WELCOME HAUNTINGS: *THE ODYSSEY, HOW I BECAME A GHOST,* AND SUBJECTIVITY PRODUCTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM

by

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ABSTRACT

Analyzing *How I Became a Ghost* and *The Odyssey* through the lenses of the Gothic, temporality, and memorial/monument studies offers new ways of understanding how subjectivity production and the United States' nation-building project function in English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms. In particular, this study analyzes how these curricular offerings consume and produce human-ness and non-being through alt-right, Indigenous, and settler-colonial temporalities. This study gives practicing teachers and scholars a method to help students form a Gothic historical consciousness as a framework of connection, communication, and healing in order to combat curricular violence.

INTRODUCTION

Colonialism has carved the landscapes of our homes with ghosts. It left gaping wounds that still weep. — Isabel Cañas

Education as a whole, including English Language Arts (ELA), has long been positioned as an ahistorical field in teacher prep programs (Brass, 2012; Ruitenberg, 2009). However, education—and the memories, temporalities, and subjectivities produced by education—are politically charged, dictating who is remembered, who is valued, and therefore, the shape reality takes. When curriculum and education function from ahistorical frameworks, schools produce a "deep, false discord between accurate historical narratives of groups of people and how their histories are being taught and absorbed in schools" (Jones, 2020, para. 11). This dissonance commits traumatic curricular violence against students whose histories are buried and disavowed. To heal this curricular violence, Zembylas (2013) argues that educators must see education as a hauntological ongoing conversation with the ghosts of history.

In answering Zembylas's call, this paper uses the Gothic as a semiotic tool to unbury the hauntings and ghosts from the ELA curricular offerings of Homer's *The Odyssey,* as translated by Emily Wilson (2018), and Tim Tingle's (2013) *How I Became a Ghost*. In analyzing how the discourse of these two curricular offerings engages in or disrupts the nation building project of education, I aim to make visible various temporal constructions students internalize through literature, which then become subjectivities. In particular, I examine how *The Odyssey* and *How I Became a Ghost* consume and produce human-ness and non-being through alt-right, Indigenous, and settler-colonial temporalities. I do this work to disrupt

curricular violence and chart a method to help students recognize and value a Gothic historical consciousness as a framework of connection, communication, and healing.

Education is an integral feature of nation building projects which aim to create a unified national identity (Mylonas, 2020). Through teaching students to internalize collective memories about historical events and specific temporal constructions of a nation's past, present, and future, nations build a facade of unity that ignores unsettled histories and can even further genocidal regimes (Zembylas, 2013). For example, Hitler's Nazi regime used education and schools to calcify bodies as Aryan or Jewish, ultimately shaping the temporal and curricular landscape to be ripe for war and genocide (Echoes and Reflections, n.d.). In the geopolitical space today referred to as the United States, curriculum and literature construct settler-colonial memories into state-sanctioned collective memories and temporal narratives by condensing historical events into simplified, archetypal caricatures such as Manifest Destiny, the Vanished Indian, and the ruggedly masculine Frontiersman (Calderón, 2014; Stanton, 2015; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). This temporal narrative of the frontier produces the "the inventive settler, whose memory becomes history, and whose ideology becomes reason" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 642). Education systems and curriculum are key players in the construction of discourses—"the language, images, metaphors, and narratives through which…institutions produce and circulate knowledge" (Smith & Watson, 2010, p. 32)—that come to define ways of knowing and being.

The U.S. cultural imaginary of the frontier and the ongoing event of settler colonialism influences curriculum through engaging in the curricular project of replacement with the end goal of settlers solidifying their (false) claims to land and supporting settler futurity.

Curriculum's promotion of narratives such as the errand into the wilderness (Miller, 1956) and the city on the hill, a key imaginary that has been used from Winthrop to Reagan (Frum, 2021), creates a national identity—a national subject—which "continues to play a symbolic role in the American fantasy as 'leader of the free world'" (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 75). This fantasy is a smoke screen the U.S. uses to cover the tracks of genocide, slavery, and violence through "the circulation of [the United States'] creation story…that involves signs-turned mythologies that conceal the teleology of violence and domination that characterize settlement" (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 74). This fantastical creation story seeps deep into textbooks with the goal of promoting and justifying colonialism and imperialism (Calderón, 2014; Stanton, 2015)—ultimately positioning education as a white supremacist project that produces settler futurity (Calderón, 2014; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013). With these discursive regimes institutionalized through education, students "learn to understand themselves—'experience' themselves" (Smith & Watson, 2010, p. 32) as various types of national subjects; ones with a future, or ones relegated to a fading past.

In internalizing subjectivity and constructing a sense of self as a national subject, social systems and the status quo take on an aura of objective truth rather than being seen as the social constructions they are (Smith & Watson, 2010). For example, the naturalization of settler-colonial socially constructed realities through discourse within textbooks "reifies the notion that national identity and modern state formation is not ideological; rather it is a natural and inevitable outgrowth of human progress as conceived in the Western tradition" (Calderón, 2014, p. 315). Within this socially constructed reality only certain people—certain bodies—are allowed to participate in the nation building project with their humanity intact. The settler-colonial

creation story produces not only the subjectivity of the 'human,' white national citizen (Bery, 2014), but also the subjectivities of ghosts (Morrison, 1992; Tuck & Ree, 2013)—the kill-able and living-dead bodies of "the Indigenous inhabitant, present only because of her erasure…[and] the chattel slave, whose body is property and murderable" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 642). However, these dehumanizing subjectivities are not set in stone. Rather, they can be shifted and subverted through tools such as the Gothic—a genre populated by ghosts, ghouls, and the uncanny—that capitalizes on the slipperiness of the signifier and signified to offer a pathway of resistance.

While settler colonialism builds the subjectivity of a national citizen through genocidal dispossession of Indigenous peoples, the Gothic builds the subjectivity of a ghost who haunts or the living-dead who free themselves from a false grave. These subjectivities are ones of power—tools of resistance characterized by hauntings that unapologetically deconstruct the status quo. Resistance through the Gothic is possible because the genre is "a site of subversion, of a past that haunts the present, of a society in transition, and of cultural anxiety" (Gore, 2011, p. 1). Through the repressed resurfacing, haunted landscapes, and vengeful monsters, the Gothic is a powerful method of interrogating—and being interrogated by—buried, repressed histories and voices (Morrison, 1992; Gore, 2011; Ruitenberg, 2009). Morrill, Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Qollective (2016), writing from Indigenous and marginalized perspectives, view the Gothic as a liberatory lens through which to experience and participate in hauntings that chart and disrupt a cartography of dispossession. For dispossessed peoples, these researchers view haunting as a method of connection, visitation, and love, "a materializing…a mattering" (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, 2016, p. 3). Further, part of the liberatory power of the Gothic is forcing settler-colonialists to experience

"relentless remembering and reminding" (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, 2016, p. 642) of the ghosts who churn at the center of the American creation story. Through blurring and twisting temporal logics, the hauntings and ghosts of the Gothic have the power to re/shape our relationships with past, present, and future through disrupting and troubling the networks of subjectivity production and discursive regimes that directly impact students through contributing to curricular violence.

