarity with whiteness and solidarity with their students* [emphasis added]. (p. 242)

First, Boucher codifies white teachers as a racially stable location by arguing that "the racial contract demands that white people owe their solidarity to other whites." Boucher's conceiving of race as an essentialized location ignores the history of the production of whiteness and its relation to time and place. For instance, scholars (Barrett & Roediger, 2005; Ignatiev, 2012) argue that people of Irish and Italian descent became white over time in the United States, which undermines the idea that white as an identity marker, is fixed and bounded. Thinking back to my own checking off of demographic boxes, I am reminded of a student I once taught –who I had conceptualized as Black- and *their* engagement with demographic boxes. The student chose to

mark “White” on a practice exam, as one of their parents was white, destabilizing what white meant. Who was I to argue? The student chose to resist the potestas of identity markers, which reduced him to white or Black. The effects of codification produced potentia and potestas, which the student navigated based on their embedded and embodied location. In this way, Braidotti’s attention to the nuances of place, time, and bodies (i.e., Irish immigration and labor) allows space for rupture, instead of a calcified conception of race and ethnicity.

In comparison, Boucher’s (2020) codified claim that white teachers must choose between whiteness and their students of color produces an ultimatum. Boucher argues white teachers are rooted in white supremacy and anti-Blackness. Boucher’s argument solidifies binary logics of race, or “pernicious and murderous logic,” by arguing that white teachers must be in solidarity to white people, reifying racial divisions, without attention to context. This produces potestas, as it does not allow white teachers an avenue towards a positive subject position based on their race. In the context of social studies teacher preparation, this positioning of white teachers denies that race and ethnicity are produced in relation over time and space and can change, as white teachers may resist difference as pejorative in their classrooms.

In attending to Boucher’s (2020) work, my point is *not* to undermine the literature by saying that white teachers do not struggle with white supremacy. Instead, I am shining a light on how Boucher’s work is an example of ways that education researchers risk codifying racial categories in their work. It can be read as a trend that codifies racial and ethnic subjectivities in social studies, which forecloses the idea that white teachers have agency, due to being bound to whiteness.

## **Implications of the Illustrated Examples from Social Studies Literature**

Overall, I argue that the selected examples from the social studies literature illustrate a tendency for social studies literature to codify racial and ethnic identity markers. This centralizing attachment to race --or another identifier, marker, category-- is constraining because it could codify race and ethnicity into a calcified, and thus inert and inherent, place in the minds of preservice teachers. An attachment to static locations associated with race and ethnicity is in some ways the antithesis to social studies teacher education. Whether interested in transmission, disciplinary, or critical conceptions of social studies (Fallace, 2017; Jay, 2022), learning—a form of growth—is necessary for preservice social studies teachers. Thus, it feels erratic to, on one hand, claim we need to be participating in growth (i.e., anti-racist teaching), while simultaneously, on the other hand, arguing that race and ethnicity are unmovable and inert (e.g., Boucher’s languaging of white peoples and white teachers).

In fact, the five preservice social studies teacher candidates in my study offered the impetus to trouble the codification of race and ethnicity. As mentioned in my methodology chapters, my participants were masters' students who engaged in a collage focus group, individual photovoice exercise, and a photovoice debrief focus group. Below, I organize my findings by participants to unfold how each preservice social studies teachers’ journey in articulating the complexity of power imbued in essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity.

### **The Complexity of Essentialized Conceptions of Race and Ethnicity as Categories/Identities**

#### **Markers**

Race and ethnicity appeared to matter in social studies for all of the participants, who were preservice social studies teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the increased surveillance of social studies in public schools (e.g., Georgia’s House Bill 1084) in Georgia, a

state in the southern United States. For Junie, a self-identified Korean American woman, and Ron, a self-identified Latino man, it seemed like their race and ethnicity mattered because of the politics of location, as they embodied racialized and ethnicized locations. Race and ethnicity showed up explicitly in their discussions as well as in their mappings of social studies. In comparison, Sydney, Stevie, and Blair—all self-identified white women—did not discuss a long history of being aware of race mattering, though race and ethnicity also came up in their discussions and mappings of social studies. For Sydney and Stevie, race began to matter with the prevalence of the Black Lives Matter movement, leading them to think about the work of social studies education more explicitly—as well as their role in social studies. Differently, Blair did not locate a time when she seemed to ‘realize’ or become ‘aware’ of race mattering to her personally, but she spoke at length about how she perceived it as mattering and integral to teaching and learning in social studies (e.g. discussion of a particular monument in Athens, Georgia).

Based on the transcript and collages (which I move through next), it seemed that the participants critically believed that race mattered, as *potentia* and *potestas*. At moments, this was in discussion of representation and in moments, it was about racism in the United States, , having implications for the teaching and learning of social studies. However, the stories and discussions offered by the preservice social studies teachers depicted how race and ethnicity were imbricated in their embedded and embodied locations *and* essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity did not hold. The locations of race and ethnicity were specific to place, time, politics, and bodies, offering sites of rupture for preconceived notions of race and ethnicity as codified as markers of pejorative difference. For instance, race and ethnicity were attached to temporal locations (e.g., the beginning of the global pandemic in the United States) and

particular bodies (e.g., teaching students of color, versus white students). Attending to the how power moved through race and ethnicity showcased when, where, and how racism and xenophobia were not totalizing fixtures.

### **The Complexity of Essentialized Conceptions of Race and Ethnicity for Racialized Bodies**

Junie and Ron highlighted that their locations as racialized peoples led to an always already awareness of the role(s) of race and ethnicity in their relationship to social studies. However, Junie and Ron also highlighted the ways in which racial and ethnic identity markers were liminal and contingent upon place and proximity to other bodies. In what follows, I will highlight moments and matter from data generation that depicts the fluidity of Junie and Ron's relationships to race and ethnicity.

#### ***Junie***

Junie identified herself as a Korean American woman in her 20s. Across the two focus groups, Junie highlighted how her body was racialized by other people and how she lived in a racialized body. Specifically, during the photovoice debrief focus group, Junie discussed being born in Korea and moving to Missouri:

Yeah, so, like, you know, like when I was growing up, like people would call me like a Twinkie because I was yellow on the outside when I'm white on the inside, that's like a thing... They also like, like, banana, 'you're like a banana' Right? Like, 'you're yellow on the outside, but white on the inside', but like that's, that was always so like, ingrained in my mind.

Junie's discussion highlighted how potestas (power as constraining) was operating through racism, and racializing, as Junie's body became a metaphor: Twinkie and Banana. Junie was not constituted as complex, in her experiences in the town she lived in in Missouri. Instead, she was

constituted as food. Further, based on Junie's testimony, people positioned Junie's body in proximity to whiteness, reproducing codifying binaries, and attempting to bifurcate her interiority and exteriority.

Junie went on to highlight how geographically situated, and complex, this racializing was. For instance, Junie noted:

I never thought anything's wrong with it [being referenced as Twinkie and Banana], but, and then I moved to Georgia, and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, I moved to Korea', there were so many Asian people here and I was like, 'What the heck is going on?' And so that, that I think, like allowed me to like, tap into that part of myself more...

Junie's discussion of her move to Georgia led her to be around more people who were Asian or of Asian heritage. Further her comment, implied that being around other Asian people allowed her to attune to her own racial (Asian) and ethnic (Korea) identity ("allowed me to like, tap into that part of myself more"). Junie's discussion highlights the specificity of location as well as proximity to certain bodies (Junie connotes that there were many more people that appear to be Asian or of Asian heritage in Georgia) as important for her own embodiment of race. It was affirmative in her becoming, as she felt comfortable querying how race mattered to her, because of the community (moving from (Korea and Missouri) and to (Georgia)).

Junie's discussion of moving from a space of lack of Asian bodies to a space that had more Asian representation may substantiate the idea/hypothesis that people tend to feel affirmed by racially similar people. However, Junie continued to highlight the complexity of racial and ethnic assumptions, as she noted that even after moving to Georgia in high school, she chose to join a white sorority instead of a sorority associated with Asian heritage. Junie said, "...when I was in undergrad, like, I joined a sorority because I, like, felt more comfortable with, like, white

girls, right. And so --than Asian girls-- and so, like, it was, like, a whole identity crisis...” Junie’s comment depicts her movement in relation to her identity, racially and ethnically. Though Junie noted she chose a white sorority, she also said:

I had to kind of train myself, during COVID. Because I was, you know, like, with my family and like mostly like Asian people like I had to like retrain myself to be in like a very white space, when I came into the master's program. I'm not, I'm not even kidding. I like I like had to like, flip a switch. I was like, ‘Oh, yeah.’ Like it's, it's different. And so I'm always battling with myself, which is really interesting.

Locating herself in reference to her family (Asian) and the master's program (white), Junie articulates that she had to change, she had to “flip a switch.” Though Junie does not articulate the master's program as bad, she does connote that there is something racially (white) disciplining about the space.

Thinking with Junie’s movement across space and time, I turn to Braidotti (2006) who writes that nomadic subjects engage in “border-crossings” and have “non-unitary identities” (p. 67). Further, Braidotti noted that:

subjects constituted in and by multiplicity, however, are marked by contradictions. This makes them especially open and opposed to fixed, essential identities and to the power of dominant categories, even that of race itself. This emphasis on complexity and relationality, which facilitates cross-border connections and alliances among differently located constituencies, is a political position. (p. 67)

In other words, even seemingly hegemonic forces, such as racial(ized) identity, cannot be overdetermined. The becoming nomadic subject can be affirmed and sustained in different spaces across time and place. Theorizing Junie’s becoming, it seems as though moving to

Georgia -after being in Missouri—was affirming, as she saw many people that looked (more) like her. However, Junie also seemed to feel “more comfortable” socializing with white women (e.g., choosing to join a white sorority). Yet, when she came to the master’s program, she had to “flip a switch.” Junie’s comments highlighted the importance and unpredictability of race and ethnicity, which showed up in her mapping and discussion of social studies, which I turn to next.

**Teaching Social Studies** Junie’s racializing led to specific orientations towards teaching social studies in her role as a social studies preservice teacher in Georgia. For instance, when collaging to ‘map’ social studies, Junie created a multi-colored map (Figure 8) and specifically stated that “there's so many different colors to history, like it's not just white and black. Um. There's other people that are included in, in history as well.”

### Figure 8

*Junie’s Mapping of Social Studies*



Though Junie did not explicitly state the other “colors” to history, she did so through the material she used in her collage. She tore, taped, and stapled (with so much force she broke my stapler), indigo, salmon, lemon, amethyst, black, and cream-colored construction paper as the background to her mapping of social studies. The cream-based color, which she referenced as white, took up more than half of the mapping.

Noting, and including, there are “different colors,” mattered to Junie. Junie’s words echo in relation to social studies scholar, Janis’ (2012), discussion of race in the South:

Though other races are recognized in the South, the United States, and the rest of the world, the emphasis on the duality of Black and White relations remains poignantly more significant in the Southeastern region of the United States. These Black and White, inevitably racist, relations are still engulfed in the everyday experience of people living in the South resulting in an unexplainable and immeasurable divide. I feel abandoned in a wedge-shaped space in-between Black and White race. (p. 128-129)

Here, Janis (2012) highlights how racial categories beyond “Black and White” tend to be marginalized or “abandoned,” which is something Junie was also touching on in her words and work.

Junie seemed to be critiquing the ways in which she perceives social studies as focusing mainly on stable “white and black” histories. For instance, in the bottom portion of the map of social studies, which Junie articulates as what she conceived the curriculum to be (in comparison to what she thinks it should be), is a torn illustration of Washington crossing the Delaware and a torn black and white photo of people (who appear to be black) in a room. Junie pointed to the first image and the second image and stated that the curriculum is “...like the heroic American like, story. Usually faced with some kind of African American struggle.” Juxtaposing Junie’s

comment about “so many different colors” with her mapping of what social studies’ curriculum is in comparison to what she believes it actually is and should be, highlighted how *potentia* and *potestas* was operating in social studies in relation to race and ethnicity. The bottom portion of her mapping was constrained, limited by what the current curriculum offers as race and ethnicity (e.g., “white and black” histories). In relation, the top portion of her map is *potentia*, as she includes a multitude of colors, taping and stapling how social studies can be “illuminating” –as her cut out magazine asserts. Her mapping recognized the simultaneity of *potentia* and *potestas* in social studies.

Junie seems to be pointing towards a more nuanced, more colorful, less “white Eurocentric” and less “clean cut” version of social studies. However, bringing in more nuance and more people to social studies did not equal Junie abandoning “white and black” histories. Attuning to time and place, Junie’s critical attention to “white and black” histories also showed up in her discussion of practicum. Junie noticed that racialized power differentials were at play when she was placed with her first social studies mentor teacher. The power differentials were produced between the location of the mentor teacher, a white woman, and her location as a social studies practicum student, who is Korean American.

**Teaching the Civil War** For instance, Junie remembered feeling anxiety as she never knew what her mentor was going to say in class. Junie remarked, “I feel like she's [former mentor teacher] uh, she'll be like, ‘Ms. Junie, Ms. Junie, can I can I, can I just say something?,’ and I'm like, ‘Oh god, what are you gonna say?’” Specifically, Junie recalled teaching about the Civil War:

I was, like, bombarded [by her previous mentor] even from like, my first day, like, kind of *had like words put into my mouth a little bit*. She like picked up and said, ‘*Oh, we're*

*going to have Miss Junie tell us about why slavery was not the cause of the Civil War.’ I was just like, sitting there just like, my first day. My first day I'm sitting there and I was like, oh, like, like I was like, um, that's the awkward, like, that's so awkward. And so yeah, that was like even from the start, like, I felt like my mentor teacher was just like, okay, well, she's still like it's her classroom, we're still a guest. Even though we are teaching pretty much the whole day like, it's like, we're still a guest in our classrooms. It was like really hard managing. *Your body tenses up every time your mentors and you're like, like, tries to say something. And it's like, oh, God, like, what are they saying?**

[emphasis added]

Junie seemed to have a mentor that wanted to teach against the idea that enslavement of Black and Brown bodies was central to the Civil War (“*Oh, we're going to have Miss Junie tell us about why slavery was not the cause of the Civil War.*”). Junie appears to articulate how these interjections and assertions (potestas) mattered affectively for Junie (“*Your body tenses up every time your mentors and you're like, like, tries to say something. And it's like, oh, God, like, what are they saying?*”) Thus, even as Junie mapped for more “colors,” than “white and black,” Junie was still critically concerned with how social studies was taught in relation to issues of race that attend to “white and black.” Holding both, I return to Braidotti’s (2006) point that the “emphasis on complexity and relationality, which facilitates cross-border connections and alliances among differently located constituencies, is a political position” (p. 67). Junie desires for more sustainable forms of social studies (e.g., including “many different colors”) does not preclude teaching about oppressive “white and black” histories.

Furthermore, returning to Junie’s mentor teacher, Junie’s reflections showcased how reductive conceptions of race and ethnicity can be violent, operating as potestas. Junie’s former

mentor teacher, who is white, told Junie, who lives in a racialized body, to state that the Civil War was not a racialized event, that the Civil War was not rooted in white supremacy. Locating Junie as the subordinate in this situation, as the practicum student during her first assigned rotation, she is forced to act as a guest, a guest that has to play her role and read her script, which was oppressive and limiting.

However, returning to the notion that race and ethnicity are complex –and much more than “white and black,” Junie also highlighted how race was mattering when teaching social studies. For instance, she said that she wanted to teach at a school where *she* felt represented:

... there's not a lot of Asian teachers. And so I think when I was looking for schools to work at like, I specifically looked for schools that had a bigger Asian student population. ...I think it's just important like that I can be around students that look like me, just like visual representation.

There was something affirmative for Junie in being located at a school where she has the opportunity to be around people that look like her, particularly temporally after her experiences with her mentor teacher. This highlights the effect, or potentia that is Junie’s zigzag, the nomadic movement in Junie’s becoming as she moves through place and time, negotiating potestas, in the aim of fostering more sustainable futures for herself.

The racial and ethnic makeup of bodies seemed tethered to her comfort level and teaching more critically. She noted that she felt more comfortable teaching and “truth telling” with certain bodies in the room. Specifically, Junie said:

[S]ometimes I feel like people like me get away with saying more racial things because I'm not white... I guess like being my own, like those like straying away from the standards, but it's like, okay, because I'm not like, I won't get called out for it as quickly.

Like I know there's a lot of anxiety about teachers teaching the way that they want to sometimes in Social Studies classrooms in general, and I was really anxious about it too. And then I started doing a little bit of my own little truth telling, you know, like, I would download YouTube videos. And then I would like put it in the PowerPoint, and then they can't be blocked anymore. Right? And so it's like, more like screenshotting things and like just putting it in there and seeing like, how people react and like, Yeah, so like, social studies classrooms are very interesting. And then like, some, like African American students, or like, White students, but if I say something they would like look at me like small like, like, 'Hmm' like 'Hmmm, did you just say that?' But yeah.

In Junie's elaboration, it seems like she felt comfortable being subversive (e.g., downloading and screenshotting content that may not have passed the district's firewall) because she is "not white." Though an essentialized conception of race would always locate whiteness as dominant, Junie showcases how complex an essentialized reading of race and ethnicity is. Junie specifically notes that her location in a classroom with students who look like her makes her feel empowered to be subversive. Furthermore, she locates this feeling of empowerment, what Braidotti would articulate as *potentia*, amidst a time when teachers, herself included, are feeling surveilled and anxious. Junie unmoored the non-dominant location of her racialized body from submissiveness to whiteness in this particular context.

When I prompted Junie to be more specific about which bodies are in the room when she is subversive, Junie *also* noted a sense of anxiety around how different assemblages of bodies produced different feelings around teaching subversively. For instance, Junie said that having white bodies in the room made her *more* anxious when teaching about white supremacy:

I guess I get anxious when I talk about like white people sometimes, like in social studies, I'll be like, 'Oh, this guy was' like we were talking about a Georgia Governor and he was extremely like it literally says, like, in the book he was a white supremacist. And so I would, I was like, really hes-, I was like sweating that day. Because I was like, I have to like, see that he's a white supremacist and like he was and that's factual but like, because it's like, half of my students are white. I was like, 'Oh God, like what are they gonna say', like, like he's a white supremacist.

Even when relaying something “factual” about white supremacy in Georgia’s history, Junie seemed to be uncomfortable teaching about white supremacy with white students. Juxtaposed with her earlier comment that she felt she could “get away” with teaching subversively (in the context of heightened anxiety about how and what teachers feel they can say and do in social studies classrooms in Georgia), Junie’s location to race and ethnicity shifts depending on which bodies are in the room, highlighting how complex power and its effects and affects (as *potentia* and *potestas*) are in relation to essentialized notions of race and ethnicity. The negative affective quality of this *potestas* (power that constrains), could have been heightened by Georgia’s politicians push to constrain discussion of critical orientations in social studies education (Bill 1084), which surveilles and polices (preservice) social studies teachers' discussions of race and ethnicity. To summarize, the effects and affects of how Junie’s “race” mattered was shifting and produced in relation to the other bodies in the room, racialized power, and even state school politics.

Junie’s experiences highlighted the diverse ways in which race and ethnicity were located and mattering in her journey to become a social studies educator. Her contributions, in discussion and her social studies mapping, are evidence that the power that circulates through race and

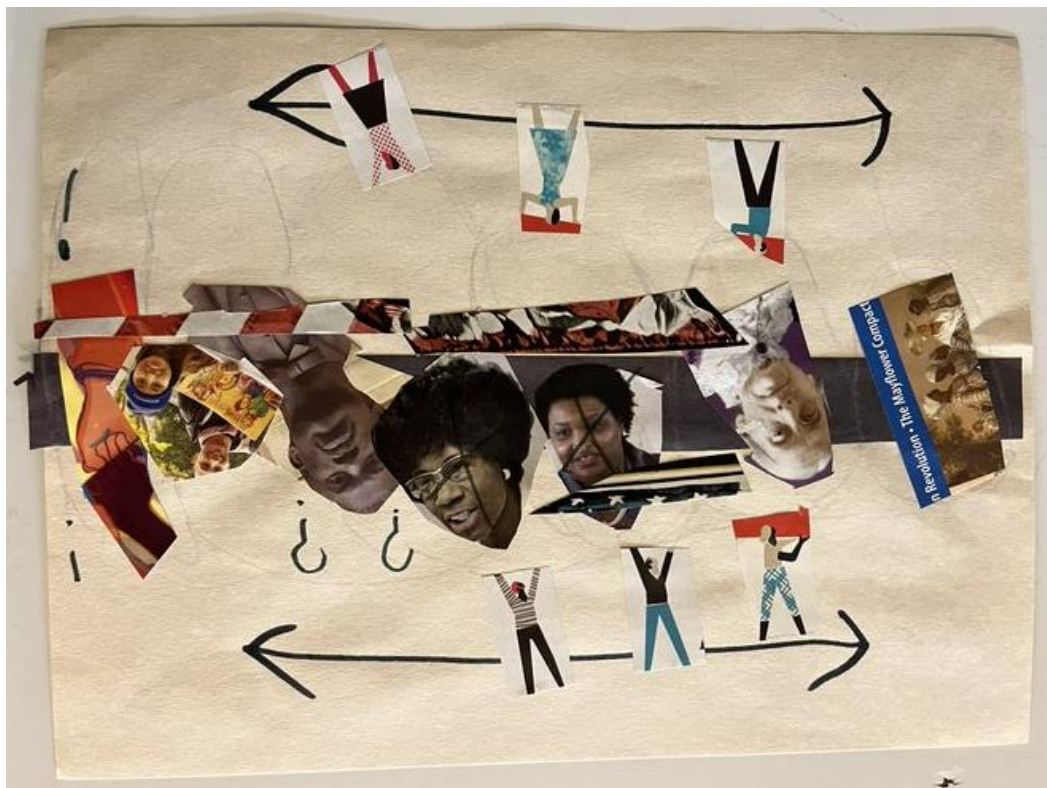
ethnicity is complex, offering sites of eruption in relation to codified identity markers in social studies. Further, Junie offered ways in which she ruptured “race [as] synonymous with inferiority, or pejorative difference” (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64).

## Ron

Likewise, Ron, a self-identified white-passing Latino man, noted the ways in which essentialized notions of race and ethnicity were complex throughout his journey of becoming a social studies teacher and his mapping of social studies. When Ron began to describe his map of social studies (Figure 9), he specifically detailed the white, black, and gray components of the mapping, articulating how important these colors –which were linked to race—were for social studies.

## Figure 9

*Ron’s Mapping of Social Studies*



Ron's mapping of social studies (Figure 9) lays on an off-white piece of construction paper. If looked at in a landscape presentation, there appears to be a continuum. Down the middle of the paper, Ron has collaged cut out faces, which are in different directions, alongside two cut out hands, fist bumping, and cut up pieces of an American flag. Above and below this continuum of faces are two black arrows, drawn in black marker, pointing in both directions, also in landscape orientation. On the arrows, there are cut outs of animations of people, who appear to be holding something up the middle section. Then, there are concentric circles around the middle section, drawn with pencil. Additionally, there are two question marks over two of the faces, one face being Shirley Chisholm and the other being Octavius Catto. Furthermore, Chisholm's face, as well as Stacey Abrams face, have Xs across them. Finally, there are exclamation points on either side of the fists.

Ron's mapping of social studies appears to recognize the ways in which social studies in Georgia is raced and how that matters. Ron noted that "race is really important" in mapping social studies in Georgia. Ron's map attended to the foundation of whiteness in social studies, something much more than skin color. It seems to be more fluid and less static than the pigment of flesh. Ron points to the background and the through line:

there's the black and white and that's how you get the gray. So the gray circles are there because that's both perspectives... But the white is obviously the bigger one where you have the black through line that's kind of covered up.

In Ron's elaboration, he appears to be highlighting the "white and black" history –wherein whiteness erases or "covered up" blackness- that Junie is critiquing in her own mapping. Here whiteness and blackness are positioned as pejorative. This was an interesting paradox, as Ron's heritage, like Junie's racial identity, does not necessarily fall into "white and black"

constructions of history, but it is bound up in his attention to these racial matterings. In Georgia's curriculum, both Junie and Ron seem to be highlighting how sticky pejorative difference shows up for white and Black bodies.

Further, Ron specifically articulated this in relationship to his family, his undergraduate work, and his mapping of social studies. Ron explained the ways in which race and ethnicity operated in social studies because of the politics of his own location:

I mean, I guess it's tough for me because I'm a white passing Latino. So it's like some thing's like going to get because I have parents who are working on their documentation that are residents that like, I've seen them deal with it firsthand, but at the same time I'm like, the outsider perspective, because I can walk away from that whenever I want. So for me, it's like I know it's important. So how do I get it through to other people that like, I know firsthand why it's so important.

Ron articulates he has an insider/outsider relationship to essentialized conceptions of ethnicity and race, showcasing how liminal the boundary markers of race and ethnicity are. This is evidence that essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity are complex; they are malleable and contextual, as he can move between communities that are white and Latinx. He articulates watching his family deal with the legality of place due to their racial and ethnic identities, while he [Ron] has the privilege to “walk away” from it, as a documented United States citizen, who is also “white passing.”

Looking at the cream paper, I pondered how Ron traversed the liminal boundaries of race and ethnicity. For instance, Ron's location also seems to create a sense of urgency to “get it through to other people” that ethnicity and race matter in social studies. Ron, a white-passing person, seems to want to use social studies as a vehicle to recognize the ways in which race and

ethnicity matter, in the aim of producing more sustainable racial and ethnic futures. Returning to Braidotti's (2006) theorization of nomadic subjects, Ron is engaging in "border-crossings" as he has "non-unitary identities" (p. 67) as a person who is Latino and white passing. He seems to understand his "political position" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 67) and desiring to use it to "introduce a dose of pure positivity into the notion of 'race'" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64).

Not only was Ron interested in "getting it through to other people," Ron's always already engagement with race and ethnicity was *not* static. Ron continued to learn how the politics of location, based on specific places, time, and bodies mattered. For instance, Ron explains that his undergraduate work *further* challenged his notions of race and ethnicity in relationship to documentation. Ron discussed that he attended a former residential school in Canada, which engaged in the forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples in that area. Ron highlighted that he worked in the archives at the (now) university, and this had implications for the documentation (and therefore politics) of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Ron said:

If you don't know what that is [a residential school], it's basically when they took like native children or Indigenous children from Canada and basically forced them to be like white acting. And so literally like working and then one summer I got to work in the archives and people come to prove their status, like Indian status and get records of like, 'Look, my, uh, relative was at one of those schools, I should have status. I should not be taxed.'

Ron's account of Indigenous relationships to archives (acquiring evidence to substantiate that they were indeed Indigenous, legally impacting whether they paid taxes) highlighted how ethnicity mattered, particularly in documentation -documenting to become United States' citizens, documenting to not be citizens of Canada. It also interrupts the notion that history is

“white and black,” destabilizing racial narratives further. Race and ethnicity are specific to place (Canada), bodies (Indigenous and European), politics (assimilation, erasure, and taxes), and time (colonization versus the last ten years).

In this way, race and ethnicity were always already explicitly mattering for Junie and Ron in their becomings as social studies educators because of their embodied (Junie) as well as embedded (Ron) locations as racialized and ethnicized bodies. Furthermore, Junie and Ron articulated how racial and ethnic becomings were contingent upon context (place, time, bodies). These are important findings for teaching preservice social studies teachers about race and ethnicity, as both Junie and Ron came in with complex understandings of race and ethnicity, in comparison to codified concepts of race and ethnicity. Furthermore, Junie and Ron seemed quite cognizant, based on their maps of social studies and discussions of social studies, of the “murderous logic” that can confine race and ethnicity to negative binaries, such as “white and black” and wanting to move beyond those logics.

Likewise, Junie and Ron’s white counterparts, Sydney, Blair, and Stevie, all recognized how race and ethnicity were mattering in social studies, though where, when, and how race and ethnicity came to matter seemed to be more recent. Even though race and ethnicity did not seem to be always already apparent to Sydney, Blair, and Stevie, race and ethnicity did not hold static locations. Like Junie and Ron’s discussion, race and ethnicity were contextual and relational. I turn to the specifics next.

### **The Complexity of Race and Ethnicity for (In)visibly Racialized Bodies**

Sydney, Blair, and Stevie—all self-identified white women-- noted that race and ethnicity began to matter, particularly in the context of the rising prevalence of the Black Lives Matters grassroots movement and its relationship to students. In what follows, I will highlight that

difference and how it manifests in race and ethnicity mattering in specific times, places, and bodies in relation to social studies.

Different from Ron and Junie, Sydney, Blair, and Stevie seemed to *come to* understand that race and ethnicity were always already mattering in social studies. All three participants cited the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, a grassroots movement that recognizes and resists structural anti-Blackness, as important in their reflections of how they came to recognize the importance of race. Cartographically speaking, Sydney and Stevie drew specific coordinates of Black Lives Matter in relation to the COVID-19 global pandemic. In comparison, Blair related Black Lives Matter in relation to students in social studies classrooms and centering those students' voices, which implicitly seemed to be the centering of racialized students' voices. I will begin with Sydney and Stevie's articulations of race and ethnicity, unpack the specificity of race and ethnicity, and then Blair's affirmative conversations with students about race and ethnicity.

### **Sydney**

Sydney and Stevie articulated the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020 as important for their budding understanding of the importance of race in social studies. For instance, as Sydney was explaining her relationship to social studies, from AP history courses in high school to studying anthropology in college, Sydney began to engage with race as mattering *more explicitly*:

...[S]o I ended up working for the legal publisher, which was in Charlottesville, and then later, like, during, you know, the whole pandemic experience and, um, Black Lives Matter protests, I realized like a lot of the things that people were talking about with like, issues of race and equity and things like that, and like actually understand that stuff. And I you know, and so I started the more -and I had already becomes, become more



Sydney's mapping of social studies is multilayered and multicolored. Blue, red, lavender, and green appear in the background, partially covered by a myriad of illustrations and photographs clipped from magazines. The left side of the map draws my eyes vertically, as it cleanly covers a third of the page, very little background peeking through. I see four different illustrated eyes staring ceaselessly at me from the top left, below which appears to be an illustration of a light skinned woman in glasses staring at a computer screen, which holds the image of a darker skinned child. It seems like these two people are on a video conference. Below this is a tree, which appears to bear fruit. People, one on a ladder, one on the ground, and one in a wheelchair, are picking fruit from the tree. Separately, a bird appears to be leaving the scene with a note in its beak, flying southeastward on the map, heading towards a white (passing) man smiling and playing the accordion. Below, and slightly to the left is a black and white photograph of a group of four children that appear to be of Asian heritage. Moving east, Sydney has placed a decadent circular gold colored piece of art at the center of the map. It reminds me simultaneously of a medallion, the Mayan Calendar, and intricate Buddhist carvings found at temple. Looking East, the perspective changes a bit. It is less flat and orients a longer gaze. For instance, Northeast of the golden art is what appears to be a photograph of mountains amidst clouds, popping through the cloud cover like islands in water. A separate illustration of a dark-skinned child is catty-corner, drawing squiggles on white paper at her desk, overlooking the scene of the mountains. Layered below this appears to be an image of ruins of a civilization stretching into the distance, a young masked, darker skinned (young) woman holding her fist up in solidarity (sideways perpendicular to the rest of the mapping), and an illustration of a young dark-skinned child with a backpack on. I describe all of these elements to highlight how no one race or ethnicity is centralized in this map of social studies. Sydney's mapping includes human and

more-than-human bodies spliced and pasted together. There appears to be resistance (figure holding their fist up), play (child drawing), and joy (figure playing the accordion), across space and time (black and white photo in the bottom right corner). The assumptions I have to make about the matter in this mapping reminds me of the unsettled ground that race and ethnicity are built upon.

Furthermore, Sydney's, like Junie's, discussion highlighted how race and ethnicity in social studies were complex, depending on power differentials. For instance, Sydney noted that she was unsure what race looked like in her classroom, depending on the assemblage of bodies. After Junie highlighted her anxiety with discussing white supremacy with white students, Sydney noted that she "wondered" what it would be like teaching social studies to white students:

Yeah, I was actually wondering about that, because I've been talking pretty openly with my students, but none of them are white. So it's like, how is it gonna be different when I'm in a classroom where I do have more white students, like, you know, it really changes the dynamic a lot. And never really thought about it until actually being there in the space.

Sydney's comment that teaching white students "really changes the dynamic a lot" highlighted, to me, the ways in which an attention to bodies and space matter. Sydney does not articulate that white bodies will change the fact that she engages with race and ethnicity in her social studies class, only that it will "be different." Sydney's comment makes it possible to reflect on how particular social studies classroom constellations (time, politics, bodies, place, space) may embody and produce particular knowledge about race and ethnicity, and changing that

constellation changes what knowledge is produced. This shift, this change, highlights how precarious race and ethnicity are in social studies education.

### **Stevie**

Like Sydney, Stevie's explicit engagement with race and ethnicity, which led her to social studies education, began with political polarization and the rise of BLM. Stevie highlighted that her shifting relations to race began in 2016, and her desire to teach social studies became more poignant during the pandemic and, specifically, the prevalence of BLM protests. Stevie explained:

I think it's a white thing like since we've gotten here and I've talked about it like I had the privilege, not worried about politics up until that point and then like hearing everything during the 2016 election and like people getting marginalized and the like disparity between everyone, and I was like, 'Woah.' So I went to university to get the degree and intended to go to law school. And then COVID happened and weirdly enough along the same lines, Black Lives Matters protest started occurring and everything got political and then it got into the activist part and I just thought I would never be happy as a lawyer. Like I never thought I would be able to make the difference I wanted to as a lawyer, and it would just be like chasing a dream that I could never attain. So that it makes me really sad and like depressed as a career. And I've always worked with kids like always, I've never had a job where I wasn't working with children and you can make a difference with it. Even if it's just like, you know, I have a student who was pregnant like talking to her about things like that, like that made an impact more than I think I ever could have as like the lawyer I wanted to be.

In Stevie's explanation, she noted that she had not previously considered the politics of "people getting marginalized" or "disparity between everyone," attributing this lack of awareness to being a "privileged" "white thing." Stevie seemed to be connoting Braidotti's (2016) point that her coming to understand race was in relation to "the political economy of invisibility" which "means that the only notion of 'race' that our culture has produced, is in the mode of a minority" (p. 64). Stevie was able to articulate this potestas, or constraining the futures of some bodies (i.e., people of color).

For instance, it was obvious that race was always already operating in Stevie's life, even though she was not able to recognize its contours in their space, time, and bodies. This became obvious when Stevie was discussing her map of social studies (Figure 11). Stevie said that her social studies teacher gave an extra credit 'opportunity' in high school, which included visiting a white supremacist museum, she calls "Wildman's." Stevie notes how she believes where she grew up, which was Cobb County, a white suburban city north of a larger metropolitan area, impacted her lack of awareness of race and ethnicity, pointing to the situated and placed based importance of race and ethnicity:

It has like a bunch of, I was like a student led project, I briefly looked at the article [referencing the material she used from a magazine for her mapping], but it has everyone's names like George Floyd. There's Rashard Brooks, Breanna Taylor, and then it was just all about like, this impacts my students and I have never really thought about race in a classroom until I came here. And I was just living this like white bubble of Cobb County, [Ron coughs] where things like this were not talked about and like to think that that takes a tone and the way we teach things and like, could have affected my peers in



include a critical attention to race, though race was always already operating (e.g., Wildman's museum).

Yet, returning to Stevie's first quote and reflecting on Stevie's map, it seems that Stevie has a sense of efficacy about the complexity of this "pernicious and murderous logic." She noted that she vacillated between her original intentions of becoming a lawyer and her desire to work with children, where she felt she could be more of a change agent. This is how she ended up applying for the program and becoming a social studies preservice teacher, as the program, a particular space, offered her a positive subject position for affecting change. Her future, as a white person, a dominant racialized location, does not foreclose her ability to help create more sustainable and affirmative social studies, particularly in relation to race and ethnicity.

Furthermore, though a desire for sustainability and the actualization of sustainability are not synonymous, Stevie's movement away from the logics of codification, towards more thoughtful relations, gives license to the notion that racial and ethnic markers are complex instead of essentialized, as Stevie, who lives in a white body, embodying whiteness, yet desires more for affirmative becomings. This desire for difference, as positive, also showed up in Blair's mapping and discussions of social studies, which I turn to next.

### **Blair**

In comparison to the other participants, Blair did not story a particular moment when she became racially aware (i.e., when she became white). However, like Sydney and Stevie, Blair recognized the importance of BLM in social studies for her students, and it also was apparent in her mapping of social studies (Figure 12).

**Figure 12**

*Blair's Mapping of Social Studies*



Blair's map of social studies (Figure 12) has a landscape orientation. A quote from Alexa Villatoro in red letters on a white background read, "It's not just about providing funding interpretation and translation but providing it in a way that is culturally responsive" in the top left portion of her map. This inclusion prompts the notion that culture, including identity markers, cannot be generalized or essentialized; culture –and being culturally responsive– is specific and contextual.

Moving to the right of the quote, there is an illustration of a group of ethnically diverse people in police style uniforms, interrupted in the middle by a darker skinned woman in a pink

shirt. A cut-out of the word Anti-Racist sits perpendicular to the right of the graphic, layered on top of a circular vote illustration, which includes a ballot box. A younger brown skinned woman stands with her fist in the air, partially covering the group illustration of police. Stars and stripes comprise her background and a banner reading “JUSTICE” flies to the left of her body. Below this top spread (quote, group illustration, word, vote illustration) is spliced together phrasing from magazines, which reads “HONEST” “TEACHING” “The” \_\_\_\_\_ “Perspectives,” linked to “TEACHING” by red yarn. Another set of magazine cut outs reads “Past” “Present” and “Future.” Interestingly, after re-listening to the audio, I realized that the \_\_\_\_\_ space did include a cut out word reading “forgotten.” All that remains in the residue and discoloration of ineffective glue. The irony of the missing word -- “forgotten” -- in the midst of a construction of social studies meant to recognize “perspectives” in the plural, in relation to time – “Past” “Present” and “Future” showcases how Blair stitched together the multiple locations, particularly temporally, that exist in social studies education. This attention to increments of time belies the idea that race and ethnicity do not change.

Furthermore, to the right of this, there is an illustration of a hand holding a plant; each leaf of the plant has an illustration: a man reading with a woman, a person holding a poster, which the person on the right most leaf is drawing a heart on with a giant pencil. The background papers of this mapping appears to be tangerine and salmon in color, with black peeking out of the top right corner. I flip to the back, and the foundational piece of paper is black. In relation to her peer’s maps, I realize that every participant had a different color as their background for their social studies map. Though Blair does not explain why she chose a black background, she seems preoccupied with Black liberation. Blair’s attention to race became most explicit in her aims for

social studies: holding space for students in the social studies classroom. Blair originally came at this from the perspective of diversity:

So I've tried to focus on social studies to teach the *forgotten perspectives* in the past, present and the future. And then it should also like, I think *amplify students' voices*, so I have this little student here. Um. And then I just wanted to *focus on like diversity* because that's what I feel like Social Studies Education means more of, *in order to relate to our students like the students need to feel seen and heard* and the class so focus on that, um, *anti-racist teaching, honest teaching*, and then I have this quote that I found a put in it too. And then I like this because I felt like there was more like me just like *building my students up and then like letting them learn from each other* to I think is a key factor that should be in social studies education is like, [tape sound] being sure you create space and like an atmosphere with like, the kids feel like they want to learn from each other. But also, do learn from each other [emphasis added].

Blair appears to connect diversity and being “seen and heard.” Blair orients this as potentia, as an affirmative way in which to ‘do’ social studies. It made me wonder who would be affirmed *and* made me question which bodies she felt were not seen and heard, which I inferred as racialized bodies, based on the bodies she mapped (Figure 12). Moreover, Blair orients this work need to be “anti-racist” and “honest” to sustain student dialogue in social studies, which she also collaged on to her social studies map.

Though the attention to anti-racism was not fully explained in her mapping, Blair did describe a particular class discussion that highlights the impact of BLM and discussing race critically. Blair said:

I mean, it just feels like [taping sound] at least like any time that I've had it, it's like, like, I don't know, like you feel a sense of like, you actually matter and like, your opinion holds value. Um. I was able to have that experience with some of my students. Some of my Black students we ended up talking about the Black Lives Matter protest and like the protests in Athens around the, um, removal of the Confederate statue. And I tried to create like space for dialogue and my class a lot like we really, and I'm in seventh grade, but we love like debate like they love to debate, and they're super respectful of each other. Um. But with that, like I had one kid that was like, I mean, it's a part of history. You know, he was a white boy, and I know that his parents are very, very conservative. Um. So like, [he said] it's a part of history, like it's not hurting anyone, and I just was trying to just be like, 'Well what about the placement of where it is like, what is in front of, you know, the arch at UGA?' And like my two Black girls that were just kind of very quiet and are normally very outspoken in class, and they were sitting there pretty quietly, and I was just like, invited them to talk about what the statue meant to them too. *And like, they were like, very appreciative and like, kind of, were shocked. I think that I asked their opinion and like, just talk about race so openly. But they got to explain you know, like, anytime they see any Confederate anywhere, it just makes them feel uncomfortable and like, what they know is the Confederacy is that they hated slaves, and they want or they wanted slaves, they hated Black people. And that's what it feels like and so for that to be just something that they saw driving downtown Athens like it just feels unwelcoming and they were very happy and like felt heard that it was taken down. [The "white boy"] was like, 'Oh, I've never even thought about that. And it's like, yeah, we have to like learn*

*from each other and like, experience these different perspectives. So yeah'* [emphasis added].

Blair offered an example of students being in dialogue about a monument in Athens, Georgia as evidence that students that embody difference racialized experiences can learn from each other. Specifically, Blair said she invited to two students, that she articulated as "Black girls" to share their thoughts about a confederate monument. According to Blair, the girls were 1) "shocked" to be asked, and 2) noted that the Confederate monument, this more-than-human entity, made them feel "uncomfortable" because of the history and hate that it is/was tied to. For instance, Blair said the girls noted that

what they [the two Black girls] know is the Confederacy is that they [the Confederacy] hated slaves, and they [the Confederacy] want or they wanted slaves, they [the Confederacy] hated Black people. And that's what it feels like, and so for that to be just something that they [the two Black girls] saw driving downtown Athens like it just feels unwelcoming and they [the two Black girls] were very happy and like felt heard that it was taken down.