Aside: Terminology

In this paper, I use the terminology of United States/U.S. instead of America/American. This language choice recognizes that what is now the United States is both a geopolitical location and an institution—not an eternal entity that has always been on this land. After all, the United States has not yet existed for even 300 years—a blip of time in the grand scheme of human history. In using United States/U.S., I aim to trouble how the language of America/American has morphed into a linguistic shorthand with tremendous power to naturalize harmful structures such as colonization. In denying the use of America/American, I hope to create dissonance for my readers and recognition that this term is a weapon in the United States' nation-building project. The term America/American constructs a national citizen subjectivity that sees itself as the true inhabitant of these lands, instead of the Indigenous Peoples who have lived on these lands, known as Turtle Island, since time immemorial. Further, America/American is also a term used to hide accountability of who—institutions or individual people—committed crimes such as genocide when, in reality, the U.S as an institution and individual settler-colonialists both enacted genocide.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ODYSSEY AND HOW I BECAME A GHOST

The Odyssey

It is difficult to overstate *The Odyssey*'s centrality to the Western world. As described by Mason (2017), *The Odyssey* is the "second-oldest text in a Western tradition impossible to imagine without [it]" (para. 2). Long a part of the education system, *The Odyssey* "provided the basis for much of classical literature: tragedy, but also history, [and] later forms of [the] epic, pastoral, and the novel" (Wilson, 2018, p. 76). Throughout this history, Euro-Americans came to locate their origin, their creation story, within the classics (Dozier, 2020; Poser, 2021). The Western imaginary holds up this creation story and its legacy as both the shining, untouchable moral ideal and the invisible norm in dominant education systems; therefore, *The Odyssey* is a traditional and supposedly timeless curricular offering from elementary school through college.

Despite this status, *The Odyssey* is a restless and unsettling text. The epic "presents itself as telling an important story…and the collective memories and experience of the Greek-speaking world" (Wilson, 2018, p. 1). The poem is filled with contradictory characters who hide their true intentions through unreliable narration. One reader's plot synopsis could trace heroic Odysseus, a cunning ancient Greek king of Ithaca, through trials and tribulations as he fights and outsmarts gods and monsters on a journey to return home and free his family from horrific, parasitical suitors. Another equally true synopsis could spotlight Odysseus' murderous traits as an enslaver, rapist, liar, and colonizer who is willing to sacrifice anyone as long as he can maintain the purity of his human and non-human property and, therefore, his wealth and power (Wilson, 2018). As seen by these two true yet contradictory plot synopses, *The Odyssey*'s polytropos—much turning, many faced, complicated (Wilson, 2018)—protagonist became a perfect, ambiguous,

and moldable hero. As *The Odyssey* traveled through the centuries, the beliefs and ideological identities of different time periods imprinted on the text, ultimately molding the epic to produce specific subjectivities and power.

With difficult to pin down temporal and geographical locations (Wilson, 2018), authors and philosophers consumed *The Odyssey* and, through their readings and translations as guided by their era's discursive regimes (Smith & Watson, 2010), reshaped it to fit shifting cultural landscapes. This productive consumption is due to the fact that classical texts, artifacts, and societies have always "acted as a model for people of many backgrounds, who turned it into a matrix through which they formed and debated ideas about beauty, ethics, power, nature, selfhood, citizenship, and, of course, race" (Poser, 2021, para. 30). For example, in the *Republic,* Socrates "famously insists that Homer…must be excluded from the ideal city, because his work provides a false image of reality, and stirs up emotions that are better repressed and controlled" (Wilson, 2018, p. 76). This dismissal is a far cry from George Chapman's 1615 translation of *The Odyssey,* which constructs Odysseus as "a true soldier and gentleman, a proto-Christian and proto-Stoic whose greatest virtue is his ability to endure suffering and control his impulses" (Wilson, 2018, p. 77). This restructuring is key to a Christian subjectivity and reveals the immense value placed on suffering in order to condition people to accept and even see significance in their own suffering. When a population understands enduring suffering as key to their subjectivity, then suffering becomes a method for social control. However, proving the shape-shifting nature of *The Odyssey,* half a century after Chapman's translation, John Milton's writing reversed Odysseus' proto-Christian characterization and instead reworked the epic to signify Satan's influence (Wilson, 2018).

Later in the eighteenth century, Odysseus, through English poet Alexander Pope's translation, became an exemplar character of "proper manners and good government" (Wilson, 2018, p. 78)—key concerns to shape national subjectivities in a time period characterized by British imperialism and colonization. When discussing the impact of this translation, Wilson (2018) writes:

> In Pope's version, Odysseus is the ultimate hero of politeness and tact, the man who always has the appropriate response to every social challenge. He is also a just monarch, whose knowledge of suffering informs his exertion of power over the "nations" whom he governs. (p. 78)

This gentlemanly version sits uneasily with the textual realities of Odysseus as a colonizer, enslaver, thief, pirate, and vicious murderer who easily allows people in lesser power positions to die for his own gain, wealth, and survival. Pope's translation reveals how writing often becomes an agent of furthering the narratives and subjectivities available in specific discursive regimes. As Pope's translation was written in an era of brutal British colonial expansion, Odysseus' characterization became justification of the violent acts in which the British imperialist nation engaged in and paradoxically used to define itself as civilized (Poser, 2021).

British imperialism functioned off race-based (mis)logics which Padilla, a Black Classics professor at Princeton, connects to the use of classical texts and artifacts to produce a European creation story along with whiteness itself—even though ancient Greeks and Romans did not see themselves as white (Poser, 2021). In an argument that illustrates the parasitical, symbiotic relationship between classics and racialized (mis)logics, Poser (2021), discussing Padilla's views, writes that "classics and whiteness are the bones and sinew of the same body; they grew strong together, and they may have to die together" (para. 37). Throughout the centuries, the field of the classics, in which *The Odyssey* remains at the core, has become enmeshed,

intertwined, and trapped within the framework of white supremacy. With this, many classical Western texts, including *The Odyssey,* produce subjectivities and temporal narratives that provide "classical justifications of slavery, race science, colonialism, Nazism and other 20th-century fascisms" (Poser, 2021, para. 2).

Following this, the modern alt-right, who are currently working to solidify their influence in classrooms and curriculum, look to the classics from Greek and Roman antiquity to craft the temporal imaginaries that legitimize alt-right historical perspectives, ideologies, and subjectivities (Dozier, 2020; Valencia-García, 2020). Richard Spencer, an alt-right white separatist, based his vision of a white ethno-state on the ancient Roman Empire (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2019), which Spencer "idealizes, like generations of fascists before him, as a model of a militarily invincible, hyper-masculine, and, despite all evidence to the contrary, a racially pure, European civilization" ("A New Roman Empire for White People", 2019, para. 4). Beyond Spencer, the alt-right is obsessed with maintaining racialized hierarchies as natural and pure. This obsession manifests in many ways, including in attempts to control the books and perspectives that enter classrooms. Current culture-wars over Critical Race Theory and book bans, which are discussed in subsequent sections, illustrate the alt-right's efforts to cling to canonized, supposedly white texts, including the classics of ancient Greece and Rome.

It is also worth mentioning that the works and legacy of ancient Rome and Greece have also been put towards "radical and disruptive uses" (Poser, 2021, para. 30). Liberatory movements such as feminism, Black civil rights, revolutions, and LGBTQ+ rights have turned to antiquity to find hope, community, and inspiration (Poser, 2021). Overall, *The Odyssey* inhabits dual, and seemingly counter, spheres of influence—both liberatory and oppressive. Both a

foundational piece of Eurocentrism and white supremacy and a tool revolutionaries have used to disrupt these systems, *The Odyssey* continues to be a text "unsettled and unsettling" (Morrison, 1992, p. 6).