Again, Blair seemed to connote that the discussion was generative for both the Black girls and a white boy. Blair noted that the white boy in the conversation said something to the effect of "Oh, I've never even thought about that." This example highlighted how Blair saw engaging in discussion about race and ethnicity as potentia in social studies, as it led to great understanding. And though greater understanding may not lead to change, it might open doors that sedimented logics of racial difference leave closed. Her story does this by depicting the specific place, space, and bodies where racial difference was operating as "pure positivity" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 64).

This attention to place, space, and bodies in relation to race and ethnicity were also apparent in Blair’s photovoice submission(s). As I discuss in the chapter on methodology, as I prompted students to attend to material relations (relations of matter) that they believed were important in social studies. Blair offered an image of Hot Corner (Figure 13), which is in the historically Black district of Athens, Georgia. Her caption read, “Hot Corner— being aware of location and space.”

**Figure 13**

*One of Blair’s Photo-voice Contributions*



The image includes known business peoples in Hot Corner, like Monrow Bowers “Pink” Morton and Homer Wilson, as well as representation of other anonymous characters important to Hot Corner. Reflecting on Blair’s contribution, I surmise that Blair had to go to Hot Corner to take this photograph, putting her body in relation to “location and space,” contingent upon histories steeped in Black thriving. This mural exemplifies that thriving as well, operating as potentia, as it offers an alternative figuration of Blackness in comparison to codified racial assumptions of

Black as other and inferior. Comparing the conversation Blair had with students about monuments, Blair could have contributed an image of a confederate monument. However, she did not. This speaks to the complexity of racialized expectations (i.e., being white being linked to being oppressive). These findings are generative to think with in social studies teacher preparation.

### **Space for Eruption**

Unsurprisingly, all of the participants appeared to believe that race and ethnicity were mattering in social studies, as cultural responsiveness (i.e., attending to how race and ethnicity matter in social studies) is a facet of the social studies program for the preservice teachers. However, interestingly, as noted in the introduction, the racially embodied locations of each participant appeared to impact when and how race and ethnicity were mattering as preservice social studies teachers. For instance, Junie, a Korean American woman, and Ron, a white passing Latino man, spoke at different moments about how their personal locations as racialized peoples in the United States played a role in their always already relationships to social studies. Differently, Sydney, Stevie, and Blair -all white women- seemed to come to realize the importance of race and ethnicity and how, when, and where it matters in social studies. All of the participants *also* discussed the ways in which their racialized identity markers were complex, which has important implications for social studies teacher preparation, particularly when situated amidst conversations that participate in codifying racial and ethnic becomings (e.g., Boucher, 2020; Jones, 2022; Loh-Hagan, 2022).

When preservice teachers conceive of bodies based on essentialized racial and ethnic markers, our conception of students (let alone other social studies stakeholders) becomes stagnant. We not only lose the ability to understand our students as complex, which can lead to

preservice teachers losing sight of social studies students' capabilities, but it may also calcify how preservice teachers perceive their own racialized embodiment. Furthermore, in doing so, preservice teachers may reify the logics of oppression that benefit from binary and discrete racial and ethnicized identities, losing the nuance of the politics of location.

However, thinking with Braidotti's conception of race and ethnicity as positive difference, as one facet that co-constitutes the politics of location, preservice teachers have the opportunity to approach the work of social studies as a space that can produce change. Shifting from pejorative difference -particularly in relation to race and ethnicity—to positive difference could help produce rupture and opportunities for healthier, more sustainable relations. In particular, recognizing that race matters *and* that essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity are complex could be useful in social studies teacher preparation and education, as it reflects many of the experiences and discussions that are offered by the preservice social studies teachers, at least in my findings and experiences. Further, articulating race and ethnicity as malleable constructs leaves the door open for preservice teachers to have positive subject locations.

Thus, through the methods of collage, photovoice, and focus group discussions, the preservice social studies teachers recognized how, when, and where race and ethnicity were complex markers of bodies.

## CHAPTER 5

### CRITICALLY LISTENING TO THE COMPLEXITY OF ESSENTIALIZED CONCEPTIONS OF RACE AND ETHNICITY

In the last chapter, I wrote through the ways in which the data generation with preservice social studies teachers emphasized the complexity of race and ethnicity in social studies. I theorized preservice social studies teachers' discussion (using transcripts as evidence), collage, and photovoice submissions on what matters in social studies *and* what an attention to material relation does for social studies, when read through Braidotti's *Critical Posthumanism*. In this microchapter, I will specifically showcase how sound from audio clips offered another entry point to analyze participants' contributions to what matters in social studies. I will do this with one example from Junie, who, as I mentioned in the introduction, is a Korean American woman who lived in the Midwest until her senior year of high school, at which point she moved to the Southeast. I offered transcript from this conversation in the previous chapter, but now I will analyze the audio.

Over the course of this microchapter, I will delineate what sound is for the context of this dissertation. The purpose of this chapter is to bring you, the reader, in relation to the sonic qualities of the research, offering a different sensorial experience (literally hearing and feeling the vibrational effect and affects) of what mattered to preservice social studies teacher as well as what an attention to that relation offers social studies education. To do this, I will begin by offering you an audio clip of sound from Junie, depicting how the effects and affects of power in the sound was unstable via a spectrogram, a visualization of the frequency of sound over time

(pitch). Then I will theorize how a posthuman sound and listening, giving attention and consideration, thought with Critical Posthumanism, oriented me to how power relations (potentia and potestas) became material in the sound (audio clip as seen in the spectrogram). Finally, I will *extend* the same argument offered in the last chapter about the utility of conceiving essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity (and their effects and affects) as complex. In what follows, I begin to make audible how this microchapter offers a slice of sound as an exemplar of the possibilities of theorizing the sensorium in social studies teacher preparation.

### **Sound(s)**

Scientifically, sound is energy that vibrates along a wave. In everyday interactions, we might think of sound as something we hear –be that the Pledge of Allegiance over an intercom or a fishbowl discussion on the causes of American sectionalism. We are not always able or offered the chance to see sound, literally or metaphorically, through the ocular (eyes). It is multimodal in this project. As noted in my discussion of a posthuman sound and listening, critical listening and hearing is felt (Flint, 2021a, 2021b). It can evoke an attunement to memory, history, place, and time.

This critical listening, which offers an attunement to power, particularly for marginalized and minoritized bodies, can be theorized with resonance. Daza and Gershon (2015) wrote that resonance:

provides a means to examine echoes across time and contexts, opens relationships within and between ecologies, breaks down barriers between siloed fields and methodologies, provides a means for the marginalized to literally voice their perspectives, and to consider complex interrelations and orientations inside and beyond people. (p. 641)

Here, Daza and Gerhon theorize resonance as a reverberation in relation to place, space, time, and bodies.

This brings me to the next point about sound: sound is relational. For example, Flint (2021a) studied belonging with university students. She wrote that making sound compilations, “braiding” together the students’ voices and experiences, meant engaging in “a processual, relational ethics” (p. 8). In other words, Flint (2021a) points to the way in which her sound composition necessarily decentered the individual (e.g., layering voices is plural). Beyond the voices being in relation in the compilation, a listener is also in relation, as the emergent quality of sound takes hold, until the energy/intensity of sound moves beyond the human sensorium (e.g., literally the Hertz is too low or high, or we ‘move on’ from the relation).

Furthermore, because sound is relational, it is also contingent. When I recorded the preservice social studies teachers during our focus groups, the recording devices (I used a MacBook Zoom audio recorder, handheld recorder, and the Otter application on my phone to record the focus groups) came into relation with a multitude of sounds (e.g., air, art materials being shuffled and used, chair movement, food wrappers, coughs from participants) and then produced audio of those relations. In relation to embodiment, I am a human and I can hear up to about 20,000 Hertz. Then I came into relation with the recordings, I listen (giving attention and consideration) from my embodied and embedded location. I am also located as a white woman raised in the southeast, working as a social studies teacher educator and researcher. My embedded and embodied locations impact what and how I listen (non-essentialized), which I understand to mean that my listening is not totalizing. It is partial, based on the politics of location and my specific theoretical attentions (e.g., Critical Posthuman concepts, such as potestas and potentia).

Furthermore, sound emerges continuously, moving outward and, eventually, beyond the human sensorium. It may reverberate in our memory, in resonance (Daza & Gershon, 2015), even be felt in our bodies. Sound can produce affects and intensities beyond the ear. It may produce feelings of anxiety, a pit in the stomach, even a wholesome sense of joy. For the purpose of this microchapter, I will focus on Junie’s discussion of her racialized experience and how that offered an attention to power, particularly the insidiousness of white supremacy. Next, I turn to the media that I will use to unpack this: an audio clip and a spectrogram.

### **Audio Clip of Junie’s Racialization**

Audio: [The Complexity of Race and Ethnicity for Junie](#)

Above, I link a clip of audio, wherein Junie is explaining how she was racialized during her adolescence. As noted in the previous chapter, this portion of the audio was situated in the photovoice debrief focus group, near the very end of our time together. In particular, after a group discussion on global forms of nationalism, Junie began to unpack her racialization by highlighting how her parents perceived themselves as Korean American, and they positioned her as American Korean (see Figure 14).

### **Figure 14**

*Junie Explaining Her Racialization by Family*

**Junie:** But then my parents, even though they live in the US, like they and they like want to vote and all of that stuff. They always asked me like what is the like, what do we need to look for? Like they have a hard time understanding too. So it's like, they always call me American Korean, but then they call themselves Korean American. And like... --

**Morgan:** --Korean American

**Junie:** Korea-- Yeah. Oh. So I was like, what's that? Mean? They're like, 'You're like 60% American and 40%' and I'm like 'Can you even say that?' I mean I understand. So it's like, yeah.

In the transcript, it seems Junie was positioned as American first and Korean second by her family.

Junie continues to explain how she is racialized. Junie says, as we hear in the clip, “Yeah, so, like, you know, like when I was growing up, like people would call me like a Twinkie because I was yellow on the outside when I'm white on the inside, that's like a thing.” Here she is remembering how she was racialized (“people would call me like a Twinkie because I was yellow on the outside when I'm white on the inside”) and then she is also urgently confirming her experience, “that's like a thing.” However, this transcript, sensed through the ocular (eyes), does not do justice to Junie’s storying of her racialization. I will unpack this more after I introduce a visualization of this audio clip: the spectrogram.

### **Spectrogram of Junie’s Audio (Sound)**

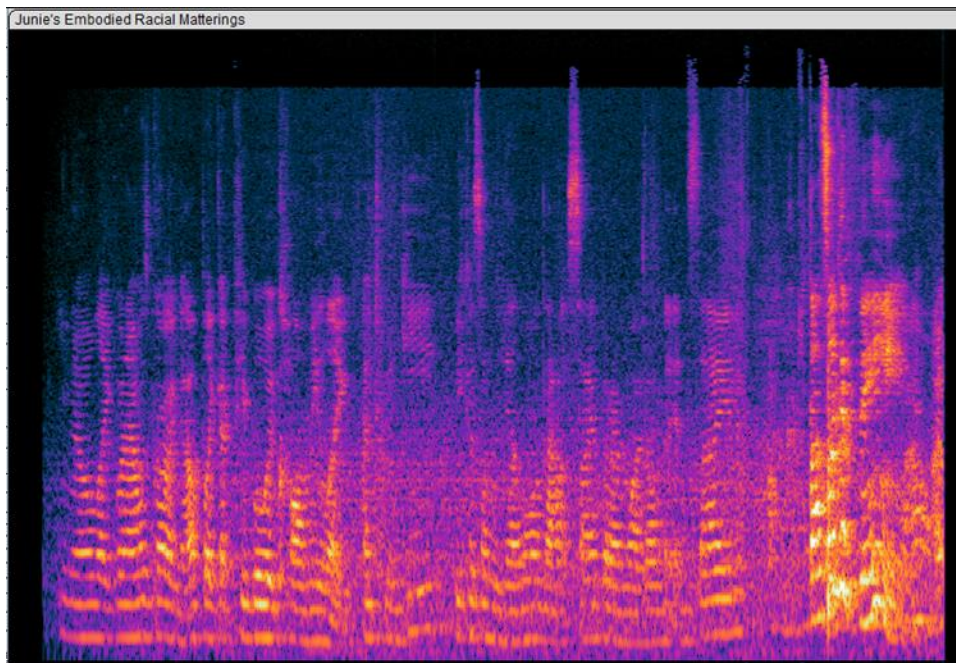
Below (Figure 15) is a spectrogram of Junie explaining how she was compared to a Twinkie. This is a moment wherein Junie reflects on her experiences due to her racialized embodiment as a Korean person in white spaces.<sup>28</sup> This appeared to leave a mark, as an important part of her becoming as a social studies preservice teacher.

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<sup>28</sup> As noted earlier, Junie was raised in the Midwest.

## Figure 15

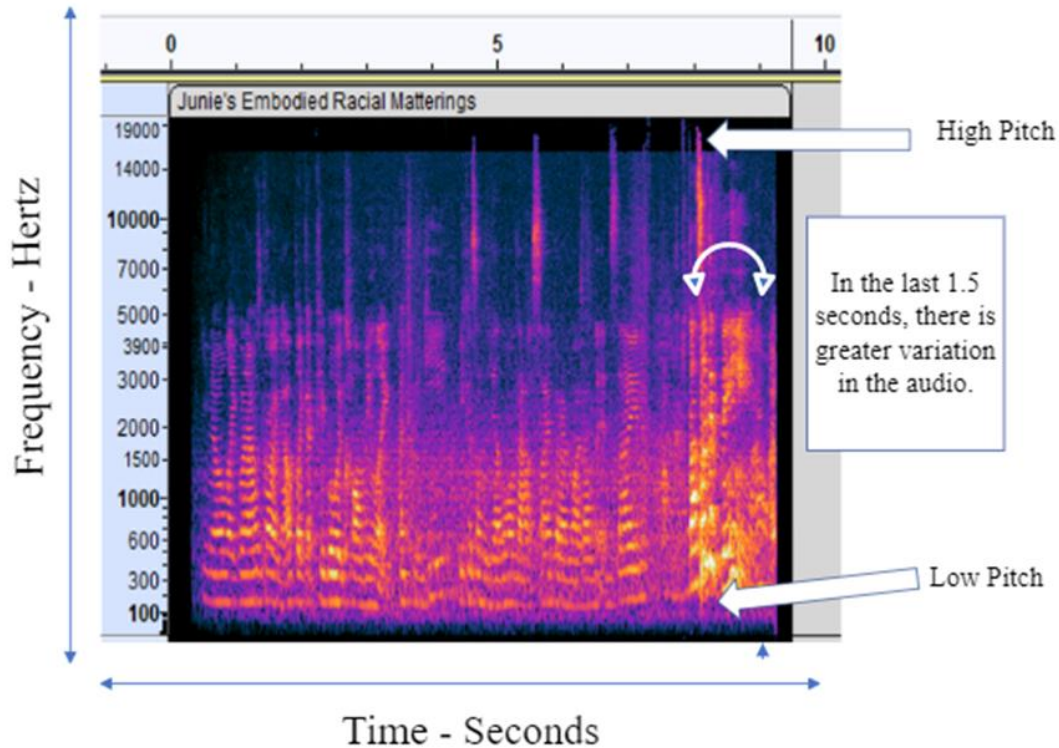
### *Spectrogram of Racialized Power*



Below (Figure 16), I diagram this spectrogram. The vertical axis displays frequency in Hertz and the horizontal axis represents time. Across the spectrogram, amplitude is represented by brightness (the orange color being the most intense with its brightness). The black background is silence, while the fuchsia and orange showcase the shifts in sound. This depicts a range of frequencies (lowest at the bottom of the display, highest at the top) and how loud events at different frequencies are. Loud events will appear bright and quiet events will appear dark.

**Figure 16**

*Diagrammed Spectrogram of Racialized Power*



In looking at this spectrogram, the first 7.5 seconds appears somewhat similar. Most sound registers at a frequency of less than 5000 Hertz. There are a few milliseconds (e.g., 4.6, 5.6, and 6.8) where there is a higher pitch. Then in the last 1.5 seconds, you may notice there is more brightness, or amplitude. I unpack this next.

### **Theorizing the Complexity of the Power of Essentialized Conceptions of Race and Ethnicity in Sound**

With an attention to amplitude and pitch, the audio of Junie, coupled with the spectrogram, highlights the complexity of power in relation to essentialized conceptions of race

and ethnicity through the sounding of racist slurs. This occurs both in Junie's retelling of the ways she has been racialized and in her fellow participants' reactions to her recalling racist metaphors. For the purpose of this microchapter, I offer the sounding of Junie's memories associated with being called a Twinkie, in relation to the space of the focus group, which included myself and other participants (human and more-than-human).

### **Potestas of White Supremacist Logics**

As Junie notes, she was compared to a Twinkie. A Twinkie is meant to symbolize that though Junie appears to be Asian, she is white on the inside. In particular, the term Twinkie differentiates people who are from Eastern Asia or have Eastern Asian heritage and embody their *native* values and practices in comparison to people who are from Eastern Asia or have Eastern Asian heritage that exhibit *Western* values and practices. As Trieu (2019), a professor of American Studies and Asian American Studies wrote, the term Twinkie is meant "to reflect conformity to whiteness and assimilation" (p. 2). In other words, Twinkie is term that includes or excludes people based on how assimilated they are to white culture. As sociologists Chou and Feagin (2015) note, this term, when used as a form of validation, is meant to signify that white culture is "correct and normal" in comparison to "other ways of doing things [which] are [constituted as] undesirable if not dangerous to life, family, or career" (p. 157). This produces Asian as Other and therefore inferior, while white is help up as good or right as the normed position. In this way, Junie explains how her racial identity, and embodiment, was bifurcated by white supremacist logics.

### **Critically Listening to Junie's Memory of the White Supremacist Logics**

In Junie's remembering of the racist metaphor, Twinkie, she begins quietly and maintains a steady pitch. Then, there is a shift that occurs in Junie's audio. This becomes more visible

when her fellow participants in the focus group respond to the racialized rememberings, which occurs at approximately 7.5 seconds. Someone can barely be heard mumbling “Oh my gosh,” and then, “Wow,” as Junie urgently continues, “...that's like a thing.”

In her sounding (the audio) of her experiences, Junie articulates what I interpret, with Critical Posthumanism, as negative difference (being compared to a Twinkie), her volume building over the course of her remembering, as she articulates how she has been conceived and positioned as a person who is Asian on the outside and white on the inside. Her sounding, the energy building reflects how power moves through the audio. As Braidotti (2019) noted, potestas is a force of “repressive structures of dominant subject-formations” (p. 33). In this way, Junie articulates how people she came into relation with/in her adolescence attempted to weaponize (intentionally or otherwise) white supremacy to codify her subjectivity.

When she hears her peers respond in astonishment, there's urgency in the resonance (relation between sonic vibrations in the audio), which can be seen and in the last 1.5 seconds. There is a shift in pitch and amplitude. Specifically, the sound increases in pitch (higher sustained frequency). This is seen in the brightness which moves vertically and horizontally across the last 1.5 seconds.

This shift, between the first and second portion, highlights the relational nature of sound and listening. On the surface, it appears that Junie’s peers have not experienced this or heard this racist metaphor before. Or maybe, the other participants are simply astounded. No matter the root cause of Junie’s peers, Junie feels compelled to note, “that it’s a thing [being called a Twinkie].” There appears to be a sense of urgency in the acoustics of her voice, represented in the increase in amplitude and range of pitch.

### *Critically Listening to Felt Distance*

Furthermore, the comments, in relation to Junie's witnessing, create a sense of distance in relation to her experience. This is heard and felt, as there is distance in the volume of responses. Junie's voice takes the most space. Layered behind this are the voices of her peers. There is a felt distance, wherein the other people in the room offer surprised responses, which could be related to their own location in white and white-passing bodies. I am not arguing that they meant to create that distance, nor that the other participants are 'bad' for having that distance. But the distance does matter, as this conversation, and the sound produced, may likely be different for people with insider knowledge (e.g., other people that have experienced similar traumatic racist metaphors due to their embodied locations or witnessed this particular example of racism).

The distance in the audio, theorized with Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism, is felt. Junie's remembering is rife with *potentia* and *potestas*. Junie's remembering produced *potentia*, in that it interrupts white supremacists' logics by calling attention to a slur that was commonly used to codify Junie's personhood racially. She is recognizing the politics of her own location.

Further, *potestas* becomes apparent in the building of intensity in her remembering of encounters with this *potestas* (being called a racist metaphor). In particular, the responses by her peers are also a site for sonic interrogation, as they produce a situation where Junie urgently feels the need to confirm that this happened to her, that she experienced racism in her racialization. Transcript does not offer an attention to speed and inflection of Junie responding “...that's like a thing.” I unpack the implications of this for social studies research and teacher education next.

### **Implications**

Working with sound offered particular insights that may have not come to light had I only engaged with transcript from the focus group. As I explained in the methodology section,

attending to sound offered me many provocations for attending to preservice social studies teachers' perceptions of matterings in the field, beyond what was literally said (what I could read in a transcript) and holding space for how something is said and what the saying produces. As Flint noted (2021b), listening is an “embodied encounter” that is relation, which has the capacity to “produc[e] intimacy, presence, place, or movement through qualities like tonality, amplitude, or cadence” (p. 525). Put differently, the prosody of audio in Junie’s voice was imbued with power, memory, and affect. I became in relation to it, listening and affectively engaging with the ways in which Junie was constituted by white supremacist logics. This has implications for social studies research and teacher education.

(Re)listening to the audio produced intensities in my body. I felt a sense of strain in my body as she recalled being compared to junk food as well as when participants responded with shock (“wow”). I felt a sense of strain in that I felt/feel co-implicated in white supremacists' logics as I am located in a white body, which is normed. I am accountable to resisting white supremacist logics that attempted to commodify Junie’s embodiment.

Further, I sensed urgency in the last two seconds of the audio. This urgency came into relation with the knowledge that the participants had all offered critical attention to race and ethnicity, acknowledging how white supremacy can operate in and beyond social studies classrooms. Yet, in listening to Junie, these participants offered shock. That was their response to being in relation to Junie’s storying of her racialized experience. The knowledge gleaned and juxtaposed depicted a paradox for me, which only occurred in my listening to Junie and all the prosody (I.e., tone, speed, inflection, amplitude) associated with that listening.

Further, in (re)listening to the audio, her storying was juxtaposed with Junie’s comment (offered in the previous chapter) that history is not just “white and black.” Junie connoted that

other racial histories are marginalized. The power wrapped up in the slur attempts to codify who Junie is. Offering Junie's voicing of this slur (in comparison to just the transcript) felt like an ethical necessity, as I am accountable and responsible (Braidotti, 2019), as white social studies researcher and teacher educator, to shine a light on the ways in which Asian and Asian American students might experience schooling, and social studies specifically, in the West.

Listening to Junie was imperative, as reading the transcript sanitized the emotion (heard through the amplitude and pitch) in Junie's voice. Listening to the shift in amplitude and pitch were important for me to feel, to better garner how her words were in direct correlation to her becoming, as she traversed being conceived as both Asian and white as she navigated Korean and white spaces in her journey to become a social studies educator.

This sonic and sensorial engagement is an example of how researchers can stay close to their participant's enunciations, to pay better attention to the energy (e.g., sound) being produced by their social studies experiences and becomings. Furthermore, it is offering of the ways in which race is conceived and how her sound is a new place to pay attention and critically engage with the work of social studies education. I elaborate on these implications further in the conclusion. Next, I discuss the slipperiness of Sport in social studies.

## CHAPTER 6

### THE SLIPPERINESS OF SPORT AND SOCIAL STUDIES

*“The community cares far more about what I do on Friday nights than about what I do in the classroom Tuesday morning... Certainly it’s more exciting on Friday night, and they write articles in the newspaper about me about what happens on Friday night; they don’t really care that they are studying aggregate supply.”* - Fred, a Social Studies Teacher Coach (Conner & Bohan, 2018, p. 60)

This quote comes from Conner and Bohan’s (2018) research with social studies teacher coaches. This social studies teacher coach, pseudonym ‘Fred’, argues that “the community” does *not* “really care” what he is teaching; they care more about how he coaches “on Friday nights.” This comment connotes that social studies curriculum is second to Sport. Further, this comment plays into the discourse of the jock social studies teacher coach, because coaching Sport is proffered as more important than teaching social studies.

However, Fred’s comment stands in stark contrast with surveillance and policing of social studies curriculum by politicians and “the community” (e.g., Moms for Liberty). As noted in the introduction, over the past two years, politicians have claimed that children in Georgia are being taught Critical Race Theory (CRT) in social studies classrooms. This claim is not substantiated with quantitative or qualitative data. However, the claim positions social studies educators as actively teaching CRT, which these same politicians and “community” members argue is ‘divisive.’ For instance, Georgia’s governor, Brian Kemp, signed House Bill 1084, the “Protect Students First Act,” saying, “Here in Georgia, our classrooms will not be pawns to those

who indoctrinate our kids with their partisan political agendas.” Here, Governor Kemp argued that the teaching of CRT in social studies classrooms in Georgia is “partisan,” or prejudiced. Putting Fred and Kemp in conversation showcases the slipperiness of social studies. Is social studies a site for/of Sport? Or is social studies a site of political indoctrination?

With these questions in mind, I will first turn to the literature to unpack the slippery nature of stereotyping social studies teacher (coaches) and classrooms, and then I will demonstrate how that slipperiness did, and did *not*, occur during data generation with preservice social studies teachers.

### **Literature on Sport and Social Studies Educators**

The literature on social studies educators and Sport primarily focuses on social studies teacher coaches (Brown & Wilson, 2020; Chisholm, 2022; Chiodo et al., 2002; Conner, 2020; Conner and Bohan, 2018, 2021; Thomas III 2022a, 2022b; Wetter, 2002). Research tends to discuss how social studies teacher coaches are perceived by stakeholders (e.g., preservice teachers) as well as how the teacher-coach roles impact pedagogy (e.g., teaching methods and curriculum).

### **Perceptions of Social Studies Teacher Coaches**

Specifically, the research attends to perceptions of social studies relationship to teacher coaches (Chiodo et al., 2002; Conner & Bohan, 2021; Connors et al., 2000). This research seems to purposefully occur with preservice teachers (e.g., research is designed to determine preservice social studies teachers’ beliefs about coaching). For example, in 2000, Connors et al. surveyed preservice social studies teachers with a Likert style instrument at three midwestern universities and found that coaching was not a primary cause for becoming a social studies teacher.

Differently, Conner and Bohan (2021) surveyed 52 preservice teachers about social studies teacher coaches (SSTC). Of those 52 participants, they interviewed eight of those preservice teachers, and participants:

indicated that the SSTC phenomenon was prevalent both in their own high school experience as well as their student teaching experience. In fact, several stated that social studies teachers were more coaches than non-coaches. (p. 5)

Beyond their experiences with teacher coaches, Conner and Bohan (2021) found that the preservice teachers believed their ability to obtain a job teaching social studies was dependent on coaching. One participant said:

I know it's been really hard for a lot of my friends to get jobs. So they agreed to do anything they can to differentiate themselves. But especially in high school I know it's hard to do it without coaching. I don't know anyone that's been hired who is not coaching in social studies. (p. 7)

Here, Conner and Bohan's (2021) research highlights how preservice social studies teachers perceived a strong correlation between obtaining a job in social studies and coaching (hiring contingency).

Beyond hiring contingency, Conner and Bohan's research with preservice teachers showcased the assumptions of how social studies is taught (i.e., direct instruction) by social studies teacher coaches. For instance, Conner and Bohan (2021) included that one of their participants, Matt, espoused a common assumption about social studies teacher coaches' pedagogical choices:

Like they're a great coach ... You put them in social studies because that's sort of to me the easiest subject to teach ... like in layman's terms it's like memorization ... and you

know like the end-of-course test is essentially memorization, like there's no essay.

There's no higher order thinking. (p. 6)

Here, a social studies preservice teacher, Matt, seems to believe that social studies teachers use rote memorization, connoting this pedagogical choice as inferior to "higher order thinking."

Likewise, Chiodo et al.'s (2002) work with 174 social studies, science, and English preservice teachers at two southwestern universities (p. 12) compared the preservice teachers' perceptions about coaching and teaching (e.g., difference in attitudes about hiring contingency, perceptions about which disciplines best fit with coaching, beliefs about the value placed on coaching by administration) (p. 10-11). Furthermore, the scholars noted that "the preservice social studies teachers... showed a stronger interest in teaching and coaching than the other majors" (p. 14). This "stronger interest", in conversation with Conners et al. (2000) and Conner and Bohan's (2021) research around hiring contingency shines a light on the variability in preservice teacher's perceptions about social studies relationship to coaching.

### **Pedagogy of Social Studies Teacher Coaches**

Additionally, social studies scholars have researched the ways in which Sport is tied up in subjectivity and the pedagogy of social studies teacher coaches (Brown & Wilson, 2021; Chisholm, 2022; Conner, 2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018; Knowles et al., 2020; Thomas III, 2022a, 2022b).

Some scholars' research reifies the deficit views of social studies teacher coaches' pedagogical choices. Conner and Bohan's (2018) research with social studies teacher coaches highlighted how coaching decreased the amount of time that participants had to curate social studies lessons. For example, the scholars wrote:

David stated that the hardest part of being a SSTC was balancing his time between roles. He lamented, ‘There just aren’t enough hours in the day to get it all done.’ He admitted to cutting corners in the classroom to fulfill his coaching role. There are some times during football when I have to give the kids a worksheet so I can get some stuff done. And that’s not good but I ain’t gonna get it done. And I try not to do that but sometimes I have to and a lot of times I do that—put a video in or give ‘em a worksheet... ‘(p. 59)

In this excerpt, Conner and Bohan (2018) call attention to the effect of role conflict on the SSTC’s pedagogical choices (e.g., choosing worksheets and video to prioritize coaching).

Conner (2020) continues to research how coaching impacts SSTC’s pedagogical choices. In Conner’s (2020) case study research with three white, men social studies teacher football coaches in the southeastern United States, she also found that the three participants tended to engage in role retreatism. The social studies teacher coaches favored coaching over social studies due to an unequal rewards system that favors coaching in comparison to teaching social studies. Due to this role retreatism, Conner (2020) reported:

They [social studies teacher coaches] each utilized instructional strategies that allowed them to reduce grading responsibilities; they tended to rely on direct instruction, current events, discussion, and multiple-choice assessments. Moreover, participants admitted to conserving energy in the classroom for football; but they never appeared to slight their coaching responsibilities for their teaching duties. (p. 192)

In other words, Conner’s research demonstrates that her participants’ pedagogical choices centered the teachers’ needs instead of students, due to coaching.

Knowles et al. (2020) conducted a quantitative study of 3557 high school teachers from 44 states from a data set collected in April 2010 until January 2011. They argued that “coaches

disproportionately prefer lecture and textbook instruction while indicating less support for primary source materials” (p. 123). This argument positions SSTCs as less pedagogically sound than social studies teachers that do not coach.

Other social studies scholars (Brown & Wilson, 2021; Chisholm, 2022; Thomas III, 2022a, 2022b) move beyond deficit orientations and recognize how Sport coaching can have positive implications for social studies education. For instance, Brown and Wilson (2021) research attends to a first-year social studies teacher coaches' experiences negotiating teaching and coaching. Brown and Wilson (2021) proffer that the SSTC's familial rapport with sports (p. 11) and professional knowledge as a teacher transferred to their coaching (e.g., assessing athlete's skills) (p. 15). The scholars offer a framework for interrole symbiosis (p. 4), which includes making coaching education a part of teacher education, to help streamline the teacher coach relationship instead of having role conflict.

Chisholm (2022) goes further, recognizing the affirmative implications of coaching and for social studies education. Chisholm's (2022) autobiographical work shines a light on the pedagogical possibilities of Black teacher-coaches, such as “increasing the critical consciousness, self-empowerment, and racial healing potential for Black and Brown youth” (p. 181). In this way, Chisholm's research is a site of rupture, as he generatively contests the norms of the white, male social studies teacher coach as well as the unfair stigma associated with 'meathead' social studies teacher-coaches.

Similarly, Thomas III (2022a) theorizes a case study of Black male teacher coaches with Black Critical Theory, attending to how their Black families and communities produced a Black counterpublics, discourses and structures that oppose white supremacist logics. Some of the participants were social studies teachers, which is why this piece was included in this review.

Thomas III (2022a) argues that these counterpublics “provide a means for breaking out of the limits of antiBlack projection” (p. 22). Furthermore, he argues that these Black male teacher coaches’ counterpublics have positive implications for “youth knowledge” and curriculum (p. 24). This scholarship depicts how race matters, generatively, at the intersection of sport and social studies. Thomas III (2022b) elaborates on the positive implications of his case study with Black male teacher coaches (English and social studies educators) in another manuscript, focusing on the “civic mindedness” of Black male teacher coaches. This “civic mindedness” was specifically attributed their locations as Black men working beyond a traditional classroom context. For example, Thomas III (2022b) highlighted one Black male social studies teacher coach, Mr. Pemberton, who taught selflessness through Sport. Thomas III (2022b) argued, “He [Mr. Pemberton] utilized after-school athletics as a space to foster critical multicultural unity and racial literacy to promote equitable outcomes.” Put differently, Thomas III (2022b) depicts how the sustainable civic pedagogies of the Black male SSTC. In this way, Thomas III’s (2022a, 2022b) research challenges most social studies research by offering affirming accounts of how Sport is generative for social studies.

### **Both/and**

Though the research is productive for understanding the impact of Sport on social studies teacher coaches, leading to implications for social studies classrooms, the literature does not discuss social studies beyond Sport. Sport is positioned as an appendage of social studies, whether generative (*potentia*) or detrimental (*potestas*). Furthermore, like the literature on race and ethnicity in social studies, there seems to be a trend, wherein social studies and Sport are used in tandem, becoming slippery. Particularly, there seems to be slips between stereotypes and assumptions about who teaches social studies (i.e., white men) (Busey & Waters, 2016; Conner,

2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018; Knowles et al., 2020), even when there are scholars offering examples that do not fit that norm (Brown & Wilson, 2020; Chisholm, 2022; Thomas III, 2022a, 2022b) and have data to showcase otherwise (Busey & Waters, 2016). This makes the fixedness of Sport in social studies feel exclusionary for women and racialized bodies, since they are not often discussed or highlighted in research, unless positioned as marginalized.

The literature follows this exclusionary slippage between sport, social studies, men, and whiteness (Busey & Waters, 2015; Fitchett, 2010). Specifically, Conner and Bohan (2018, 2021) and Conner's (2020) research discusses gender disparity as an implication of an unequal rewards system that leads to a trend in white, men coaches in high school social studies positions. The research calls for an attention to hiring practices by administration, but again, there is a sense that Sport is permanently attached to social studies. For instance, Conner and Bohan (2021) call for more supports, such as kinesiology courses (p. 8), to support preservice social studies teachers in balancing being coaches and social studies teachers.

Likewise, Brown and Wilson (2021) argue "the separation between university teacher education programs and coaching education programs may actually serve to perpetuate the divide between teaching and coaching" and that scholars should research the "absence of coaching education for preservice teachers" (p. 20). Brown and Wilson's (2021) positioning the lack of coaching education as a "divide" connotes that coaching preparation is important for teacher preparation. With the knowledge that social studies, as an academic discipline, has the highest proportion of teacher coaches (in comparison to English education or math education), this positioning in some ways reifies this phenomenon instead of questioning structures beyond hiring practices that lead to the inequity of many social studies positions being held by white men who coach. This leads to a sense of stasis. It is being, there is no becoming differently for

social studies --different being the idea that the social studies teacher coach might become less of a phenomenon.

This attention to stasis is not to say that the social studies teacher coach is a negative location or inherently wrong or bad. As noted earlier, Chisholm's (2022) and Thomas III's (2022a, 2022b) work with teacher coaches offered insight about the generative possibilities of Black teacher coaches in social studies classrooms. In this way, the social studies teach coach could be a beneficial subject position. However, to this point, *much* of the social studies research proffers a particular image of the social studies teacher coach (white, men).

Additionally, the literature on the relationship between Sport and social studies is somewhat stigmatizing, as it is usually articulated as deficit in relationship to the types of learning strategies (i.e. direct instruction) that are found to be commonly employed by social studies teacher coaches (Conner, 2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018). A better move, which I will offer later, is the both/and relationship, in comparison to treating the phenomenon of the social studies teacher coach within the binary of good/bad.

Here I have traced how the literature reinforces the relationship between social studies and Sport, as an assumed relationship. Through collaging, talking, and photographing (and even just screenshotting), my participants depicted the ways in which sport *was* and *was not* linked in very particular ways to social studies, highlighting how this relationship between Sport and social studies is actually quite rocky. In what follows, I will discuss moments when Sport bubbled up for preservice social studies teachers *and* how participants *disrupted* the notion that Sport was synonymous with social studies or stigma. Thus, in what follows, I will highlight how negative stereotypes and assumptions about social studies and Sport were reified as well as when social studies and Sport did not fit the stereotypes and assumptions.

## What Was Produced Through Posthuman Sound and Listening

Throughout the work with teacher candidates in this study, I found that Sport was not an immediately pressing component of social studies education for most of the preservice social studies teacher participants, though the literature positions the relationship between social studies and coaching as having some semblance of permanence. For instance, Sport was *not* mapped *as* or *in* social studies by any of the participants in the first focus group. The only time Sport was discussed in the first focus group, was in relation to Ron's embedded location as a wrestling coach, which I will discuss further later. The lack of attention to Sport in the mappings of social studies (Figures 8, 9, 10, 11, 12) as well as the first focus group showcases that Sport is not at the forefront of the preservice teachers' thoughts or conceptions of social studies when directly asked what mattered –whether that be what they believe social studies is, has been, or should be. Instead, the stickiness of sport and its duration showcased how Sport came to matter in very particular ways.

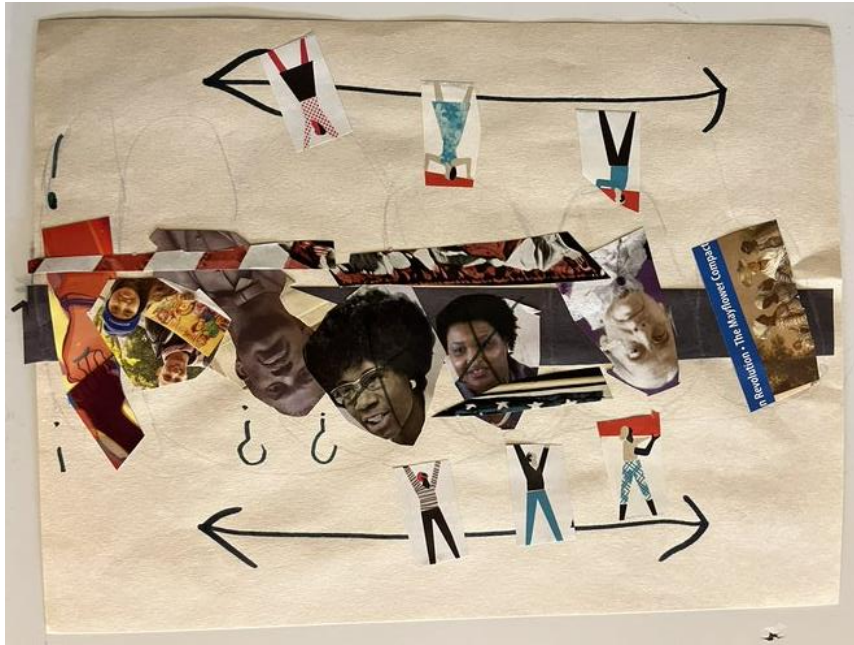
### Figure 8

*Junie's Mapping of Social Studies*



**Figure 9**

*Ron's Mapping of Social Studies*



**Figure 10**

*Sydney's Mapping of Social Studies*



Figure 11

Stevie's Mapping of Social Studies

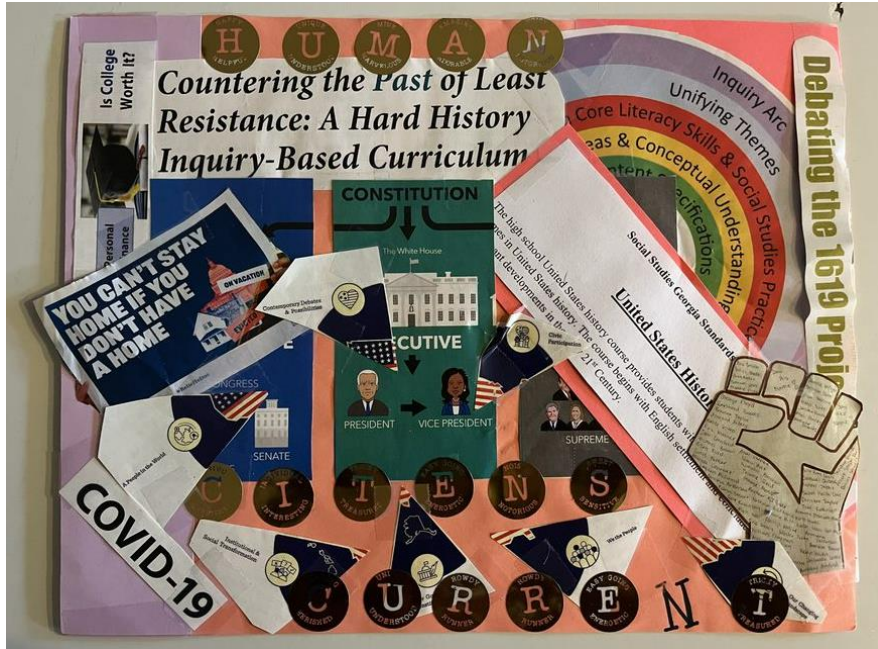


Figure 12

Blair's Mapping of Social Studies



Social studies and Sport *did* bubble up in some images in the photovoice submissions, one of which led to a conversation about experiences with social studies teacher coaches as students and becomings (e.g., experiences during hiring process) as preservice social studies teachers. Furthermore, Sport was offered as a generative site of inquiry. In this way, the preservice social studies teachers highlighted that social studies and Sport are not inherently linked but slipped and overlapped in particular ways in the teaching (teacher and curriculum) of social studies. In this way, I theorized with Braidotti's conception of power that Sport operated as both potestas (constraining or oppressive power) as well as potentia (affirming or generative power) for preservice social studies teachers. Their contributions, photographically and conversationally, at moments *reified* how slippery Sport becomes, entangled in social studies education, and the participants *contested* the literature on Sport, undermining the notion that Sport is negative and that Sport coaching is necessarily tied to social studies. Next I will unpack how Sport was generative (potentia) and constraining and oppressive (potestas), all at once.