How I Became a Ghost

This short, middle-grades novel follows ten-year-old protagonist Isaac, his family, and his Choctaw Nation as the U.S. government violently forces them onto the Trail of Tears—a genocidal displacement policy enacted by the U.S. government. In 1830, President Andrew Jackson, ignoring the sovereignty of the Eastern Indigenous Nations of the Ani-Yun' wiya (Cherokee), Chahtas **(**Choctaw), Chikasha (Chickasaw), Muskogee/Ocmulgee (Creek), and yat'siminoli **(**Seminole), signed the Indian Removal Act into law ("Trail of Tears," n.d.). In signing and enforcing this act, Jackson ignored not only these Nations' sovereignty, but also the laws of the nation he oversaw as president. In 1832, after years of organized and concentrated lobbying from Indigenous Nations, the Supreme Court ruled in *Worcester v. Georgia* that the state of Georgia "could not extend its law over the sovereign lands of the Cherokee nation, and had no authority to displace the indigenous people" ("The Indian Removal Act," n.d., para. 5). Jackson, the military, and U.S. settler-colonialists enforced the Indian Removal Act anyways, forcing around 100,000 Indigenous Peoples off their land. This forced removal, fueled by settlers' inhumane and excessive consumption of resources, sentenced Indigenous Peoples to march thousands of miles ("What Happened of the Trail of Tears?" n.d.). Many people died and were buried in unmarked graves alongside the trail before the Nations reached their destination in Oklahoma ("Trail of Tears," n.d.).

Despite settler-colonial attempts to control, bury, and contain Indigenous peoples, *How I Became a Ghost* is a series of ghostly encounters with past, present, and future ghosts. The living walkers on the Trail of Tears are accompanied by thousands of the ghostly dead who "died from the fires…died from sickness and…died from hunger. But they will never leave" (Tingle, 2013, p. 44). As *How I Became a Ghost* is situated within the Trail of Tears, the novel is also a story about a journey and supernatural forces, but its spatio-temporal markings and historical basis differ in important ways from *The Odyssey.* In *How I Became a Ghost*, Isaac, who has prophetic visions, witnesses the deaths of various people close to him before the deaths actually happen, including his own death from a wolf attack while on the Trail of Tears. While Odysseus described the land of the dead as covered in "destructive night" (Wilson, 2018, p. 279) and felt "pale fear" (Wilson, 2018, p. 280) and "bitter grief" (Wilson, 2018, p. 282) when hearing the eerie cries of the dead, Isaac is relieved when he dies. Now Isaac and his living friend Joseph, who has the power to turn into a panther, can pursue their goal of freeing Naomi, a Choctaw girl enslaved by the white soldiers, with the help of other living and ghostly Choctaws. While *The Odyssey* crafts a cautionary tale and hierarchy of good and bad deaths, *How I Became a Ghost* positions Isaac's death and subsequent haunting as both a tragic loss and a continuation of community. Isaac's death is not a foreclosure of an Indigenous future, as the U.S. government and settler-colonialists hoped, but instead ensures an Indigenous future.

How I Became a Ghost's plot revolves around the dispossession of the Choctaws—revealing the violence wrought by the United States' nation building and insatiable consumption of land and people. Oxford Languages (n.d.) defines dispossession as "the action of depriving someone of land, property, or other possessions" (Google Dictionary). Though this definition

accurately describes the United States' policy of assimilation and genocide, it is incomplete and limited in scope. Morrill, Tuck, and the Super Futures Haunt Qollective (2016) expand dispossession into a concept that "attends to how human lives and bodies matter and don't matter—through settler colonialism [and] chattel slavery" (p. 5) where dispossession "operates as a global modality of power that makes some of us the living dead by determining who can be wasted, disposed of" (p. 12). This definition illuminates the motivations and desires of the U.S. government and soldiers who used death, torture, enslavement, and dispossession to realize the settler-colonial project of erasure and replacement in order to "establish a settler as native identity" (Calderón, 2014, p. 318). However, the Gothic elements of the novel refuse this attempted erasure waged through ideological and physical dispossession, illuminating refusal as an Indigenous tactic of survivance that "as a theory and a method, is generative, an analytic that can make, through its focus, particular structures and sets of relations visible" (Sabzalian, 2019 as cited in Stanton, 2020, p. 149-150). Isaac and other murdered Choctaws literally become the living dead—as is dispossession's goal—but use this positionality as a strength. In refusing the grave and the silence of death, Isaac and the other ghosts practice a politic of refusal.

How I Became a Ghost pulses with the power of this refusal. In refusing dispossession, the novel ultimately refuses the settler-colonial temporality that hinges on "legitimating settler territorial acquisitions…[by creating a] dialectic presence and absence of Indianness" (Calderón, 2014, p. 314). This settler-colonial dialectic, the United States' temporal imaginary, aims to make the settler into a new Native identity (Calderón, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012) through making the absence of Indianness a true absence; Indigenous peoples become buried ghosts locked in the past. For example, the settler-colonial imaginary is populated with stereotyped

caricatures of the dead Indian who is made dead, made disposable, throughout all temporal periods in the settler-colonial imaginary. The dead Indian caricature falls from his horse in a battle during the Manifest Destiny period, dies of disease wrapped in a gifted blanket, and perishes in a drunken car accident (Sabzalian, 2019). Settler futurity depends on the past, present, and future dead Indians (Sabzalian, 2019; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, Wolfe, 2006).

However, *How I Became a Ghost* takes this stigma and stereotype of the dead Indian and transforms it, making the signified and the signifier slippery—a key component of the Gothic—ultimately disrupting and destabilizing this core aspect of the U.S. imaginary through collapsing the cell bars of temporal borders. The dead Indian, the absent specter of Indianness, literally manifests through the character of Isaac and his continued haunting and visitations to his family. Graves and dead bodies do not equal a disappearance, an absence, or dispossession as settler-colonialists desire. In this way, settler-colonialists' genocidal action of foreclosure is resignified as productive (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, 2016). Through the dead returning, foreclosure is fractured and *How I Became a Ghost* constructs a narrative in which dead Indians, instead of being a derogatory caricature, are a continued, everyday threat to the hegemonies built on settler-colonial temporal imaginaries.

Why These Two Texts? Culture Wars in Education and Literature as Monuments

This project engages with curriculum's ideological structures and fractures as laid bare by the Gothic, making *The Odyssey* and *How I Became a Ghost* ideal texts to investigate. As described by Calderón (2014), curriculum is like a palimpsest, "a document in which previous writings are erased and written over yet old knowledge bleeds through" (p. 315). As such, *The*

Odyssey and *How I Became a Ghost* engage with and enact hauntings in the United States' national consciousness—hauntings that are visitations of ghosts, ghouls, and bodies dripping with knowledge that call into question the past, present, and future. *The Odyssey* participates in creating socio-temporal imaginaries that close off other histories to promote white, colonial creation myths. Alternatively, *How I Became a Ghost* centers and strengthens voices and a time period that white, colonial creation myths attempt to close off. *The Odyssey* is a curricular classic that supports the United States' claims to democracy. *How I Became a Ghost* is a text that confronts the United States' genocidal policies surrounding race and ethnicity.