### **Sport as Potesta in Social Studies**

Several of the preservice social studies teachers noted that they experienced negative encounters with social studies due to the slipperiness of Sport. In this instance, the slipperiness led to Sport being (seemingly) prioritized over social studies. In particular, Blair shared how Sport impacted her experiences as a student in social studies courses. The experience impacted her conception of social studies, and social studies teacher coaches in particular. Additionally, several of the preservice social studies teachers noted the pressure of hiring contingency or recognized how hiring contingency appeared to be operating in schools. The preservice social studies teachers had the assumption or knowledge that they were only going to be hired, or were more likely to be hired, if they offered to coach Sport and teach social studies. In what follows, I

will specifically highlight how Sport was potestas in their experiences as students and as preservice social studies teachers on the job market.

### ***Experiences as a Student Shaping Negative Perceptions of the Social Studies Teacher Coach***

Blair highlighted how the social studies teacher coach operated as potestas, or limiting, in her learning of social studies. Blair said:

I will say that. I think one of the reasons I hated history so much in high school is because all of my teachers were coaches, and none of them cared about the content. They were there to coach and it was so boring.

Blair seemed to connote that her social studies teacher coaches focused more on coaching Sport, leading to the marginalization of the social studies curriculum. This aligns with the literature on role retreatism, or the prioritization of one role (teacher or coach) at the expense of the other role (Conner, 2020). Beyond the obvious favoring of Sport, Blair seemed to articulate that this led to her social studies classes being “boring.” Though the literature does not articulate that role retreatism leads to boredom, Conner (2020) did find that her participants, social studies teacher coaches, showcased role retreatism. Further, some research (Knowles et al, 2020) has found that social studies teacher coaches lean on direct instruction (i.e., lecture, worksheets) in comparison to student centered instruction. Blair’s experience seemed to reflect stereotypical negative portrayals of the social studies teacher coach.

### ***Experiences as Preservice Social Studies Teachers on the Job Market***

Beyond the participants’ experiences as students with social studies teacher coaches, Sport also negatively slipped into the preservice social studies teachers’ becomings --in this case the hiring process. Like Conner and Bohan’s (2020) research on hiring contingency, or the belief that you have to coach in order to be hired (p. 2), some preservice social studies teachers felt a

sense of pressure to coach. Differently than the literature on Sport and social studies, participants showcased agency in navigating gendered and raced norms of stereotypes of social studies teacher coaches.

The participants discussed the impact of Sport on their experiences with hiring practices as preservice social studies teachers. Blair noted that “social studies is pretty coach heavy, especially like, interview wise.” Blair’s comment contributes to the slipperiness of social studies and Sport, by linking the weight (“heavy”) of Sport upon the field of social studies. Junie further supported this assertion by offering an experience she had during a social studies interview:

There's an interview I did and like every single person that it that was in the interview with they're all in the social studies department, and they were all men. And I was like, ‘Whoa, what is going on?’ And they were like, ‘Yeah, like, we're all coaches.’ I'm like, Ah, that's like, they were like, and they were joking around. I think. They're like ‘you want to coach football?’ I was like, ‘yeahhhh,’

Junie recounts being surrounded by men social studies teacher coaches in an interview. She also noted they joked about her becoming the football coach and her joking reply. There seemed to be a precedent about the role of the social studies teacher being a coach. Coaching while teaching increases the workload and expectations for an incoming (preservice) social studies teacher, which could be potestas, or oppressive, due to the time commitment and pressure to win in Sports (Conner, 2020).

Similarly, Blair substantiated Junie’s interview experience with her own experiences on the social studies job market. She said, “I've been asked at every interview. ‘Are you willing to coach? What do you coach?’ you know, and I'm like, ‘Okay.’” Blair seemed to experience a high

frequency of inquiry around her willingness to coach, producing a sense of pressure, or potestas, to coach.

Like Blair, this pressure, assumed or real, continued to slip into Junie's experience on the job social studies job market. For instance, Junie said:

... I like asked in my interviews, like, I like framed it as a 'Do you guys have like extra?' I don't know exactly what the term I said was like 'Do you guys have extra things that you require from first year teachers?' And then they're like, 'Well, what do you mean?' I was like, 'I specifically just' I was like, '*I just don't know if I'm like, wanting to coach anything.*' I said I would [do] sponsored stuff, like sponsored club but I was like, 'I don't know if I would be the best coach' and they're like, '*Oh, no, no, like, you don't have to if you don't want to.*' That's the place I actually ended up taking the job... [emphasis added]

Junie explains that she asked to not coach in an interview for a social studies position, and her interviewing school offered her a social studies job. Junie's question during the interview illustrates the slipperiness of Sport, as she assumed that she would have to coach. Yet, as she notes, her hiring team said, "*Oh, no, no, like, you don't have to if you don't want to.*" In this way, Junie showcases her own assumptions about social studies and Sport.

Blair also articulated some of the barriers, or potestas, that some bodies (i.e., women's bodies) experience, even when there is hiring contingency at play in social studies. For instance, Blair recalled how her embodied location was marginalized from the subject location of the social studies teacher coach when in conversation with one of her mentor teachers' colleagues.

Blair said:

Yeah, I actually had a teacher at the middle school, my middle school placement because there was a job opening, but I've applied for it and I probably got, but he told me, 'You

shouldn't even apply because *you're not a coach.*' Oh, like straight up. One of the teachers in the Social Studies Department said that to me. And I was like, he was like 'You need to--', because he said, in order for me to get a job, I need to either get my Sped GACE so I can teach special education or figure out some sport I can coach and I was like, 'Well, I mean, I can coach tennis. Like I played tennis.' He was like, '*Oh, I just didn't think that you were the type to coach*' and I was like, 'I also coach a special needs cheerleading team.' [emphasis added]

Blair's story exposes the ways in which some people are assumed to be social studies teacher coaches, and some bodies are not "typed" as social studies teacher coaches. Blair, a white woman, was not perceived as a coach by her colleague, who she describes as a man. Moreover, she is told by her colleague, a man, not to apply, *and* he explains to her why she is not qualified. However, Blair, in her storying of the conversation offers that she is qualified to coach tennis and cheerleading. Though Conner and Bohan (2021) highlight the need to engage administrators in relation to hiring contingency, Blair's experience with hiring contingency underscores the need to attend to gendered stigma beyond administration (e.g. departmental or school exclusionary practices). Additionally, Blair's story depicts how restrictive Sport in social studies can be for certain bodies.

### ***Reflecting on My Own Negative Experience with Sport and Hiring Practices***

Listening to my women participants' experiences with interviews, made me remember my own negative experiences with the assumptions about which bodies are social studies teacher coaches. After graduating with *my* bachelor's in social studies education, I drove to schools that I was interested in working at, showing face and leaving my resume. In particular, I remember walking into a middle school in rural Tennessee. I planned to speak with a principal about an

open social studies position. He was in a meeting, so I left my resume –one Morgan Tate looking to teach social studies. I remember walking back to my car to drive to the next school. I unlocked my used Nissan Sentra and heard a buzz, as the screen of my phone lit up. I did not recognize the number calling, but I answered. The middle school was calling me back. The principal had a minute to speak in person, if I was still in proximity. I turned around and walked back inside the school, my black suit feeling hot in the southern summer afternoon. The secretary opened the principal’s office door, and a middle aged, white man looked up with a smile, which quickly faltered, as his shoulders seemed to quickly slump. The air shifted. I knew immediately. There was a slipperiness with my dual gender name, much the same that there was a slipperiness with social studies and Sport. Indeed, the secretary had not told him that the Morgan Tate that left the resume was a woman. The principal was polite and chatted for a few more moments. Eventually, I remember him saying something to the effect of, ‘Well, we need to hire a football coach for the [middle school] football team, and when I saw your resume, I was impressed. But it’s a football position.’ I also remember hiding my frustration by chuckling and offering to coach. The principal chuckled as well and noted the school might have funding for a part time push in for reading during Response-To-Intervention (RTI). I promptly thanked the principal for keeping me in mind and left the school. I was fuming that coaching mattered more than social studies to this principal.

The experience with the first principal was not surprising to me, even so early in my not-yet career. I actually began my undergraduate career in English, as I had been disciplined to believe that women did not teach social studies. My intention had been to teach English abroad, as I didn’t believe that I could obtain a social studies job at home, in the South, due to my own experiences as a social studies student. As a student, my social studies experience was gendered

and raced, as I had three white, men social studies teachers<sup>29</sup> in high school. Looking back, this trend showcased how important representation was in my student experience -as well as the ability to rupture the taken for granted (i.e., white, men social studies teacher coaches).

The trend did not necessarily go away in the department in which I taught, though I was an example of a social studies teacher who did not coach and was not a man (though I am a white woman, which is the leading subject location for public educators in the United States). For example, the high school social studies department I taught<sup>30</sup> in for three years had six men<sup>31</sup> and three women.<sup>32</sup> Honestly, I was surprised to be hired by the second principal and administrative team, as the school was in a rural area and underfunded, which, according to the literature in social studies (Knowles et al., 2020, p. 120), is a prime site for social studies teacher coaches. Indeed, over the three years, I co-taught United States History, I collaborated with four different men<sup>33</sup> and one woman.<sup>34</sup> Most of the men coached a sport. Thus, my embedded locations seemed to mirror the literature, though my embodiment and lack of coaching ruptured the stereotypical social studies teacher. Next, I turn to other sites of rupture.

### **Sport as Potentia in Social Studies**

Yet, even as some of the social studies preservice teachers experienced Sport as potestas, some of the participants recognized how Sport was positive in their social studies pasts and (possible) futures. Ron and Stevie both discussed their desire to coach Sport. Additionally,

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<sup>29</sup> This was three out of four teachers. Two of the men coached. My only woman teacher did not coach.

<sup>30</sup> I, a white woman, did not coach, though I sponsored the student government association, co-sponsored prom, led pep rallies, and helped with graduation. Generally, I was expected to do care labor, such as organizing and creating cheer and excitement.

<sup>31</sup> Five of the six men were white. Three of the men coached.

<sup>32</sup> The women did not coach; they each sponsored different student organizations.

<sup>33</sup> Three of the four men were white. Three of the four men coached.

<sup>34</sup> The woman did not coach; she did sponsor a writing club.

Sydney emphasized her positive experience with a social studies teacher coach, as a student. Finally, Sydney unpacked how she conceived Sport as a site of community inquiry. Thought with Braidotti's theorization of power as *potentia*, these preservice social studies teachers conceptualized Sport as producing generativity.

### ***Preservice social studies teachers Desire to Coach Sport***

Some of the participants were excited about becoming social studies teacher coaches. As I noted earlier, Sport bubbled up in the photovoice submissions as well as the focus group debrief of the photovoice. As I highlighted the methodology chapter, the prompt for the photovoice exercise was:

The aim of this photovoice is to take approximately 1-5 photographs of material relations you believe matter in social studies education. When I say material relations, I mean humans, more-than-human entities, discourses, etc. And by mattering, I mean that they hold importance or have some sort of value.

In response to that prompt, Ron included two images, already taken (screenshot), that explicitly showcased his relationship to coaching wrestling. The first image (Figure 17) shows two people grappling, with bleachers and more people in the background. It appears to be a wrestling match. The caption reads, "Struggling Together."

**Figure 17**

*“Struggling Together” Photovoice Submission from Ron*



Ron is in the photo, stretches his arm up, seemingly mimicking a move. The struggling together is left ambiguous, and I am left to assume, based on my knowledge that Ron is a wrestling coach, that Ron is struggling through the match with one of the students. For Ron, this image conveys material relations, such as coaching, wrestling, and social studies, as being important. Though the literature in social studies supports the notion that Sport is important, due to social studies, as a discipline, having a high proportion of social studies teacher coaches, social studies is usually linked to white men who coach football. However, in this case, it is a white-passing Latino man coaching wrestling, disrupting the slippage between white men, football, and social studies. Though Ron still holds the position of social studies teacher coach,

his embodied (white passing Latino man) and embedded (wrestling) locations depicts the ways in which the SSTC stereotypes, which can be potestas, fall flat (on the mat).

Furthermore, like Blair's experience as a student, most literature in social studies articulates the social studies teacher coach as relying on teacher centered instruction (Conner 2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018). However, as seen with Ron's submission (Figure 17) undermines this pedagogical assumption, as Ron thinks "struggling together" is important. Connecting this back to his mapping of social studies (Figure 9), Ron maps struggling through some critical material, such as the erasure of Black and Brown bodies in social studies education. It seems that Ron's "struggling together," wherein he supports students, through coaching on the mat or coaching in class, is *potentia*, produced by the relationship between his being a social studies and Sport. His work is sustainable, as he attends to the relational nature of social studies ("struggling together"). As Braidotti (2006) wrote:

Interconnectedness and the argument that 'we' are all in this together, are best served by a nomadic, non-unitary vision of the subject which has dissolved the boundaries of bourgeois individualism and redefined itself as a collective, multi-layered yet singular entity. (p. 272)

Ron does not segregate himself from his students, as an individual. He articulates himself alongside his students, working towards something, "struggling together." Furthermore, Ron defies the assumptions and stereotypes about social studies teacher coaches as meatheads and jocks (Conner, 2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018), *potestas*, that seem to be associated with the social studies teacher coach, by showcasing a relation and critical orientation to the mapping (Figure 9) and material relations (Figure 17) of social studies.

Likewise, Stevie discussed her own desire to coach Sport as a social studies teacher. For instance, Stevie said that she wanted to coach and offered to do so, saying:

...I played a bunch of sports up until, like 10th or 11th grade so I was, and I think just because like, we were talking earlier, the relationships [not dependent on grades] that students have with coaches I always thought was cool, so I thought it would be interesting. And the stipend.

Stevie seems to want to coach based on the relationships she feels she can build with students as a social studies teacher coach, in comparison to only teaching social studies. Further, Stevie noted she was interested in the pay associated with coaching (“the stipend”). Thus, the relational and fiscal component of coaching as a social studies teacher coach produced potentia for Stevie, as Stevie articulated the affirmative effects of the role of coaching for her.

#### ***Experiences as a Student Shaping Positive Perceptions of the Social Studies Teacher Coach***

Beyond being a social studies teacher coach, Sydney talked about her experiences as a student with a social studies teacher coach as positive, or potentia. Sydney told the group:

The best teacher I ever had was a teacher who was also a coach, the baseball coach, um, but he was also an excellent teacher. He loved his content... He's actually currently the principal of that school now, but um, yeah, he was amazing.

Sydney describes her social studies teacher coach as “excellent.” Sydney’s experiences with a social studies teacher coach, as student, showcased the fallibility of negative stereotypes about social studies teachers that coach. Sydney does this by countering Blairs storying of social studies teacher coaches. Moreover, Sydney adds that the social studies teacher coach she had is now an administrator, which seemed to be a piece of evidence to further substantiate her former social studies teacher coaches’ excellence.

### ***Sport as Social Studies Curriculum***

During discussion of photovoice submissions, Sport slipped into discussion of curriculum, moving beyond the subject positions/locations. Sydney submitted two photos from a taekwondo tournament, which was held in a school. Sydney highlighted how the tournament itself depicted a myriad of material relations in and of social studies and offered an example of how Sport offered its own social studies lessons. I turn to both sets of relations next.

**Taekwondo Tournament as Social Studies Curriculum** Sydney showcased how Sport can be a site that affirms and crosses bridges, zigzagging between many racial, ethnic, and gendered locations. This was evidenced in Sydney's photo submission of a taekwondo match. People lined the railings, watching people compete below on the gym floor. Mats, uniforms, flags, and people show prominently in the space of the gym. The caption reads:

The Taekwondo Tournament taking place in the same gym. Called Battle Ground Atlanta, it is now the second largest Taekwondo tournament in the U.S. The confluence of different cultures and people can be seen, as well as the geographic confluence of Forsyth County and the city of Atlanta.

In the caption, Sydney explains that this is the "second largest Taekwondo tournament in the U.S." emphasizing how important Sport is in this context. Specifically, Sydney highlights how space (gym) and place (Atlanta and Forsyth) are in relation to the Sport of Taekwondo.

Furthermore, Sydney attends to the social studies of Sport --particularly the cross cultural connections produced by Sport ("confluence of different cultures and people can be seen").

Sydney's submission highlights the cultural importance of Sport and how it can cross boundaries (cultural and geographic). Sydney positions Sport, in this context, as sustaining culture, because

people from all over the United States come together to partake in a sport that originates from Korea.

Furthermore, Sydney read the tournament as a text, attending to the history of place juxtaposed with the tournament. Sydney said:

And like how just, I know South Forsyth has had or Forsyth County in general has had major issues with, um, you know white supremacy and chasing out minorities. My husband had just read *Blood at the Root* when I was there, which is all about like the racial cleansing in Forsyth County. So, and to see this like this Atlanta-based taekwondo tournament there with, I mean, it was so racially diverse, like it was just like so many different people like meeting in this one location. They had the American flag and then they had the Korean flag up. So that really kind of caught my attention.

Sydney explains how oppression (“white supremacy”) had been the norm in Forsyth County, acting as potestas (“chasing out minorities”). Sydney seemed to be proffering the tournament as as potentia, in the space, as it brought together a “racially diverse” group of people. Sydney even attended to the diversity in flags, highlighting that there was an American and Korean flag. Sydney’s attention to material relations (e.g., history, oppression, bodies, and flags) produced an understanding about the capacity for change in Forsyth.

**Figure 18**

*Photovoice Submission from Sydney*



**Sport Banners as Social Studies Curriculum** Furthermore, thinking with the tournament, Sydney began to theorize how Sport can be place based social studies curriculum, acting as a site of inquiry and sustaining a sense of heritage and community, producing potentia. Sydney photographed flags hanging on the cinderblock gym wall (Figure 18). The flags appear to highlight a myriad of sport championships, across a span of thirty years. Sydney’s caption reads:

Banners at South Forsyth High School showing state championships from 1994 to 2021. The banners also show the progression from AA to AAAAAAA, as well as a change in sports, from slow-pitch softball and cheerleading, up to boys' soccer.

**Figure 19**

*Second Photovoice Submission from Sydney*



Sydney's caption attends to change in relation to time ("1994 to 2021"), population (AA to AAAAAAA), and the various winning sports (flags). Sydney explained her submission:

One thing I wanted to mention number nine that I took, there's not a very exciting photograph, but it was really cool because you could see on the gym wall, like starting in 1994 it was like, I can't read what it was it was like might have been cheerleading, but the double way, state champions and as you go down, you can see it going from double A to quadruple A, to like 7A [Stevie says something] see the school grow and you can even see the sports change because it starts out it's all cheerleading, and then in 2021 it was like boys soccer state champion, *so I thought that was like be a really cool way to like bring the kids in and actually show them like, 'look you know, this is your school' and you can plot out like how it changed the school itself over time and look at the data.* [emphasis added]

Sydney articulated how she perceived the flags in the gym, as markers or change, to be instructive for social studies. Sydney honed in on the relationship between the divisions (“from double A to quadruple A”) espoused on the flag and the population of the school portrayed change. For instance, Sydney’s submission of the hanging Sport flags map gender, competition, and population, attending to shifts over time. Sydney’s photograph showed the ways in which Sport can become social studies, a site for place-based inquiry.

### **Both/and**

The literature on social studies and Sport (Brown & Wilson, 2021; Chiodo et al., 2002; Conner, 2020; Conner & Bohan, 2018, 2021; Conners et al., 2000; Fouts, 1989; Knowles et al., 2021; Thomas, 2022; van Deraa & Schug, 1993; Wetter, 2002) tends to perpetuate a stable relationship between social studies and Sport. However, through data generation, primarily in the photovoice exercise and debrief focus group, the preservice social studies teachers depicted how Sport operated as both potestas and potentia in their becomings as social studies students and preservice teachers.

Further, research on the topic tends to focus on the image of social studies as white, men football coaches. However, none of my participants embodied this specific archetype. Ron, a white passing Latino man, coaches wrestling. Stevie, a white woman, wants to coach to build relationships and receive a stipend. Blair, a white woman, is open to coach tennis, though she was told she was not the ‘type’ to coach. Thus, none of the participants fit the archetype of the social studies teacher coach, and yet, there was a spectrum of responses for who wanted to teach social studies and coach, highlighting how varied the preservice social studies teacher participants felt about their relationship to Sport as becoming social studies educators.