Education's role as a battleground for cultural power and dominance is strikingly visible throughout the United States' educational history—such as the use of education as a vehicle of assimilation and genocide throughout the Native American Boarding School Era and the foundation of the ELA field in the 1910s as an arm of the assimilative project aimed at immigrants (Brass, 2012). Later in the 1960s, the ELA field moved to include feminist, African American, and Native American literature in classrooms as a response to trends in education that harmed marginalized students (Lauter, 1991). In the 1980s, tensions over which histories and voices curriculum should include came to a head in the canon debates (Reed, 2013) and the Back to Basic movement (Weiss, 2005). Decades later in the 2020s, these cultural battles ignited once again. Cultural anxieties erupted during school board meetings over which histories and literature are proper and appropriate to enshrine in the American collective memory. Subsequent state-level legislation—sometimes failing and sometimes passing—targets the curriculum, perspectives, and discourses within classrooms (Pendharkar, 2022). Through attempts to ban diverse, inclusive curriculum and books, wide-reaching legislative actions work to "discourage

teachers from making race or gender salient in conversations about power and oppression" (Schwartz, 2021, para. 5). For example, a Trump era executive order banned federal agencies' diversity trainings that responded to the social realities of racism, sexism, xenophobia and homophobia, naming these as divisive concepts (Schwartz, 2021). This executive order denied the United States' historical and contemporary realities and instead attempted to calcify a silencing, color-blind understanding of U.S. history.

Upon entering office, President Biden repealed the Trump Administration's executive order. However, similar attempts to control which temporal narratives enter classrooms and, therefore, the subjectivities and the historical consciousness students form, continue to emanate from statehouses to Congress. In one of the first actions of the 118th Congress, House Republicans passed H.R.5, a sweeping measure aimed at further restricting teachings of accurate, honest histories (Jotkoff, 2023). Legislative actions seek to return the U.S. solely to historical narratives and collective memories that propagate the lionization of the status quo.

Many of the cultural battles throughout the United States' educational history focus on literature since literature taught in ELA classrooms plays an active role in producing human and non-human bodies. This is because, as theorized by Tanglen's (2021) work on *To Kill A Mockingbird* and Morrison's (1992) work on the white American literary canon, literature functions as a monument to various ideologies, such as white supremacy. Both monuments made of stone and those made of ink work to calcify spatio-temporal imaginaries through "transform[ing] collective memories into the official histories" (Bowmen-McElhone et al., 2019, p. 1179) around which groups of people structure their subjectivities and legacies. Through this

function, monuments and literature become tools for transmitting cultural memory that produces specific conceptions of nation and national citizen.

Literature becomes a monument when its plot or curricular placement locates the text within disputed histories, otherwise known as the “contested space of memorial ecologies" (Bowmen-McElhone et al., 2019, p. 1179). Often, contested memorial ecologies involve sites of past and ongoing structural violence. Given the colonial, assimilative, and genocidal past and present of ELA education, the wounds caused by the histories and legacies of state-perpetrated violence weep and ooze off the pages of books. Understanding texts, such as *The Odyssey* and *How I Became a Ghost,* as monuments and memorials pocketed with wounds and haunted by ghosts sheds light on the current cultural battles being waged on and within the United States’ education system—especially the right-wing and alt-right attempts to legislate which historical narratives classrooms teach (Schwartz, 2021).

These bills ignore the contested memories of trauma events and attempt to suture the wounds and bury the ghosts left by the United States’ violence—an attempt that results in failure and the production of rot that dissolves the very basis of the alt-right’s temporal claims. The alt-right’s attempt to suture the United States’ wounds is seen in Richard Spencer’s white supremacist movement, the Tea Party, and Trump’s form of conservatism. Bauer (2020) writes that all of these groups envision themselves as historical actors who believe they transcend time and history (Bauer, 2020). This creates a spatio-temporal imaginary that right-wing and alt-right groups use to re-narrate history and create a dichotomy where Americans can “either focus on the nation’s ‘scars’ *or* on building its future” (Bauer, 2020, p. 131). This discourse creates a binary of good and bad history, which have two distinctive temporalities. Good histories are the

ahistorical narratives that do not question the mainstream, official history of the United States as a good and just nation. Therefore, within the right-wing spatio-temporal imaginary, good history is positioned as "eternal, occurring in the past but also transcendent, occupying the present and determining the future" (Bauer, 2020, p. 131). Meanwhile, bad history positions the United States' involvement and investment in racism, sexism, colonization, xenophobia, and homophobia as mistakes of the past that were righted during America's arc to justice. With this, bad history is "rendered static, calcified into discrete 'scars' that require no more treatment and, thus, can be forgiven and forgotten" (Bauer, 2020, p. 131). This discursive move is an act of historical closure (Davis, 2016).

As theorized by Davis (2016), historical closures imagine historical events as having well-defined temporal borders with obvious starting and ending points. For example, the mainstream national narrative imagines slavery as a problem fixed by the Emancipation Proclamation, racial discrimination as fixed by the Civil Rights Movement, and Indigenous people as having lived and died as a true, authentic people during the colonization period (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Historical closures, which are really ahistorical closures, trap histories into the vacuum of a single moment, closed from contextual factors and denied continuation, even though the ongoing violence of racism and colonization continues. Therefore, in this narrative, racism and the cures for racism are neatly packaged within the visible borders of each historic moment. However, the wounds that historical closures attempt to suture closed continue to rot, fester, seethe, and bleed through the stitches and into the present day. Rot and leaks are productive; they express "the horror of walls transgressed, physical structures made permeable and violated of their…promise of protective boundaries" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 645). With this,

the badly done sutures of historical closures—the transgressed protective boundaries—are a site from which the Gothic arises. The ghostly voices of untold narratives, of secrets powerful hegemonic structures are desperate to keep, refuse to stay buried.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Temporality

This study utilizes the theoretical lens of temporality to analyze how *The Odyssey* and *How I Became a Ghost* produce specific subjectivity constructions. Temporality, as a theoretical framework, explores people's understandings of self and the world in relation to constructions of time and space (Tuan, 1977). For example, Halberstam (2005) theorizes how dominant culture in modern day U.S. is structured around the heteronormative temporality of reproductive time. This temporal construction lays out a series of life markers that people need to accomplish to be considered successful—graduate, get a job, get married, buy a house, have children. When people understand their past, present, and future through this temporal construction, a specific subjectivity is produced. As seen in this example, temporal constructions are ultimately political through creating subjects who support various policies and social norms that align with their temporal views.

Freire (1970), a foundational emancipatory theorist in education, writes of how temporality is political through his discussion of temporal constructions on the right and left. He writes that the "rightest sectarian…wants to slow down the historical process, to 'domesticate' time and thus to domesticate men and women…[the rightest sectarian] attempts to domesticate the present so that…the future will reproduce the domesticated present" (Freire, 1970, p. 38). This temporality aims to turn the status quo immortal. Meanwhile the leftist "…falls into essentially fatalistic positions [and] considers the future pre-established—a kind of inevitable fate, fortune, or destiny" (Freire, 1970, p. 38). This fatalistic petrification causes inaction, which ultimately supports the alt-right's rise to power.

Settler-Colonial Temporal Constructions

Indigenous scholars theorize how settler-colonial temporal constructions, literature, and curriculum legitimize violent and false land claims to solidify "the permanence of the settler-colonial nation state" (Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013, p. 73). U.S. history textbooks construct a narrative of national identity that relies on settler moves of innocence—defined as "a set of evasions…that problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 1). Through deifying Manifest Destiny and trapping Indigenous peoples in a vanished past, these temporal narrations clear the landscape of Indigenous peoples, Nations, and ideologies. (Calderón, 2014; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Students, through internalizing constructed memories such as these, develop "notions of shared national history" (Smith & Watson, 2010, p 26) which then instills the identity and memories of a specific national subject.

Of course, this national subject identity excludes and distorts the histories, memories, and perspectives of all marginalized peoples—positioning these peoples as non-being backdrops in the grand American story. Morrison's (1992) study of subjectivities within early American literature, the canon commonly taught in ELA classrooms, shows that the United States' racialized society creates an epistemology that "assumes that the characteristics of our national literature emanate from a particular 'Americanness' that is separate from and unaccountable to this presence [Africans and African Americans in the U.S.]" (p. 5), thereby erasing Black voices from the narratives that produce the national subject. In order to construct the white national citizen as natural and pure, the temporal imaginary of whiteness consumes and regurgitates Blackness and other people of color into the Other—human non-persons and the living dead (Bery, 2014)—ultimately transforming marginalized bodies into ghostly

apparitions (Brass, 2012; Calderón, 2014; Halberstam, 2006). Literature and education re/produce this white supremacist, violent subjectivity as linked to Western temporal imaginaries that work to legitimize settler-colonial pasts and futures (Calderón, 2014). With this, education and curriculum engage in violent subjectivity production, creating fertile ground for the alt-right to gain power through materializing a re-narrated temporality that attempts to permanently calcify power relations.

Alt-Right Temporal Constructions

Building on Freire's (1970) discussion of rightest sectarians, Valencia-García (2020) writes of how alt-right temporalities are crafted through mythologized, temporal-imaginaries of Greco-Roman antiquity—ignoring historical complexity and instead creating imagined, ancient pasts that must be restored. Freire (1970), in speaking about mythologization, writes about how oppressors mythicize the world to preserve the status quo through presenting the world as "a fixed entity, as something given—something to which people, as mere spectators, must adapt...the oppressors [deposit] myths indispensable to the preservation of the status quo" (p. 139). As such, the alt-right temporality mythicizes history with the intent of creating a present and future that preserve the white-supremacist status quo. To create urgency for this vision, alt-right temporalities characterize the contemporary age as marked by decline and degeneracy.

Indigenous Temporal Constructions

While alt-right temporal narratives fixate on decline and moral deterioration, Indigenous temporal constructions "reject reproductively inflected narratives of inheritance of declension" (Rifkin, 2017, p. xiii). Instead, Indigenous temporalities create and are created by a time that

operates outside of linear, heteroreproductive settler-colonial temporalities (Rifkin, 2017). In Indigenous temporalities, “time is a multiplicity” (Rifkin, 2017, p. 176) where “past is the present is the future” (Baldy, 2013, para. 30). While settler-colonial epistemologies privilege objectivity and linearity, Indigenous temporalities value knowledge rooted in the supernatural, circularity, and dynamism. Within Indigenous knowledge systems, “The natural and supernatural world impinge and interpenetrate each other to a degree such that no real separation can be made” (Bunge, 1994, as cited in Hopkins, 2020, p. 120). Overall, Indigenous Peoples, Nations, and temporalities rupture settler-colonial temporal frameworks as “temporal aberrations” (Rifkin, 2017, p. vii). These ruptures and continued Indigenous presence and visibility challenge settler claims to land and settler futurity as a whole, therefore challenging settler-colonial and alt-right politics of inevitability and inevitable supremacy (Rifkin, 2017; Valencia-García, 2020).

Organized around kinship and relationality to land (Chayne & Rifkin, n.d.), Indigenous temporalities craft a subjectivity in which the self is not understood as a solitary individual. Rather, self-hood and subjectivity develop in relation to others, to the land, and to an ethic of responsibility to community. Within this temporality, words, stories, and storytelling create and author a reality that sustains cultural and political sovereignty (Rifkin, 2017). As such, storytelling gives “rise to fields of possibility that cannot be measured within or through settler frames of reference” (Rifkin, 2017, p. 40). Whereas settlers transform memory and the past into frozen, static monuments—including static, written text canonized into monuments—Indigenous temporalities view the past, present, and future as knotted together and, in a way, alive (Momaday, 1997; Rikfin, 2017). Many Indigenous authors who use written formats, such

as books, still avoid reinforcing western staticness and linearity through crafting circular and dynamic plot structures that embrace non-linear storytelling.

The temporal placement of the apocalypse is another key difference between Indigenous, alt-right, and settler-colonial temporalities. The settler-colonial temporality imagines the apocalypse as looming in the future (Beck, 2019), the alt-right temporality views the white-Christian apocalypse as currently happening through a social landscape that shows signs of embracing equity (Valencia-García, 2020), and in Indigenous temporalities, the apocalypse already occurred through the United States' genocide of Indigenous peoples (Baldy, 2013; Beck, 2019). During the colonization period, the United States' necropolitical violence was a politic of death that decided who deserved to live and who deserved to die (Verghese, 2021). This necropolitical violence labeled Indigenous peoples as the living dead and through this violence, created death worlds (Rifkin, 2017). Indigenous peoples survived genocide, survived the apocalypse, and now live in a post-apocalyptic temporality where storytelling is both an act of creation and of survivance. Baldy (2013) discusses the importance of storytelling and temporality when she writes:

> We cannot be complicit in erasing the past by 'getting over it.' In these words, when we speak to our survival, we are sending strength to those who fought, bled, died, and refused to 'get over' what was happening to them. We also refuse to accept that it can, should, or will happen to us. We stand up. We fight. (Baldy, 2013)

Indigenous temporality and survivance are "articulations of sovereignty, and self-determination in the present" (Chayne & Rifkin, n.d.).

Though this conversation is beyond the scope of my paper, it is important to note that Indigenous temporalities are not "inherently liberatory nor transcendent. They can generate their own questionable normativities and can still be worthy of critique on various grounds"

(Rifkin, 2017, p. 188). The purpose of this section is not to critique or romanticize Indigenous temporalities, but rather to lay out the ways Indigenous temporalities challenge alt-right and settler-colonial temporal constructions. It is also important to note that the unique Indigenous Nations have their own temporalities as informed by their own stories and ways of being. These important differences are, unfortunately, outside of this paper's scope as well.

Self-Location—My Own Temporal Subjectivities

Milner (2007) states, "dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen can emerge for researchers [and teachers] when they do not pay careful attention to their own and others' racialized and cultural systems of coming to know, knowing, and experiencing the world" (p. 388). In locating my own systems of knowing and presenting, I write about my personal and cultural background as a settler-colonist. With this structure, I confront my own history through the lens of settler-colonialism as a structural system—ultimately investigating how this background shapes my epistemological and axiological stances as a teacher-researcher (Stanton, 2019).

During WWI, my great grandmother fled her home in the (then) Austro-Hungarian Empire, chased by haunting dreams of falling bombs. In Sweden, my great-great grandparents walked onto boats bound for the United States, leaving behind famine and family in search of jobs. All sides of my family found their ways to Montana and the mines of Butte, Anaconda, and Georgetown—locations where my family has remained ever since. In the high mountain desert forests of my childhood, I chased my grandma's spoken memories of her grandparents—I leapt over deep, linear trenches marking collapsed mine tunnels, explored desolated, alien planet landscapes caused by poisonous mine waste, and unearthed strange, rusted machinery from Georgetown's industrial past. I mythologized the land and these remnants of settler-colonialism

as being part of the masculine wild West where brave adventurers overcame great obstacles to thrive. However, this narrative, which became part of my ways of knowing the world, is violent and supports white supremacy. In the following sections, I confront how these aspects of my identity inform who I am, where I am, and what I believe.

Settler-colonialism, upheld by the myth of meritocracy through land privatization as an incentive for 'settling' the West and building industry, was enacted through the Mining Act of 1872 (Simon, 2018). People such as my family used these acts to displace the Indigenous Peoples of the Ql'ispé and Séliš Nations who lived in and passed through the Georgetown Valley and what is now Anaconda ("Tribal Territories in Montana," 2019). Settler-colonist prospectors literally and figuratively flooded the valley in 1901 to create Georgetown Lake and a hydro plant that powered mining operations (Riddle-Johnson, 1964). This displacement through flooding was a precursor to the United States' other acts of Indigenous dispossession through floods, such as the Pick-Sloan Plan (Estes, 2019). Though my family didn't arrive to mine and log Georgetown until 1923, their participation in the nation of immigrants framework, which "undermines long-standing claims Indigenous people have to lands and privileges Eurocentric nationalistic origin myths" (Stanton, 2019, p. 284), fully benefited them and, subsequently, gave me many privileges.