Additionally, the literature on Sport and social studies tends to paint social studies teacher coaches as coaches first. Though this is logical, if findings support participants' own focus on coaching in comparison to teaching social studies, it also reduces capacity to discuss students' experiences and perceptions of social studies teachers coaches as in/effective social studies teachers. As Sydney noted, she had an "excellent" social studies teacher coach. Thinking with Sydney's experience as a student, social studies education research could benefit from research on students' perspectives on social studies teacher coaches, (re)focusing on students' learning of social studies --not just the subject position and methods employed by social studies teacher coaches.

### **Unsettling the Equivocation of Sport and Social Studies**

Whether on social media, in folk' social imaginary, or in the literature, social studies and Sport seem slippery, as though they are tied together, and at moments, even interchangeable. In working with preservice social studies teachers, it became obvious that Sport was not foundational in their conceptions of social studies.

Instead, the participants seemed aware of Sports impact on social studies for particular bodies and in particular situations. For instance, Sport became important in discussion of stereotypes about the social studies teacher coach (e.g., Stevie discussing social studies teachers that are baseball coaches) and hiring practices (e.g., Blair being positioned as not the 'type to coach). Additionally, Sport became a productive site for inquiry (e.g., Sydney theorizing how gym décor could be used as a teaching tool). The specificity of when Sport matters in relation to social studies is important for rupturing the notion that social studies and Sport are necessarily linked.

It becomes important to query the relationship between social studies and Sport, particularly in the context of high teacher attrition and burnout, as teachers, coaches or not, continue to work under heightened political pressures and the weight of a global pandemic. Sport does not have to be an added pressure for preservice social studies teachers as they enter the field. As the participants showcase, there can be valid desire to coach (e.g., stipends). Whether in the field or on the field, Sport is not a totalizing tenet of social studies.

## CHAPTER 7

### CRITICALLY LISTENING TO THE SLIPPERINESS OF SPORT

In the last chapter, I traced the current literature on social studies and Sport, elucidating the ways in which potestas –assumed (stigma) and real—and potentia were bound up in the relationship between social studies and Sport. Then I theorized the artifacts from data generation with preservice social studies teachers with Critical Posthumanism, showcasing how sport *was* and *was not* linked in very particular ways to social studies. In doing this, my purpose was to highlight how the relationship between Sport and social studies is actually quite unpredictable. In this second microchapter, I will specifically showcase how sound from audio clips offered another entry point to theorize when and how preservice social studies teachers depicted what matters in social studies –again in relation to Sport. I will do this by addressing a conversation (previously touched on) amongst the participants about their perceptions of Sport (via coaching) based on their experiences and how that impacted their conceptions of Sports relation to social studies. This excerpt primarily involves Blair (28 years of age, white woman), Ron (24 years of age, white and Hispanic man), and Sydney (46 years of age, white woman).

As a reminder from the last microchapter, I will offer a brief description of how sound is operationalized within this dissertation. The purpose of this chapter is to offer another sensorial experience (via sound) of what mattered to preservice social studies teacher as well as what an attention to that relation offers social studies education. In what follows, I will introduce you to an audio clip of sound from Blair, Ron, and Sydney, depicting how the prosody of the intermingling sounds was incoherent and slippery, via a spectrogram (a visualization of the

frequency of sound over time). Then I will theorize how a posthuman sound and listening, thought with Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism, oriented me to how power relations (potentia and potestas) became material in the sound (audio clip as seen in the spectrogram). Finally, I will *extend* the same argument offered in the last chapter about the slipperiness of Sport and social studies, garnering particular attention to how the participants sound out how Sport affected teaching social studies. Next, I offer context for sound.

### **Sound(s)**

As you may remember from the last microchapter, sound is energy that vibrates along a wave. Some people might tend to think of sound only being sensed through the ears. We are not always able or offered the chance to see sound, literally or metaphorically, through the ocular (eyes). As noted in my discussion of posthuman sound and listening, critical listening and hearing is perceived by multiple senses (Flint, 2021a, 2021b). It can evoke an attunement to space, place, memory, and power.

This attunement is indicative of the relationality that sound offers. For instance, in the previous chapter, in my discussion of the slippery relationship between Sport and social studies, multiple participants voiced their experiences with social studies teacher coaches. The conversation evoked a myriad of memories, thoughts, and feelings, all in energy that became vibrationally relational with other the bodies in the room, and the topic at hand.

Further, sound is contingent upon the space, place, and bodies that are in relation. The sound of breathing, the building's own air system, movement of wheels, coughs, and paper mingled with the voices of different participants. Further, these sounds were mediated by the recorder and then *my* own listening. Then comes your own listening. What I am saying is that each engagement is partial and chance, based on the politics of location. Our embedded and

embodied locations impact what and how we hear (non-essentialized). Thus, with Critical Posthumanism and posthuman sound and listening, our hearing cannot be constituted as absolute truth.

Furthermore, sound emerges continuously with and through bodies in space and time, going beyond the human sensorium. Sound can be felt beyond its initial vibrations, as rumination on its affectivity offers a myriad of intensities in our perception and memories of sound. For instance, hearing the recording of a person we have lost can be affectively charged, even after stopping the recorder.

Thus, sound is relational, contingent, and emergent, which may become apparent in this chapter. For the purpose of this microchapter, I will focus on Blair, Ron, and Sydney's discussion of social studies teacher coaches and how that offered an attention to power, and becoming, particularly in the context of their perceptions of social studies teacher coaches. Next, I turn to the media that I will use to unpack this: an audio clip and a spectrogram.

### **Audio Clip of Slipperiness of Sport and Social Studies**

Audio: [Sydney, Ron, and Blair Talk about SSTC.wav](#)

Above, I link a clip of audio, wherein Blair, Ron, and Sydney discuss how Sport impacted their social studies experiences and conceptions of the social studies teacher coach. This portion of the audio was situated in the photovoice debrief focus group, after a group discussion on the ways in which coaches have more informal relationships with students (e.g., Ron noted that as a coach he texts his wrestling students<sup>35</sup>) than teachers. In the figure below, I offer the transcript of the conversation in the audio.

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<sup>35</sup> The implicit difference would be that teachers do not have students' numbers and do not text or call them, as that is too familiar, and therefore taboo.

## Figure 20

### *Sport as Potestas and Potentia in Social Studies*

Blair: I will say that. I think one of the reasons I hated history so much in high school is because all of my teachers were coaches, and none of them cared about the content. They were there to coach and it was so boring. So it was just like...

Sydney: How wild.

Ron: I promise I'm not that guy.

[chuckling]

Ron: [laughing] I promise.

Sydney: The best teacher I ever had was a teacher who was also a coach, the baseball coach, um, but he was also an excellent teacher. He loved his content.

Blair: Yeah --

Sydney: --He's actually currently the principal of that school now, but um, yeah, he was amazing.

In the transcript, Blair highlights her negative experiences with social studies teacher coaches as a student. Ron notes that he (as a social studies teacher coach) is different than her experiences. Sydney follows up by explaining her best teacher was a social studies teacher coach. The transcript follows the flow of conversation, but it does not attend to the emotionality and affective qualities of the audio. I also include a spectrograph (visualization of the frequency of sound over time), to offer another depiction of the texture of emotion.

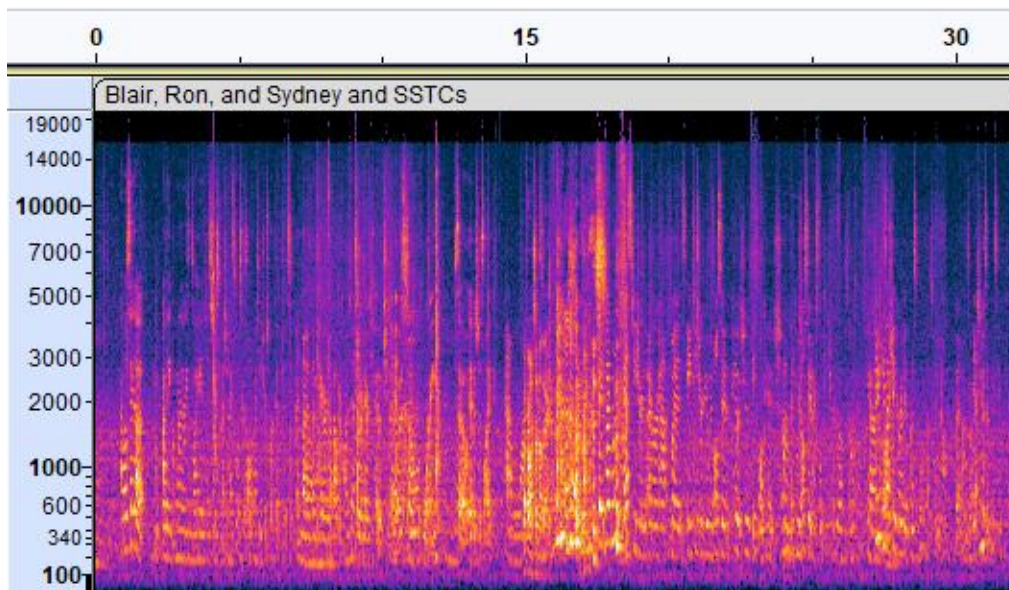
### **Spectrogram of Audio (Sound) of Sport as Potestas and Potentia in Social Studies**

Below (Figure 21) is a spectrogram of Blair and Sydney discussing their experiences with social studies teacher coaches as students as well as Ron's becoming as a social studies teacher

coach. Blair begins by offering how social studies teacher coaches operated as potestas, followed by Ron noting that he does not see his social studies teaching as potestas (“I promise I am not that guy”). Then Sydney offers an example of a social studies teacher coach as potentia (“the best teacher I ever had”).

## Figure 21

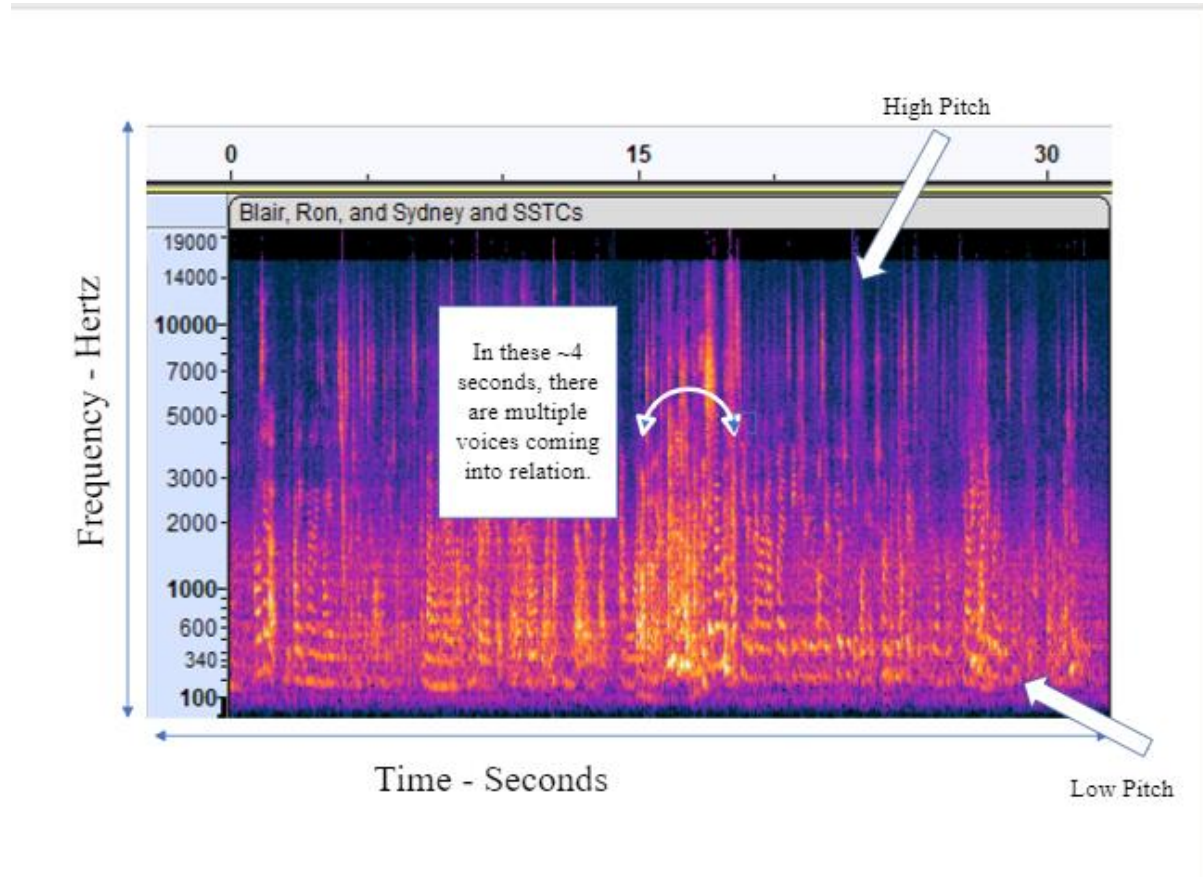
*Spectrogram of Sydney Ron and Blair Talk about Social Studies Teacher Coach*



Next (Figure 22), I diagram this spectrogram. The vertical axis displays frequency in Hertz and the horizontal axis represents time. Across the spectrogram, amplitude is represented by brightness (the orange color being the most intense with its brightness). The black background is silence, while the fucia and orange showcase the shifts in sound. This depicts a range of frequencies (lowest at the bottom of the display, highest at the top) and how loud events at different frequencies are. Loud events will appear bright and quiet events will appear dark.

**Figure 22**

*Diagrammed Spectrogram of Blair, Ron, and Sydney Talking about Social Studies Teacher Coach*



Most sound registers at a frequency of less than 3000 Hertz, before 12 seconds and after 20 seconds. However, there is more amplitude and changes in pitch between 12 and 20 seconds, showcasing a fair amount of texture (shifts and changes in amplitude and pitch as voices overlapped) between 12 and 20 seconds.

### **Theorizing the Slipperiness of Sport in Sound**

The audio (sound) of the conversation about social studies teacher coaches highlights the slipperiness of the relationship between social studies and Sport as well as stigma associated with social studies teacher coaches. All of the preservice social studies teachers had a relationship

with social studies and Sport. In Blair's sounding of her experience a student in social studies classes, she begins with noting that she "hated" social studies, stressing with inflection that "none" of the social studies teacher coaches "cared" about social studies (in comparison to coaching). Blair's emotionality in this clip highlights the stigma that Blair feels about the relationship between Sport and social studies. Though the transcript offers the languaging Blair's thoughts, it does not highlight the texture of her felt experiences (Cottingham & Erickson, 2020). The sonic quality of the audio and spectrogram better highlights how embodied her response is to the potestas she encountered as a student of social studies teacher coaches.

As Blair finishes noting her experience, Ron shifts to highlight that his subjectivity as a social studies teacher coach does not match Blair's experience. Looking at the spectrogram (Figure 21), this is where the transition to higher pitches and amplitude occurs (14-16 seconds). Voices mingle: Ron jokingly defending himself and participants laughing. Sydney follows up quickly, noting that her "best" teacher was a social studies teacher coach. There is a quickness to Sydney's response, the speed edging on defensiveness, as she noted how Sport was *not* potestas in her becoming. Each participant shines a light on how place, time, and bodies matter, how contingent their memories are.

In the audio, the preservice social studies teachers sound out how Sport impacted their perceptions of its relationship to social studies in their temporal locations. In this conversation, the participants sounding appears to depict the ability to challenge each other without fear of alienation. Thinking with Braidotti (2013b):

I define the critical posthuman subject within an eco-philosophy of multiple belongings, as a relational subject constituted in and by multiplicity, that is to say a subject that works

across differences and is also internally differentiated, but still grounded and accountable.

(p. 49)

In other words, the posthuman subject engages in diverse contexts, meeting the challenge(s) of facing complexity. Returning to the audio, Blair, Ron, and Sydney come to the conversation from very different locations, but they each offer a vantage point to unpack how Sport infiltrates and impacts social studies education.

### **Implications**

Theorizing Sport as potestas and potentia with Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism, as heard in the audio, is not a rejection of Sport, but an attention to the simultaneous possibilities for oppression (potestas) and relationality (potentia) in social studies in relation to Sport. Though Blair's sounding of how Sport was potestas in her experiences of social studies, Ron and Sydney addressed how Sport did not have to be detrimental. Ron offered this through joking about his own location, and Sydney offered this in her rebuttal. Theorized with Critical Posthumanism, Braidotti wrote that "border-crossings and non-unitary identities" (p. 67) are generative. In the context of the social studies teacher coach, the cross-border connection of Sport and social studies does not have to be harmful, if held accountable.

## CHAPTER 8

### LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD

In the previous chapter I showcased how my participants (Blair, Junie, Ron, Stevie, and Sydney), all preservice social studies teachers, navigated, advocated, and even avoided, the slipperiness of social studies and Sport. Like the chapters on race and ethnicity, my work with preservice social studies teachers depicted how complex identity markers, roles, and relations are in social studies education. In this final chapter, I will provide further discussion of the larger implications of the research conducted with these preservice social studies teachers in Georgia, their beliefs and perceptions of what matters in social studies, and what an attention to material relation offered.

In doing that, I will briefly remind you of the purpose of this study, my research questions, my review of the literature to date, and what came to bear amidst data generation. Afterwards, I will offer discussion on the implications of the complexity of identity categories (e.g., race and ethnicity) and roles and relations (e.g., social studies and Sport) in social studies, based on the empirical evidence produced in my interactions with preservice teachers in Georgia. Finally, I will offer recommendations for practice and research in teacher education broadly, and social studies education specifically.

#### **Retracing My Footsteps**

The purpose of this research with preservice teachers was to map, through artful methods, what these responsible and accountable social studies stakeholders (preservice social studies teachers) believe matters in social studies. This research with preservice social studies teachers is

particularly poignant amidst high teacher attrition for new inducted educators, rampant anti-Blackness coupled with political policing of how race and ethnicity (among other “divisive topics”) can be discussed in social studies classrooms, the death of over 40,000 people in Georgia due to a global pandemic, and the weight of many climate crises. These preservice social studies teachers have much to contend with as they practice in mentors’ classrooms and enter their own social studies classrooms. This led me to question:

1. *What matter matters to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*
2. *What is produced through an attention to material relations with preservice social studies teachers in Georgia?*

### **In Dialogue on Matter**

Assuming matter matters, I sifted through new materialist and posthuman research in social studies education (Adams & Kerr, 2021; Cho et al., 2021; Cook et al., 2019; Durham & Bronstein, 2020; Gunnarsson, 2020, 2021; Helmsing, 2016; Nelson et al., 2021; Nelson & Durham, 2021; Romano, 2019; Sonu & Snaza, 2015; Sundberg, 2014; Varga, 2022; Varga & Shear, 2022; Varga & van Kessel, 2022). In my analysis of the literature, it appears that much of the new materialist and posthuman social studies research attended to the more-than-human qualities of social studies classrooms and research (e.g., technology, curriculum), with little attention to the role of accountable bodies (e.g., preservice teachers and practitioners). There were only two pieces that foregrounded new materialist and posthuman theorizations of the human in social studies, conceptually or empirically: Isbell et al.’s (2020) attention to children’s agency and Errázuriz’ (2021) work with high school students’ subjectification. This is salient, as an attention to what new materialism and posthumanism offers curriculum and research is significant, but I also argue that research should be brought into relation to the specific *bodies* (I.e., preservice teachers, practitioners, students) that are *accountable* (Braidotti, 2006, p. 78)

and *responsible* (Haraway, 2016, p. 29) for helping set into motion the material relations (I.e., classroom, curriculum, affect, etc.) of social studies classrooms. My research with preservice teachers attends to this dearth of research by inquiring about the perceptions and beliefs of preservice teachers with a Critical Posthuman framework.

### **Critical Posthuman Knowledge**

As I explained earlier in the dissertation, critical new materialist Rosi Braidotti's Critical Posthumanism was generative in this research with preservice social studies teachers, as Critical Posthumanism recognized the emergent and relational quality of the subject (preservice teacher). An emergent and relational subject offers space for change, whereas a fixed subject is tethered to pre-determined conceptions of the human (e.g., rational individual), alienating the Other. Further, Critical Posthumanism charts how power is operating and how subjects navigate power, both when power is oppressive (*potestas*) and when power is sustaining the subject (*potentia*).

This navigation is indicative of the ethics of a posthuman subject (e.g., preservice teachers), as they attempt to sustain themselves in relation with humans and the more-than-human world within and beyond social studies classrooms. Together, Braidotti names this emergent process as becoming, or "the sustainable shifts or changes undergone by nomadic subjects in their active resistance against being subsumed in the commodification of their own diversity" (Braidotti, 2006, p. 137). In other words, becoming is an affirming process that refuses codification of subjectivity. In light of the aforementioned "complexities" (e.g., surveillance, climate crises, teacher attrition, etc.), it is imperative that we listen and hear what preservice social studies teachers believe matters, attending to how that is indicative of their emerging ethics, as they enter social studies classrooms.

### **Posthuman Sound and Listening**

Attending to power, ethics, and becoming in this research with preservice teachers, I utilized qualitative scholar Maureen Flint's (2021a, 2021b) posthuman sound and listening as methodology. Flint's (2021a, 2021b) work with sound on a university campus contested white supremacy and opened space to query belonging. In my own research, posthuman sound and listening allowed me to better attend to preservice social studies teachers' beliefs and attention to material relations in social studies. Sound and listening, the literal and figurative forms, oriented me to moments when power was operating in conversations, in the collage, and in the photovoice submissions. As Daza and Gershon (2015) wrote:

...sound method/ologies engage justice, politics, ethics, cultural differences (gender, class, sexuality, race, ethnicity, language, (dis)ability, etc.), ownership, and criticality differently, opening new im/possibilities. (p. 642)

In other words, sound (and listening) with a Critical Posthuman orientation complicated my engagement with data generation. I was more attentive to shifts, paradoxes, and complexity, as I listened across the audio, maps, and photographs.

Specifically, listening to the sounds of the preservice teachers' discussion of their experiences, perceptions, and relations (I.e. intellectual, bodily, affective) offered insight about the ways in which bodies move through space and time, negotiating power. It was not just what they were saying, it was *how* they were saying it.

Listening to preservice social studies teachers allowed me to better hear potestas (power that constrains/oppreses) *and* potentia (power that affirms) as the participants traversed becoming social studies educators (Braidotti, 2002, 2006, 2013). Sometimes I took note of this in listening to the participants reiterate a commonality (e.g., Blair, Sydney, and Stevie all explaining how Black Lives Matter showed up in their becomings). Sometimes this came to the

fore with the intensity (e.g., amplitude and pitch) of the preservice teachers' discussions. You may have noticed potestas in Junie's encounters with white supremacy, the shift in pitch, the strain to be believed when she recalled being compared to junk food. I heard memories of white supremacy leaving traces, becoming audible in her retelling. Differently, maybe you heard the effects and affects of potentia when Sydney explained that her "best" teacher was a social studies teacher coach, that Sport had been generative in her experience as student. Here, Sydney articulates the social studies teacher coach as a role that sustained her relationship with social studies. In her voice, there also appeared to be fond memories, a rapport with Sport. In the sonic micro chapters, I begin to tease apart how their voices mingle with other matter (discourses, memories, relations, desire), sounding out the complexities of their embodied experiences and their (many) roles in social studies classrooms.

My analysis, here, shows up in writing as well as the audio files and spectrograms (visuals of the energy propagating acoustically as a wave through time). I will discuss the implications of both what came to bear in data generation and how processes of data generation mattered, in what follows.

### **Discussion of Data Generation**

Thought with Critical Posthuman knowledge, preservice social studies teachers in Georgia highlighted how race and ethnicity and Sport mattered in social studies in relation to particular bodies, places, and temporalities. Through an attention to material relation, the preservice social studies teachers highlighted how complex and slippery social studies was --and is, undermining essentialized identities and roles. Even as stereotypes and assumptions of social studies may seem totalizing, listening to participants as we worked with matter, offered a multitude of examples of how stereotypes and assumptions are just that: theories about what is,

due to (perceived) trends between human and more-than-human relations (e.g., what it means to be a white preservice teacher or the desire to teach social studies and coach). Yet, these theories were disrupted by the preservice social studies teachers' experiences and beliefs, made visible through critically listening to the collages, photographs, and sound.

### **The Complexity of Essentialized Conceptions of Race and Ethnicity**

As I extrapolated in the chapters on race and ethnicity, the participants discussed, collaged, and photographed the ways in which their embodiment and their students' embodiments of race and ethnicity mattered, and *yet*, did not neatly conform to essentialized notions of race and ethnicity (e.g., people of a given race will automatically feel more comfortable with other people of the same race, identifying as an ethnicity of a historically marginalized group means centering your identity around oppression). Through these forms of data generation, it became plausible that race and ethnicity were not fixed entities, they were nomadic, as they were specific to bodies, place, and time. This is noteworthy, particularly in the midst of our current political climate, which weaponizes race and ethnicity by essentializing it, even the way social studies teachers are expected to teach about it (e.g., HB1084). The preservice teachers disrupted the notion that race and ethnicity can be codified. Their evidence showcased how this would be inaccurate. Further, an attempt to codify a particular race or ethnicity is a violent erasure of the multiplicitous way in which race and ethnicity matter for different peoples, whether that be preservice social studies teachers, practitioners, students, or community members. I will discuss that further next.

### ***The Codification of Race and Ethnicity***

As noted earlier in the dissertation, codifying is a process of reduction. This codifying, this reduction, of race and ethnicity in social studies can be harmful. For instance, in social studies teacher preparation, it has been my experience that we aim to teach students how to critically inquire about social studies phenomena. A codified conception of race and ethnicity necessitates condensing what can be thought. If there is only one conception of race and ethnicity, there is only one reference point, calcifying something imbued with much power. This codification has been utilized in violent ways by people and institutions in power (e.g., the State, the Academy).

As Michael Omi, an associate professor of Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies, noted in his talk, "Racial Classification, Colorblindness, and the Instability of Race" in 2018:

The very act of sort of defining racial groups is a process which is really fraught with a lot of confusion, a lot of contradiction, and a lot of unintended consequences as well. It's important for us to realize that government definitions of race have varied widely across time and space. There was a time in America, for instance, when it was possible to change one's race simply by crossing state lines. (n.p.)

Here, Omi highlights that racial classification, or codification, is contingent on geospatial phenomena, and is therefore unwieldy. Yet, as Omi also highlights, and I allude to earlier, race is imbued with power ("government definitions"). Omi shines a light on how codification has been used throughout space and time by the United States to reduce people to racial and ethnic markers. He uses the example of varying state laws on Blackness:

Persons, for example, were defined as black if they were 1/16 African descent in Kentucky, of 1/8 African descent in Florida, Indiana, Nebraska, North Dakota among other states, and 1/4 African descent in Oregon. We had this peculiar situation where

there was a time where individuals could be black in one state and, in fact, white in another and change race by crossing state lines. (n.p.)

Here, Omi notes how this codification (literally legal code), a form of violence meant to stifle Black peoples' lives, varied based on place (even though we know these numbers are socially constructed too).

And though this legal code may seem something of the past, something learned about in American history courses, something that does not affect modernity, the attempt to codify race and ethnicity is still weaponized. For example, these codes still held meaning in relation to marriage (e.g., interracial marriage) until 1967. Furthermore, these codes were brought back into discussion last summer, in 2022, when *Roe v. Wade* was overturned and Republican lawmakers openly discussed potentially rescinding the interracial and same sex marriage. This discussion was rooted in white supremacist codifications of race and ethnicity (potestas). Members of the U.S. House of Representatives resisted this particular codification of race and sexuality by sponsoring H.R.8404, the Respect for Marriage Act.<sup>36</sup> Though a legal code, this law, recognized the becoming of people previously marginalized by white supremacist and patriarchal systems and discourses, and thus this law, thought with Critical Posthumanism, producing potentia. Instead of reducing the capacity of people to love, it opened up space for people to love more freely. And this is just one implication of the ways in which the codification of racial and ethnic can have unexpected consequences.

With this implication in mind, let me return to the literature highlighted in the chapter on the complexity of essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity, to remind you of the

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<sup>36</sup> 169 Republican House members in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress of the United States voted against H.R.8404, the Respect for Marriage Act.

immediate stakes for social studies education. Boucher (2020), who writes about white preservice social studies teachers, claimed that white preservice social studies teachers have to pick between whiteness and their students of color. Listening to/with my participants, this totalizing binary is reductive, confining white social studies educators to oppression.<sup>37</sup>

Let's take Blair's attention to race as an exemplar. Blair's work in a social studies classrooms resisted the codification of herself and her students' racial identities. Blair, a self-identified white woman social studies preservice teacher, led a discussion about a Confederate monument between students of different races and attempted to do justice by her students by inviting their thoughts, aiming to build criticality about how matter matters differently depending on embedded and embodied locations (e.g., Blair described two of her students, Black girls, that said the monuments made them uncomfortable, and another student, a white boy, who engaged in reflexivity, noting he had never thought about it making someone uncomfortable).

In Boucher's positioning of race, context would be flattened. Based on Boucher's theorization of white teachers, Blair would have to somehow be choosing her white students in this situation. However, my work with participants showcased that nuance mattered in social studies. Though race and ethnicity were mattering in this particular discussion, her and her students were not easily boxed in, based on race or ethnicity. In this space and time, being white did not lead to Blair choosing to oppress her students.

Furthermore, based on Blair's recollection of the encounter, Blair noted that the two students, Black girls, who had been quiet for most of the discussion were "very appreciative" to

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<sup>37</sup> There are white teachers social studies teachers who use their classrooms, consciously and unconsciously, in ways that oppress their students based on race and ethnicity. I am implicated in this work as a white social studies teacher (educator), and I have participated in teaching mandated curriculum that is harmful for students. How it harms and to what degree depends on their embedded and embodied locations.

be invited to the conversation. I use Blair's recollection as evidence that Blair's teaching can be theorized as *potentia*, as it affirmed the students' sense of efficacy to vulnerably discuss personal, complicated relations with white supremacy in the form of Confederate monuments. And contrary to what some politicians in Georgia have argued, the students were able to handle the conversation, even if it unearthed uncomfortable knowledge.

In this way, codification of race and ethnicity -particularly in relation to stale notions of social studies teachers and students—was challenged. Yet, had they not been, Blair would not be able to sustain her desire for social justice, as she would be boxed into the caricature of oppressive white preservice social studies teacher. The implications of Blair's experience as a social studies preservice teacher showcased that the codified conceptions of race are much more liminal than sometimes offered in popular discourses, and it can be liberating to conceive them as such. I turn to discuss this further by highlighting the generativity of attending to complexity next.

### ***How the Complexity of Race and Ethnicity has Potential for Potentia***

In, and beyond, social studies, there is utility in attending to the nuance of how bodies are organized in space, place, time when discussing race and ethnicity. Beyond challenging totalizing conceptions of race, conceiving race and ethnicity as complex opens up new readings of our histories, presents, and futures, which also offers space for new social studies teachings. For instance, teaching race and ethnicity as complex in social studies teacher education challenges preservice social studies teachers to reflexively question their embodiments, conceptions of students' embodiments, and even how curriculum on race and ethnicity is conceived.

In the previous section, I unpacked how Blair challenged Boucher's (2020) theorization of white social studies preservice teacher. Again, as noted in the chapter on the complexity of essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity, Boucher (2020) and (some) other scholars tends to discuss particular racial and ethnic identities with particular topics, in/advertently engaging in the essentialization of race and ethnicity. For example, the literature in social studies tends to focus on immigrant status (Callahan & Obenchain, 2012), civic action (Jaffee, 2016), and English language acquisition (Cruz & Thornton, 2008) when discussing people (e.g., students) from Latinx communities. These are very important sites of inquiry. I do not want to dismiss the incredible need to talk about these topics or dismiss the material realities of folx that may struggle against oppression due to their race or ethnicity. However, in conversation with this literature, Ron -who identified as a white-passing Latino-- showcased what is offered when we recognize social studies teachers and students' embodied locations, and how embodiment is in relation to the politics of where we are embedded geographically and temporally. Understanding race and ethnicity as contingent, and Ron's subjectivity as emergent, his self-identification did not essentialize him, particularly in the context of social studies.

When filling out his self-identified race and ethnicity, Ron identified as "Hispanic & White." In explaining his collage, Ron offered:

I guess it's tough for me because I'm a white passing Latino. So it's like some thing's like going to get because I have parents who are working on their documentation that are residents that like, I've seen them deal with it firsthand, but at the same time among like, the outsider perspective, because I can walk away from that whenever I want.

Here, Ron explained that he understands the importance of ethnicity, and he recognized how he moves between racial and ethnic borders constructed by society. He understood how being

Latino mattered in relation to his family and their immigrant status. He also recognized the effects of “passing” as white in the United States.

However, in the context of *how* Ron took up space and time in the data generation, his ethnic identity was not codified in the ways typically discussed in social studies literature. Instead, Ron was very preoccupied with his subject formation in relation to wrestling, particularly in relation to coaching during my time engaging in the research process with him. He made a point to bring it up in his survey and in both focus groups, which made me believe that wrestling was a very important part of his identity. As noted earlier in the dissertation, Ron wrote, “Wrestled during my undergraduate degree in Canada as a college athlete. Sault Ste. Marie Ontario” in a section of the survey that asked participants if there was anything else they wanted me to know. Further, he included two images in his photovoice submissions about coaching wrestling. Critically listening to Ron, Ron’s continual attention to wrestling depicts his passion for wrestling –both as a competitor and coach. Does it have anything to do with being Latino or Hispanic? Ron never makes that connection. He is simply a whole human, who is complex, and has desires and passions that may or may not be explicitly rooted in his race or ethnicity. However, had I codified him based on his race and ethnicity, I may not have been able to see him as fully human, as becoming, as a desiring subject. If I had depended on the social studies scholarship to date, I may have only looked for the ways in which immigration, civics, and language mattered to him. In this way, Ron exemplifies, through his embodied location and his data generation, that his being Latinx matters, but he is not moored to preconceived relations (e.g., immigrant status, civics, English language acquisition).

**Implications** Positioning essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity as complex can create sites of rupture by deconstructing neatly packaged (yet violent) identities. Within social

studies teacher education, this has implications for unpacking discourses about people based on their (perceived) racial and ethnic identities, whether that is people in social studies curriculum or people in social studies classrooms.

Conceiving essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity as complex allows inquiry into the taken for granted metanarratives produced in curriculum and scholarship in social studies. For example, in the only articulations of Indigenous peoples in Georgia's curriculum position Indigenous peoples (no matter the tribe or nation) as something of the past, something common across the nation (Sabzalian et al., 2021; Shear et al., 2015). Put differently, no matter the geographic location or nation, Indigenous peoples almost exclusively end up located in reference to colonization. This codification of Indigeneity in the United States as something of the past is violent. Leaving Indigeneity (for over 500 nations in the United States) moored to the 20<sup>th</sup> century centers European history and erases Indigenous peoples' multifaceted pasts, presents, and futures.

Recognizing the nuances of essentialized conceptions of race and ethnicity could offer conceiving people that are Indigenous to the United States as multifaceted, beyond forced migration and death because of colonization. Though the history of oppression (and resistance) is imperative to teach, recognizing the complexity of race and ethnicity in relation to Indigenous peoples in the United States (as much of the curriculum currently centers European history) might offer inquiry about Indigenous people as people, instead of only subjects to violence. For instance, I (like Jones (2022)) think about all of the ways in which white folx, usually white men, get to be fully human.<sup>38</sup> Social studies gives much space to learning about Benjamin Franklin.

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<sup>38</sup> In the back of my brain, I think about the time I read, "The Approximate Size of My Favorite Tumor," by Sherman Alexie. Alexia identifies as Spokane-Coeur d'Alene. At the time, this attention to the politics of location was superfluous, though I now recognize it is important, due

He is conceived as a multifaceted individual, and his race and usually made invisible because he is normed as a white man. However, Sitting Bull is usually only studied in relation to *being* Indigenous, in his resistance to white supremacy and colonization. But what about Sitting Bull's becoming, throughout his life? How did he see himself situated in his family? How did his cultural values contribute to his community? How did he define and enact success in his particular place and time? These questions are lost in the mainstream codification of Indigeneity with European colonization in social studies literature (Sabzalian et al., 2021; Shear et al., 2015), yet another way in which the potestas of white supremacy and colonization obscure the multidimensional, multi-relational way in which people move throughout the world depending on their geospatial locations.

Likewise, in social studies scholarship, there is room to attend to embedded and embodied locations, particularly in the context of race and ethnicity. Again, thinking with Critical Posthuman knowledge, attending to embodiment and power differentials shines a light on the importance of specificity, in comparison to taking up essentialized notions of race and ethnicity. As noted with social studies curriculum, we need alternative models in social studies teacher preparation to help dislocate ourselves from traditions of erasure and violence, no matter our race or ethnicity. Nomadic becomings, fueled by affirmative conceptions of racial and ethnic relations, are important.

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to issues with medical access on reservations, in relation to histories of colonization and state in/action. Yet, when I read this, I thought about my papa, who was dying of cancer. I was particularly cued into the cruelty of cancer when I read it, due to my proximity to the immediacy of its effects. And now, in thinking about Alexie's work, in conversation with codification of race and ethnicity in social studies, I am attuned to how folx live and die, beyond the confines of prescriptions based on race and ethnicity. People, across races and ethnicities, live and die such multifaceted ways. What a dishonor to reduce our curation and conversation in social studies to tropes. What does that teach our students? What harm does that reproduce?

In the case of Indigenous studies in social studies, we might turn to Drs. Stephanie Tabibian (Shoshone-Paiute), Michelle M. Jacob, PhD (Yakama), and Leilani Sabzalian's (Alutiiq) work with the Sapsik'wałá Program at the University of Oregon. They offer teacher preparation that actualizes Indigenous ways of knowing and being, complimentary to what Braidotti (2019) might call the "collective construction of social horizons of hope" (p. 41). This program is affirmative and hopeful, as it defies majoritarian thought about who holds knowledge and which knowledge should be learned in teacher preparation, including social studies teacher preparation. As such, it operates as a site of becoming. In thinking about their work in the Pacific Northwest, I wonder what knowledge we could hold in the southeast, if we engaged (more) Cherokee, Creek, and Black elders in conversation about what they perceive as mattering in social studies education in Georgia amidst all of the complexities I have reiterated so far (e.g., teacher attrition, climate change) and others I cannot even yet conceive from my vantage point.

### **The Slipperiness of Sport and Social Studies**

Furthermore, the preservice teachers made strange the archetypical conceptions - sometimes proliferated in the social studies literature and sometimes shared on social media—of Sport and social studies. The archetype tends to be the football coach, and the football coach tends to be a white man. Further, this archetype positions social studies teacher coaches as only caring about coaching, as evidenced with the lack of pedagogical care taken with social studies planning and implementation (e.g., choosing worksheets over more elaborate learning engagements). This helps produce the figuration of the social studies teacher coach as inferior, creating stigma in relation to the subject location. For instance, Stevie noted, "There's definitely like Twitter jokes about it." Beyond Twitter, I have seen TikToks making fun of the social studies teacher coach. A content creator pretends to be a high school social studies teacher coach

who eats your food and focuses primarily on coaching, treating social studies as a side hustle, leading to rote memorization (e.g., book work) as the main pedagogical choice for curriculum. Some of the literature in social studies confirms facets of this stereotype (Conner, 2020, Conners & Bohan, 2018), and some does not (Chisholm, 2022; Thomas III, 2022a, 2022b). Likewise, participants showcased how Sport was generative and restrictive in their social studies becomings, which I discuss next. For the purpose of precision, I do discuss them separately, though *potentia* and *potestas* are simultaneously operating.

### ***Sport as Potentia in Social Studies***

The participants embodied locations and conversations unsettled archetypes of the social studies teacher coach and the stigmatized relationship between social studies and Sport. For instance, Ron and Stevie both showcased an enthusiasm for teaching social studies and coaching, even though they do not reflect the supposed archetype social studies teacher coach. Moreover, Sydney offered examples of the intellectual rigor that Sport can bring to social studies, whether that is via the social studies teacher coach or curriculum. This was foregrounded when Sydney photographed tapestries of a schools' sport programs in a school gym. She explained that the Sports décor could offer a historical inquiry of community at the school. In these ways, the preservice teachers portrayed how Sport does not inherently have a negative relation with social studies, though it can produce *potestas*, and seemed to for some of the participants. Thus, *potentia* and *potestas* are simultaneously operating, and some preservice teachers navigated them and felt them differently, based on the politics of their locations. I shine a light on *potestas* next.

### ***Sport as Potestas in Social Studies***

Yet, the preservice teachers also underscored the slipperiness of Sport by showcasing how it mattered in relation to their embedded locations (preservice teachers on the job market) and embodied locations (who gets to be a social studies teacher coach). For instance, even though Junie discussed that she asked not to coach in an interview, her storying as well as her peers stories showcased the pressure felt around hiring contingency in relation to becoming a social studies teacher and needing to coach. Junie seemed to feel she had to advocate for herself in her becoming as a social studies teacher, but not a coach (e.g., asking in an interview whether she had to coach).

Further, even though Ron and Stevie did not seem to face potestas about their embodied locations with administration during the hiring process, Blair did experience potestas about her embodied location not being enough. According to Blair's testimony, one of her mentor's colleagues positioned Blair as not the *type* to coach. This further depicted the slippery nature of Sport in social studies and its ability to produce potestas. In this case, it marginalized Blair, a woman social studies preservice teacher—something already rampant in social studies, particularly curriculum.

In this way, the participants showcased how Sport slipped into social studies, in both productive (potentia) and harmful (potestas) ways. Further, the preservice social studies teachers discussed how they nomadically negotiated the power dynamics that Sport produced as becoming social studies educators.