My family history, when contextualized by the broader history of the United States, means my epistemology was and is subsumed not only in the nation of immigrants framework, but also 'the great melting pot' rhetoric that supports assimilation of white immigrants. Though my great-great grandmother Lydia never became a U.S. citizen because she would not give up her Swedish citizenship and spoke very little English, her descendants assimilated to

"mainstream norms and values" (King, 1991, p. 138) to the point where my dad, my brother, and I do not identify as being culturally Swedish. My family's whiteness was, and is, "a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced, and which are intrinsically linked to dynamic relations of domination" (DiAngelo, 2011, p. 56). My family's whiteness, as intersecting with extractive capitalism and the normalized racialized victimization of Indigenous peoples and Chinese immigrants in mining towns (Merritt, 2010), gave my family access to opportunities and the ability to build a middle-class positioning through land ownership, education, and jobs—which give me power and privilege today.

Because of my family's history in what is now known as United States, parts of my epistemology and axiology are rooted in the violent "conquering culture" (Love, 2019, p. 3) of whiteness and colonization, which manifests as perfectionism and a belief that hard-work, self-control, and grit can solve any problem. As pointed out by Love (2019), these internalized beliefs are all aspects of character education, which is anti-Black. As I reflect on my professional background, I see how my drive for academic achievement was informed by and supported these harmful narratives of conquering myself and conquering courses. These beliefs became further ingrained in me as I found professional and academic success throughout college. Of course, the privileges and benefits I have as a middle-class, able-bodied, white woman have also largely contributed to my success.

Often, these temporalities of dominant culture gain power through normalizing themselves as natural. This discursive move makes identifying my temporalities difficult as they are often hidden or hard to trace, as they were designed to be. As a teacher-researcher, I self-locate myself within this history to be accountable to how my relationships with structural

systems helped shape my relationships and my ways of knowing—my reality. By addressing my internalized beliefs from my historicized and contextualized positionalities, I reveal the ways my research intersects with white supremacy and colonization. These intersections permeate this paper, even in the sinews of its format—an academic paper. As previously established, academia has been, and, in many ways, continues to be an arm of colonial assimilation.

My positionalities impact the way I read *The Odyssey* and *How I Became a Ghost. The Odyssey* has been used as justification of white supremacy, a violent system that benefits my family and I. As such, I must actively resist passive acceptance of plot points shaped into this justification. As a settler-colonist, I recognize that I need to resist reading *How I Became a Ghost* to exoticize/exorcise and observe, uncover, and know "the Other" (Stanton, 2020). Instead, I need to be present and active as I read, as recommended by Sabzalian (Stanton, 2020), and recognize that part of the novel's politic of refusal means that there are aspects of it that I cannot know or see. Tuck and Ree (2013) illustrate this dynamic when they open their writing by addressing the reader with:

> I am resigning myself and you to the idea that parts of my telling are confounding. I care about you understanding, but care more about concealing parts of myself from you. I don't trust you very much. You are not always aware of how you can be dangerous to me, and this makes me dangerous to you. I am using my arm to determine the length of your gaze...Yes, I am telling you a story, but you may be reading a different one. (p. 640)

With my cultural schema and frame of reference, there are levels in this novel that are inaccessible to me, and rightly so. This inaccessibility and control of gaze is a form survivance.

The Gothic

The Gothic can be both oppressive and liberatory (Groom 2012; Halberstam, 2006). Due to this, the Gothic is a powerful lens to uncover and recognize the systems of power that lay behind shimmering ghosts—the same systems of power that animate nation building and harm students through producing the subjectivities of humanness and non-being. These dynamics become clear through investigating the Gothic's role in constructing the subjectivity of a self-policing English national citizen.

The Gothic's focus on body horror and internal evilness created a new technology of subjectivity production, ultimately changing how humans knew and understood themselves as subjects of a nation. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, an explosion of Gothic literature built the emerging English national identity by "bequeathing to the English imagination an extraordinary carnality" (Groom, 2012, p. 34). Literature in this time period was packed with decay, unnatural crimes, destruction, and gore which "presented the body as something forever being prised apart and brutally dissected" (Groom, 2012, p. 34-35). This fascination with the internal body emerged from larger questions about what animates a body, what gives existence meaning, and "what lies within—is it the soul, a ghost, or merely enigmatic emptiness?" (Groom, 2012, p. 35). Through building plot lines and characters from these questions of body and soul, Gothic novels produced distinctions between pure, good, normal bodies/souls/subjectivities (the human) and abnormal bodies/souls/subjectivities (the non-human). Readers began to police themselves for "evil and criminality as a seed planted deep within the interior self" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 41). Searching for this deeply planted seed

caused people to create and surveil their internal selves, looking for evidence of their own normalness or deviance (Groom, 2012).

The Gothic's ripped open bodies and subjectivity production materialized in the Gothic monster—such as Hyde, Dracula, and Frankenstein's creation. Through the discursive regimes in the nineteenth century, monsters came to symbolize threats to the nation and capitalism, such as class struggle, women, sexuality, race, and the foreign, in order to justify, calcify, and condense harmful categories of Other and deviance. Through this, monsters "embody what is not human, produc[ing] the human as a discursive effect" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 45). Ultimately, monsters became vehicles spreading British nationalism and justifying the racism and antisemitism England relied on for its national building project.

Further, the Gothic's production of the policing, internal self ties individual subjects to politics and history, positioning the history of nation-building as the framework people view their own subjectivities through. For example, *Melmoth the Wanderer,* by Irish author Charles Maturin, created a Gothic framework of Irish national subjectivity. The novel crafted a horrific, nesting doll style narrative in response to the 1801 Act of Union between Britain and Ireland. Melmoth makes a pact with the Devil to live for 150 years, which overthrows rational, linear historical progress and instead breathes life into history, creating a "snarled-up historical chronology" (Groom, 2012, p. 90). In the Gothic, history "is therefore alive (or rather undead)...but it is also digressive and unstable" (Groom, 2012, p. 90-91). This collapse, or expansion, of history displays how "Irish identity is fractured and crazed" (Groom, 2012, p. 90). This makes people's bodies and souls political by tying them to a nation-building historical consciousness that "transform[s] political struggles into psychological conditions and

then…blur[s] the distinction between the two" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 18). Through this blurring, works birthed from historical and political events, like *Melmoth the Wanderer*, "reinvent the Gothic as a nationalist trauma" (Groom, 2012, p. 91)—a positionality from which oppressive or liberatory power arises.

Nationalist traumas become arenas of disputed memories and histories—a landscape dominant power structures attempt to harness in order to narrate official histories that calcify the boundaries between Us and Them. This is seen in how the United States' culture wars over Confederate monuments and book bans directly link to the nation building project through controlling collective memories. However, the Gothic genre is fueled by "the barely acknowledged suppression of history [hanging] behind the Gothic myth like a nightmare" (Groom, 2012, p. 72). Through this ever-present threat, the landscape of disputed memories and histories is not only a place of oppressive control, it is also ripe for the slipperiness of the Gothic's signifier and signified to work their magic, re-signifying events, characters, and plot lines to expose "the structures and fractures of a culture [of the nation-building project]" (Sturken, 1997, as cited in Bowman-McElhone et al., p. 1183). Therefore, at the same time the Gothic is upholding harmful, hegemonic power structures through the creation of the Other, it is also cannibalizing these power structures, eating away at their very foundation—opening up the landscapes for liberatory purposes where the Other haunts as a form of justice.

The Gothic's ability to perform this duality, this dance of oppression and liberation, lies in the genre's potential to re-signify aspects of a text. Through resignification, monsters are no longer ostracized deviant identities, but vehicles to reclaim humanity and power—an "avatar, a host that will be your shelter while you make a new geography" (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super

Futures Haunt Quollective, 2016, p. 15). The ripping apart of bodies no longer signifies the creation of internal surveillance and non-humanity, but instead signifies the ripping apart of hegemonic culture's boundaries through the creation of ruptures and orifices that pollute the nation-building project (Butler, 1990). Histories and peoples buried alive, viciously sacrificed to fuel the nation-building project, return as vengeful, liberatory ghosts "unsettled and unsettling" (Morrison, 1992, p. 6)—ghosts who are a "disabling virus within literary discourse" (Morrison, 1992, p. 7). Ambivalent and ambiguous, the Gothic genre complicates relationships between the signifiers and the signified to create new pathways of associations and meaning. This slippage results in "multiple interpretations…embedded in the text [therefore] part of the experience of horror comes from the realization that meaning itself runs riot" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 2).

In England, the United States, and Indigenous Country (which is really all land), Gothic literature animates the forces of history as if history itself were Frankenstein's monster, brought to life, deeply intelligent, and willing to obsess over revenge as justice. In bringing history to life, the Gothic ensures that national imaginaries and subjectivities are fractured by the power of hidden histories and old crimes returning from the repressed. This hallmark of the Gothic genre, "probe[s] the consequences of history and the telling of secrets" (Groom, 2012, p. 77-78), such as the secrets of slavery, genocide, and other horrific violences.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

I used theoretical thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017) to analyze *How I Became a Ghost* and *The Odyssey.* My data analysis is driven by the theoretical frameworks of this project—the Gothic, monument/memorial studies, and temporality. Following Braun and Clarke's framework for data analysis as described by Maguire and Delahunt (2017), I began my process by familiarizing myself with the data. For this project, that meant completing an initial read through of both data sets—both texts. On this read through, I used handwritten memos (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) in a research notebook to record my initial impressions. On the second read through, I organized my data according to open coding that related to my theoretical framework and research question (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The codes that arose from this process were prophecy, the Gothic, monsters and monstrosities, ghosts/hauntings, consumption, memory and legacy, grief, boundaries and borders, temporal tensions, and refusals.

Once the data was organized, I identified descriptive themes, which "described patterns in the data relevant to the research question" (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3356), from the information gathered through the coding process. In this way, I moved from identification (codes) to analysis (themes). For example, some themes that formed from my codes were: the purpose of grief, rupturing boundaries and borders, and the slipperiness of the signified and signifier in the Gothic. Before writing the findings, I defined the themes through the creation of a thematic map which "illustrates the relationships between themes" (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, p. 3351). This allowed me to most fully chart my interpretations of the data. From charting these relationships and interpretations, I organized my data into the headers in the findings section.

FINDINGS

Language and Narrative Structure

Choctaw Nation, Mississippi, 1830

> *Maybe you have never read a book written by a ghost before. I am a ghost. I am not a ghost when this book begins, so you have to pay very close attention. I should tell you something else. I see things before they happen. You are probably thinking, "I wish I could see things before they happen." Be careful what you wish for. (Tingle, 2013, p.1)*

From the very opening words, *How I Became a Ghost* positions itself as being in dialogue with the reader through the use of the pronoun 'you.' Temporal boundaries of present-day and 1830 collapse, and settler-colonial readers are instantly enmeshed, on a personal level, in a present-tense telling of the United States' genocidal removal policy—the Trail of Tears. This collapse is key for crafting a liberatory Gothic historical consciousness that ruptures the curricular project of replacement and settler futurity that positions Indigenous peoples as only being in the distant past (Calderón, 2014; Stanton, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Through collapsing coffin-like temporal borders between the text and the reader, the novel's narrative structure opens wounds wrought by genocide and dispossession.

Further, while the majority of *How I Became a Ghost* has a friendly, straight-forward, middle-grades narration voice, its opening is unique in its ominous, almost threatening tone. The tone forces settler-colonial readers "to pay very close attention…[and] be careful what you wish for" (Tingle, 2013, p. 1). In paying close attention, settler-colonial subjectivity production networks and narratives fracture when confronted with counter-narratives to the United States' official story—a confrontation that ultimately opens space for Indigenous temporalities. This is evident in Isaac's dual positioning as both a future-ghost and a present-ghost, illustrating how

within Indigenous temporality "*was, is,* and *will be*…enter into complex exchanges with each other" (Rifkin, 2017, p. 177). Further, the opening's self-awareness of its own textuality is a Gothic method to produce terror through disrupting genre norms that "stabilize the production of meaning within them" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 23). Right from Isaac's first words, he releases meaning, creating an unpredictable puzzle or labyrinth within the text's complex temporal landscape, ultimately freeing readers to de-naturalize settler-colonial temporalities and the human, non-human, and living dead identities produced within.

Drawing the reader further into this labyrinth, Isaac often speaks directly to the reader in italicized asides—interruptions that force the reader to relentlessly remember the text and the narrator's self-awareness (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, 2016). When future-ghost and present-ghost Isaac initiates dialogue with the reader, he often issues instructions, such as "*Hoke*. I should tell you this. Do not be afraid" (Tingle, 2013, p. 7). Modern readers, due to the Gothic's ubiquitousness, are conditioned to view Isaac's dialogue and instructions as creating a "layered narrative structure in which a story must be peeled back to reveal the secret or repressed center" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 21). With this, *How I Became a Ghost* is a vehicle that facilitates the return of the repressed in settler-colonial readers and in the United States' national consciousness through showing readers the necropolitical, genocidal violence of the United States' national building project. Isaac's positionality as a speaking ghost and the novel's collapse of temporal boundaries speaks to how these genocidal policies continue to haunt the U.S. today. Overall, *How I Became a Ghost*'s narrative structure catalyzes a Gothic historical consciousness in readers that resists historical closure narratives (Davis, 2016) common in textbooks (Calderón, 2014; Stanton, 2015).

For example, at the very beginning of *How I Became a Ghost*, a group of white settler-colonialists attack Isaac's village, burning houses with people still in them along with the church which housed the missionaries. As Isaac watches a white man drop a flaming torch into the church, he thinks "*What about the Bibles?...And the songbooks?*" (Tingle, 2013, p. 16). This moment reveals the lies embedded with the United States' mythos used to justify dispossession and genocide—Manifest Destiny and the Divine Doctrine. The Divine Doctrine was a Catholic papal bull "used to justify snuffing out Indigenous people's culture and livelihoods" (Chappell, 2023, para. 1) in the name of Christian expansion. Settler-colonists and the US government hid their genocidal intentions behind the language of religion and religion's civilizing mission (Chappell, 2023). However, *How I Became a Ghost* makes it clear that these settler-colonial men do not care for the church and religion; they only care about destruction and genocide. As Isaac and his family escape the white men and fire, one man whispers to himself "We should have done this a long time ago" (Tingle, 2013, p. 17). This piece of dialogue reveals that the white mens' destruction of the church was not carried out through sudden mob mentality, but was seen as part of a pre-mediated violent act to dispossess the Choctaws.