**Implications of the Slippery Relationship between Sport and Social Studies** In this way, a Critical Posthuman attention to the slipperiness of Sport and social studies recognizes how and when Sport can be generative, or not, for preservice social studies teachers and

practitioners. Further, in conversation with Chisholm (2022) and Thomas III (2022a, 2022b), Sport could also be theorized as an avenue for nomadic ethics.

***Social Studies Teacher (Coach)*** Though current research focuses on the entanglement of Sport and social studies, particularly with the social studies teacher coach, my research with preservice social studies teachers showcased that there is ample room to theorize how this does not have to be the case. For instance, there are plenty of social studies teachers that do not coach Sport. As noted, Junie's self advocacy during the hiring process alerted her administration to her awareness and resistance to be commodified as a coach if chosen for the position of social studies teacher. Social studies scholarship could benefit from research interventions that help social studies preservice teacher candidates develop a sense of efficacy about being experts and fit to teach social studies *without* coaching.

Furthermore, dislocating social studies from coaching is entangled in ethics. And this dislocation because coaching is inherently bad or wrong. As scholars in social studies have recognized (Busey & Waters, 2016) there seems to be a lack of women (and women coaches) while social studies has the highest percentage, as a discipline, of coaches. This leads to important questions about who tends to have the opportunity to teach social studies. Thus, dislocating social studies from coaching is based in a desire to confront exclusionary logics about which bodies are best for social studies. For instance, it could be beneficial to study hiring practices as institutions that do not offer coaching opportunities, in comparison to institutions that do offer Sport, shedding light on what administrators value from social studies teacher (coaches).

***Sport*** Yet, even in advocating research that seems exclusionary towards Sport, the preservice social studies teachers -as well as other social studies scholars (Hawkman & Van

Horn, 2019; Tannebaum & Cridland-Hughes, 2017)-- recognize that Sport offers rigorous intellectual opportunities in social studies. As Sydney oriented in the research, Sport can be offer attention to geospatial inquiries (e.g., which sports were offered, which genders have participated in sports, which sports are popular based on geography) that challenge students to think about the importance of context. Like with race and ethnicity, de-essentializing Sport from stigma could increase engagement with Sport as culturally important sites of social studies beyond its relation to the social studies teacher coach.

### **Artful and Experimental Methods**

The process of generating data about race, ethnicity, and Sport with preservice social studies teachers also offered insights for social studies research, and educational research more broadly. In particular, my work with the participants showcased how artful methods engage more of the sensorium.

### ***Methodologically***

Critically listening and hearing to preservice social studies teachers in Georgia offered insights on how relationships with matter *matters* in research. In my listening and hearing preservice social studies teachers in Georgia, two points become salient. First, being in relation with more-than-human matter with participants (e.g., magazines, tape, construction paper, staples, glue) offered alternative entry points for participants, in comparison to traditional semi-structured interview. Secondly, engaging participants in photovoice, a method that utilizes photography, allowed participants to reflect on their embedded and embodied locations, shedding light on how methods can reflect how personal research is.

**Alternative Entry Points** In a traditional interview, whether that be structured or semi-structured interview, the researcher(s) and participant(s) are in conversation, usually based on

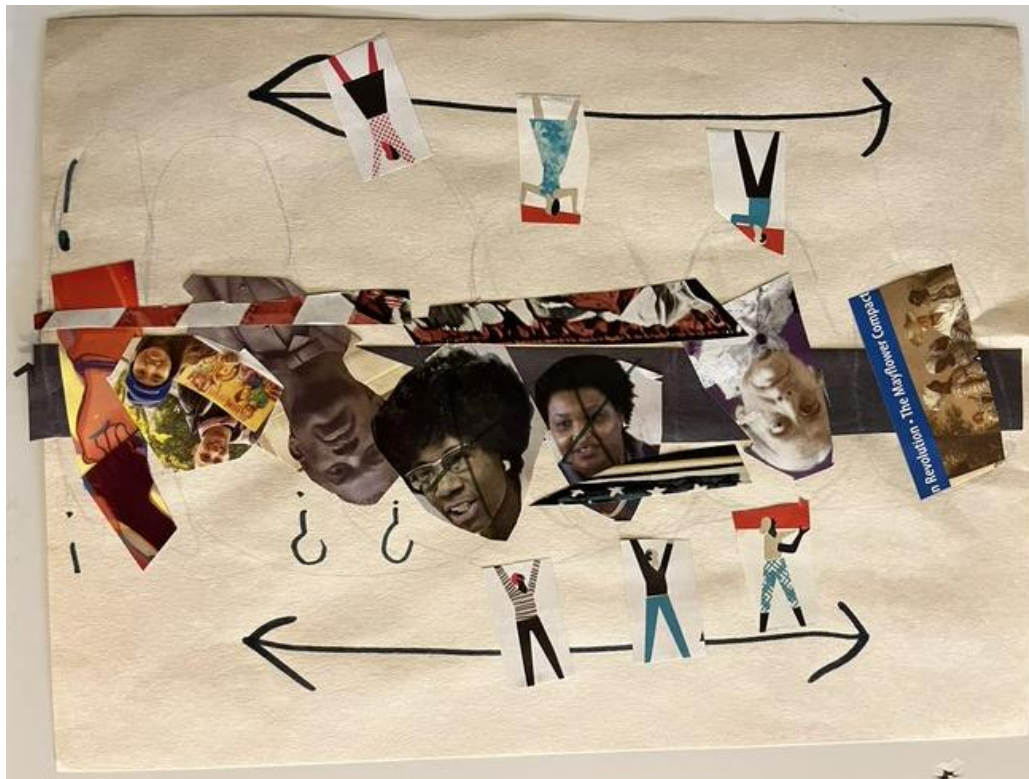
questions asked by the researcher and answered by the participants (Roulston, 2010). However, collage and photovoice brought an attention to relationality with more-than-human matter, through more-than-human matter (e.g., materials used to collage, photographic equipment). Additionally, an attention to the sonic qualities of the focus groups, beyond the words in a transcript, offered a different attention to participants. I unpack these implications next.

**Collage** Using collage as a form of interviewing during the focus group with preservice social studies teachers offered alternative entry points than simply asking questions. Collage allowed participants to work with *in relation with* matter and their memories, experiences, beliefs, and histories.

By introducing other matter, such as magazines, tape, construction paper, stickers, participants had the chance to construct visual representations, modifying the materials for their own creations, putting them in new relations. For instance, Ron explained that he saw his fellow participant, Blair, looking at “a picture of like an astronaut in space with an American flag.” They both noted that they spend a lot of time thinking about this flag for their mappings of social studies. Eventually, Blair put down the flag, and Ron took it and cut it up. He noted that his “snippets of the American flag” were the “last thing” he added to his collage (Figure 9).

**Figure 9**

*Ron's Mapping of Social Studies*



Ron's reconfiguration of the flag, placed on either side of his black through line, made strange the symbol of the United States. Juxtaposed with the crossed out Black faces, it reads as an intentional disruption of what matters in social studies. By intentional disruption, I mean that working with matter, and the flag in this case, allowed Ron to speak back to nationalist symbols of the United States. Had Ron not worked with matter, he might not have had space to unpack, or cut up, narratives of nationalism in social studies in Georgia. In this way, having space and time to work with matter during the focus group offered insight that may not have been brought to light, due to the necessary limitations of time that comes with interviewing with multiple people. The collages remained, even as the participants left.

Furthermore, there are serious implications about the choices we make as researchers if we do choose to incorporate matter, particularly through collage, into research with participants. Participants' access to particular material may offer particular insight and foreclose access to other knowledge. This difference could be due to the materials used in the collage focus group. As noted in my chapter on methodology, I chose to use *Social Education*, *National Geographic*, and *Learning for Justice* magazines. *Social Education* offered social studies specific content. *National Geographic* included explicit opportunities to bring in the more-than-human. Finally, *Learning for Justice* offered diverse (e.g., age, race, gender, ability) examples of humans (in comparison to white washed magazines, such as *Vanity Fair*). Yet, all of these magazines are primarily focused on education. They did have a variety of topics within education. However, if I had chosen to pull magazines such as *Sports Illustrated*, *PEOPLE*, *Southern Living*, *Vogue*, or *Better Homes & Gardens*, the mappings of what matters in social studies may have looked quite different. Thus, the implication offered here is that matter matters, as the options that participants had can enliven or enclose what is elicited.

**Photovoice Exercise** In conversation with this last implication, the photovoice exercise allowed participants to take the lead on what they perceived as important material relation in social studies. Further, it placed them in charge of representing what was produced by an attention to material relation based on their embedded and embodied locations. This offered a more accurate mapping of relations, in comparison to engaging students in photo elicitation. And though photo elicitation can be powerful, my aim was to pay attention to the participants' becomings and ethical shifts during the research. Handing them the reigns gave them more autonomy to showcase their perceptions of attending to material relation in social studies.

## **Sound**

Furthermore, I wanted to offer evidence of data generation that was closer to their embodied location, and thus I included a sonic element. Braidotti (2006) writes that “The body is not only multifunctional, but also multi-expressive: it speaks through temperature, motion, speed, emotions, excitement, fluids, and sounds and a variety of rhythms” (p. 97). Put differently, a body is expressive in a variety of ways. During this research, artful and experimental methods offered alternative accessibility points to what the preservice social studies teachers’ belief, perceptions, and experiences. Furthermore, as a researcher, artful and experimental methods also allowed me to bring my audience (you) into this research with preservice teachers, not just through reading, but also through critically listening to sound and images (collage as well as photography).

In particularly, adding the sonic element, beyond words on a page, necessarily offered a different engagement with the human sensorium. My hope is that by harnessing a different sense, you can sense differently --even potentially make sense of power, becoming, and ethics slightly differently. For instance, I offered transcript and discussion of how Junie talked through the ways in which she navigated her racial and ethnic identity (e.g., conceiving Georgia as Korea, purposefully joining a ‘white’ sorority, mapping more “colors” in social studies, choosing to work at a school that had students that looked like her). And while direct quotes from transcript of her audio are powerful and valid forms of evidence, it was ethically important to me, as a researcher, to have my participant discuss her embodied experiences in her voice –its tones, pitches, and pauses. Thus, I offered her sonic rendering in the microchapter. In listening to Junie, through the recording, in company of her peers, I hope I offered a sonic engagement, made richer by involving more of your senses, potentially producing a better visual in your social imaginary of what was mattering and how that was producing her becoming as preservice social studies

teacher. In this way, I hope I can better honor Junie's -and all of the preservice teachers— knowledge that became apparent through our data generation together.

### **Implications**

My research with preservice social studies teachers, thought with Critical Posthuman knowledge, offered space to conceive social studies education as more nomadic than it is policed to be. Further, compared to current social studies scholarship, this research specifically attended to how matter matters with and for *preservice social studies teachers* methodologically, using posthuman sound and listening. Specifically, this framework and methodology warranted a critical attention to power (potentia/potestas) and accountability (nomadic ethics) during the data generation, based on the politics of location (embodied and embedded locations) of the social studies preservice teacher. Further, Critical Posthuman knowledge advocates creative engagement, such as the collage, photography, and sound, to critically attend to power and be accountable in co-producing more sustainable presents and futures, between humans and between the human and more-than-human.

In thinking about preservice social studies teachers in Georgia, Braidotti offered sustainability as:

a regrouping of the subject in a materially embedded sense of responsibility and ethical accountability for the environments she or he inhabits. What is at stake is the very possibility of the future, of duration or continuity. (p. 137)

In other words, sustainability is specific to place and space, which in this context is social studies education. This sustainability is rooted in ethics, or “intersecting forms of situated accountability” (Braidotti, 2006. 36). This ethic is bound up in the ways in which the preservice social studies teachers navigate(d) power differentials, such as the ways in which race and

ethnicity are taken up in social studies curriculum and classrooms –or the choice to teach and coach. It is also offered insight about potential sites of research around sustainability in the field of social studies. This concept of sustainability, as an ethical move, was particularly salient in reference to the lack of discussion of the politics of Earthen sustainability in social studies education, which I turn to next.

### *Present Absences*

Though the candidates appeared to have critical orientations, highlighting how racism (e.g., Junie being compared to food) and sexism (e.g., Blairs interactions with colleague that did not see her as the type to coach) were at work at different moments in their becomings as preservice social studies teachers, there was a lack of attention to how social studies is implicated in the politics of climate change. This was odd, as there was attention to more-than-human matter (I.e., Junie’s photographs of plants and discussions of social studies as a garden). Furthermore, the study was designed on purpose to attend to matter (human and more-than-human) as well as material relations (human and more-than-human). One of my implicit aims was to generate preservice teachers thought on ecological precarity.

Yet, ecological precarity, a major problem being faced by all matter on Earth (though some bodies are more affected than others), did not bubble up in conversation, in collage, or in the photovoice submissions. There are some scholars within social studies that are engaging with ecological precarity (Alvey, 2020; Garrett, 2019; Houser, 2009; Kissling & Bell, 2020; Martusewicz & Schnakenberg, 2010; Seitz, 2020). Yet, there is ample room for further research in social studies education to query the lack of engagement with the politics of climate change and crises.

Further, this work is necessary for drawing accurate cartographies of power relations (e.g., environmental racism, environmental justice, pre-existing Indigenous knowledge) in the midst of ecological precarity, as not all matter is equally affected by climate change. Though my work theorizes the research with Critical Posthuman knowledge, I, like Shear and Varga (2022) encourage social studies researchers and teachers to be in conversation with Indigenous knowledges and other frameworks that dedicate space to theorizing and discussing land ethics, climate crises, and the more-than-human world. It is a matter of sustainability, it is a matter of ethics.

### **Emerged/Emerging**

Returning to my initial questions about what matters in social studies, particularly from the perspective of emerging social studies educators, this research contributes to a necessary body of literature on teacher education amidst precarious times (e.g., climate change, global pandemic, political polarization, teacher attrition). This research showcased the desire to contest the taken for granted (e.g., essentialization of race and ethnicity, stigma and sedimentation of Sport and social studies), and to think about the utility of complexity amidst precarity. The preservice social studies teachers recognized the ways in which they were taking responsibility for what and how social studies should be conceived and taught. Through artful methodologies, these participants emphasized how they sustained themselves and how they hoped to sustain others. In this way, this research highlights the ethical aims of preservice social studies teachers to be accountable in their relations in their embedded and embodied locations.

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## APPENDIX A

### COLLAGE FOCUS GROUP EXERCISE AND INTERVIEW GUIDE

#### **Intro**

Thank you again for choosing to participate in this collage! We'll spend a couple hours together; we'll be collaging and talking through the collages.

If you feel uncomfortable answering a question, feel free to pass. If you need a break, feel free to take a break.

Just a reminder from the consent form, I am using an audio recorder and will take photos of your collages (though not your faces) throughout, these may be used for conferences, educational spaces, or journal publications. I will also use the pseudonym you chose for the transcriptions. We'll practice those pseudonyms together before we jump in to collaging, during our introductions.

After we do introductions, I'll offer a prompt, and then we'll start collaging for like 15-20 minutes. After collaging, we'll discuss everyone's creations. I very much welcome y'all talking to each other, asking questions, and being in conversation. Y'all are not mice, and there are **not** right or wrong answers. I will also ask questions or give prompts with the aim of knowing more about your thoughts on what matters in social studies.

#### **Interview Questions Prior to Collage (20ish minutes)**

Do you have any questions? [PAUSE] If there are no questions, let's get started by going around and introducing ourselves with our pseudonyms.

1. **What brought you to social studies education teacher preparation in Georgia?**
2. **Can you tell me about some of your experiences as a social studies student (I.e. classes you took, things you studied (or didn't study), projects you engaged in)?**
  - a. **Have you studied similar phenomena at UGA in the social studies disciplines? Why, or why not?**
3. **Is there anything else that you would like to share?**

We'll spend the next 15-20 minutes collaging. In the creation of your collage, I am hoping you can respond to the prompt: *Imagine a map of social studies. How would you construct it with these materials?* You might think about stories, points of connection, relationships, values, tenets of social studies. There's paper, magazines, glue sticks, sticky notes, yarn, printed social studies standards, old textbooks. You might mark out, cut up, and make new compositions with these materials.

I also offer a couple guiding questions:

#### **Questions Guiding Collage**

1. *What matters in social studies?*

2. *What do you think should matter in social studies?*

**Interview as/after Collaging**

1. *What was your process? Approach?*
2. *Did you know ahead of time how this would look?/Was there a plan or method?*
3. *What does this image do for you? What is your relation to it?*
  - a. *Have you experienced this?*
  - b. *Does this evoke anything for you?*
    - i. *Certain feelings or emotions?*
4. *When you were mapping, did you come up against anything? Stories, ideas, institutions?*
  - a. *What did this do for you? Did you feel anything? Sense anything?*
  - b. *How did you respond to this in your mapping?*
  - c. *What does it produce for your engagement with social studies?*
5. *Is there a relationship between how you placed this? What is that doing for you?*
6. *What does the color do for you?*
7. *How is this in relationship to what matters in social studies in Georgia?*
8. *What did working with material as you mapped do for you?*

**Conclusions**

Well, that concludes our collaging for today. Thank you for sharing your time, experiences, and work with me. It is a huge gift.

The next portion of this research –if you continues to consent to voluntarily participate-- involves you taking photos and creating captions for the photos on your own time, which I'll talk through.

## APPENDIX B

### PHOTOVOICE GUIDE

#### **Introductions**

The aim of this photovoice is to take approximately 1-5 photographs of material relations you believe matter in social studies education. When I say material relations, I mean humans, more-than-human entities, discourses, etc. And by mattering, I mean that they hold importance or have some sort of value. You can use a photographic instrument of your choosing (I.e. phone or hand held camera) to do this. If you do not have access to a camera, I can arrange for you to borrow one for the duration of the photovoice exercise.

After photographing the encounter(s), please write a caption(s) for the photograph(s). A caption can be a naming, a description, a quote, a thought, etc. Upon completion, please submit your photographs and captions to this [form](#) by April 22nd, 2022.

If you feel uncomfortable at any point, you are welcome to stop engaging in the exercise. Just a reminder from the consent form, I will use a pseudonym you chose in our initial meeting so as to protect your identity in any materials, such as photographs and captions, if they are used for educational purposes, at conferences, or in publication.

#### **Conclusions**

Thank you engaging in the photovoice! I am excited to learn more about what you think matters in social studies. When would y'all like to get together to discuss your photovoice?

Thank you again for your time and expertise!

## APPENDIX C

### PHOTOVOICE DEBRIEF INTERVIEW

#### **Introductions**

Thank you again for choosing to participate in the study, and specifically in this debrief of your photovoice exercise.

I have them printed out so that we can all see them. They are not in any particular order, and we don't need to go in order. They're just numbered so that we can have something to reference.

Throughout our time together, I encourage you to be in discussion with each other about your photographs, choices, and thoughts. I will also ask questions or give prompts with the aim of knowing more about the material relations you photographed, what they are doing for you, and how they are informing your knowledge of social studies as a social studies preservice teacher in Georgia. Again, there are no right or wrong answers.

We'll spend about 40 minutes discussing approach and choices, and 40 minutes about what these material relations do for social studies –so what they make you think and feel, what they make possible, or don't make possible. Again, no right or wrong answers.

Like last time, if you feel uncomfortable answering a question, you are welcome to pass. If you need a break, please let me know.

Just a reminder, consent is ongoing; you consented to being audio recorded and letting me use your work as artefacts. Like I noted last week, I will use pseudonyms in interview transcripts, to help protect your identity in any materials that may be used for educational purposes, at conferences, or in publication. Do you have any questions or concerns about your consent? Do you have any other questions?

#### **Part 1**

1. How did you approach this photovoice exercise?
  - a. Did you know what material relations you wanted to photograph?
    - i. How did you think about this in relation to social studies?
    - ii. Did you automatically caption your photographs? / What are the captions doing for you?
  - b. Did you know ahead of time how this would look?/Was there a plan or method?
2. What is social studies about this?
3. Thinking about how these are placed on the table:
  - a. What are you noticing?
    - i. What did you notice first?
      1. Why do you think that is?/How is that in relation to social studies?
4. How is this photograph in relationship to social studies?

5. You noted, \_\_\_\_\_, in your caption. What does the caption make you think of in social studies?
6. Is this in relationship to what matters in social studies in Georgia?/How is this in relationship to what matters in social studies in Georgia?

## **Part 2**

Okay, so I am interested in your felt sense as well. If it helps, you might write down some of your responses and stick them next to particular photos. They don't have to be your photos.

7. How did you feel taking the photograph(s) of this material relation? Captioning the photograph(s)?
  - a. Did you recall anything? Any memories or experiences?
8. What does the \_\_\_\_\_ in the photograph do for you?
  - a. How are things in relation? What does that do?
  - b. How are they juxtaposed?
    - i. How does this make you feel?
      1. What do you sense when you look at this?
9. Do you have the same thoughts about this material relation now, as you did when you took it? / Before you took it?
10. How does this make you think about teaching social studies?

Is there anything else that you would like to share?

## **Conclusions**

Thank you for sharing your time, experiences, and work with me. If you would like me to follow up with you to talk further or engage in any more research, please let me know. At this point, I want to transition to giving y'all your gift cards and signing off on them.