The Odyssey utilizes narrative and structural moves similar to *How I Became a Ghost* to create a layered, densely woven narrative, ultimately destabilizing the production of meaning, but with the outcome of crafting a strange, eternal, ahistorical temporality. *The Odyssey* is a story of Odysseus' attempts to rewind time to an idealized past and return home—which are key aspects of the alt-right temporality (Valencia-García, 2020). Odysseus' story begins in medias res (in the middle of the plot's timeline) with Odysseus trapped on the goddess Calypso's island. Once the gods force Calypso to free him, Odysseus makes his way to King Alcinous' home and

eventually tells his story from the time he left Troy. Therefore, all of the chapters detailing Odysseus' journey are presented not by a neutral narrator, but by Odysseus himself—the "wily…lord of lies" (Wilson, 2018, p. 240); a man who is infamous for his cunningness and deceit. This narrative move produces a mixed-up plot structure that positions the epic's readers/listeners as eavesdroppers, as if we were also listening to Odysseus tell his tale in King Alcinous' court—a narrative move that, throughout time, became the seed for settler-colonial and alt-right temporalities.

As Euro-Americans locate our creation story within Greek and Roman antiquity, *The Odyssey'*s narrative structure lays the foundation for the Western "epistemological paradigm, [in which] individual knowers become disembodied, featureless subjects who gaze at the world as detached observers freed from their specific environments and contexts" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 121). *How I Became a Ghost*'s narrative structure refuses this settler-colonial epistemological paradigm through constantly addressing each specific reader with the pronoun you as a method to reveal and collapse temporal borders. However, *The Odyssey* does not collapse temporal borders; instead, through positioning readers as detached observers within Alcinous' court, *The Odyssey* constructs temporality as something eternal, objective, and possible to both observe and judge. It does not matter how much time lays between the reader and Odysseus, the reader is comfortably within Alcinous' court. As detached observers, readers experience the Western epistemological paradigm as "universal…truth-claims…everlasting and eternally true" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 121).

The Odyssey further produces this eternally everlasting temporality through epithets, descriptor phrases of specific characters repeated over and over throughout the epic. For

example, Athena is always bright-eyed, Penelope is always careful, the gods are always deathless, and Odysseus is always cunning. As described by Wilson (2018), epithets "express an *essential* quality or characteristic, rather than a trait that the object or person possesses only in a particular moment [italics mine]" (p. 6). Through this essential characteristic, epithets "suggest that things have an eternal, infinitely repeatable presence" (Wilson, 2018, p. 5). This connects with Western, settler-colonial temporalities that privilege supposedly true, unchanging knowledge. The alt-right and conservative conceptions of temporality and history reproduce *The Odyssey's* temporality of eternity in their construction of good history, the ahistorical narratives that support white supremacy and the patriarchy, as eternal (Bauer, 2020).

Containment, Contamination, and Temporal Landscapes

Settler anxiety over temporality and history is evident in Tuck and Ree's (2013) analysis of modern-day settler-colonial horror films. In these films, the innocent hero is attacked by haunting ghosts, the undead unburied from their graves, or unspeakables emerged from alternate dimensions—all symbols of ruptures to the linear, rational temporality that supports white supremacy. The presence and visibility of these monsters instead causes temporality to ripple, fold, and tangle. The supposedly innocent heroes in settler-colonial horror films obsess over righting the wrongness of the monsters through trapping them in graves or other objects (Tuck & Ree, 2013). These narratives of containment reveal that settler-colonial temporal construction is reliant on containing other temporalities, symbolized by ghosts and monsters who reveal settler-colonial temporality as a constructed false facade rather than an eternal, objective truth. Therefore, the films' heroes are made heroic through containing and

domesticating temporality as a method of domesticating people to ensure the future will be an eternal repetition of the present (Freire, 1970).

The Odyssey, much like settler-colonial horror movies, is a tale of Odysseus' journey to contain and re-chain time to a linear temporality by returning to his home, his property, and his youthful prime. The epic poem's tangled narrative structure and Odysseus' long absence from home unchained temporality from its linear path, a wrong Odysseus fights to right. This is evident as Odysseus and Athena's plan to restore Odysseus hinges on restoring "the father, the mother, the son…in the gradual and difficult struggle to *rebuild their lost nuclear family* [italics mine]" (Wilson, 2018, p. 4-5). It is key that the core struggle of the poem is to rebuild a lost nuclear family because the settler-colonial and alt-right temporalities also revolve around building and maintaining a heteroreproductive nuclear family.

Odysseus' central desire to "recover his own identity…as a master of his home and household, as a father and as a husband" (Wilson, 2018, p. 3) drives the urgency of the epic's plot and its temporal politics. On the goddess Calypso's island, Odysseus is partially unchained from a linear temporality though Calypso's offer of immortality, which would set Odysseus "free from time and death forever" (Wilson, 2018, p. 184). However, Odysseus stares at the "fruitless sea" (Wilson, 2018, p. 183)—symbolizing a future devoid of reproduction—and cries for his lost reproductively inflected temporality that gave him power. This plot point reveals reproduction and the temporality it births as key within *The Odyssey* and, subsequently, within temporalities that undergird the Western paradigm, including settler-colonialism and the alt-right. When Odysseus is eventually gifted the option to leave Calypso thanks to divine

intervention, he reclaims mortality, returning to a temporality of "masculine honor" (Wilson, 2018, p. 60) through his identities of master, husband, and father.

How I Became a Ghost also looks to temporality as a way to gain power and agency. However, *How I Became a Ghost*, at odds with *The Odyssey*, utilizes the Gothic to unbury and unchain history from linear settler-colonial/alt-right temporalities—which are forms of containment—and instead contaminates these temporalities (Tuck & Ree, 2013). This contamination destroys any possibility of re-containment, such as the return Odysseus seeks when leaving Calypso. Through this, *How I Became a Ghost* uses the Gothic and contamination as decolonization practices.

Isaac's positionality of ghost and the novel's tangled, layered narrative become a contaminating stain; a leak spreading through curriculum, national imaginaries, and Euro-American origin myths that all rely on historical closures to build a contained, linear temporality. Leaks seep around the edges of historical closures. They cause people to subconsciously "sense the unrecognizable as you might experience seepage, to see the coordinates of the familiar change from underneath and overhead, to trouble the real into a space that momentarily houses ghosts" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 647). The power of leaks lies in making well charted places, narratives, and curriculum unrecognizable. Welcoming leaks, as part of a Gothic historical consciousness, follows Sabzalian's (2019) call for curriculum to feature Indigenous representation that make "familiar ways of knowing Indigenous peoples…strange, uncomfortable, and intolerable" (p. 162).

As leaks are subconsciously sensed before they are seen, they are also a method to target the unconscious and facilitate the return of the repressed—releasing that which has been

contained and instead allowing it to spread, to contaminate. Through this leaking, haunting, and contamination of the linear settler-colonial temporality, the ghosts and hauntings within *How I Became a Ghost* "aim to wrong the wrongs, a confrontation that settler horror hopes to evade" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 642), as opposed to Odysseus' aim to right the temporal wrongs.

In *How I Became a Ghost,* settler readers face the confrontation of wronging wrongs through the novel's Gothic elements. This is especially clear when Isaac assures the reader that he will always be here; he will not disappear when his bones are buried or when the book's cover is closed, explaining, "Choctaws never say 'good-bye.' There is no word for it. We say '*chi pisa lachike,*' which means, 'I will see you again, in the future'...Choctaws never go away" (Tingle, 2013, p. 84). Isaac, and the temporality he symbolizes, will not be contained or chained to a settler-colonial temporality. Isaac's insistent presence disrupts the dialectic presence and absence of Indians that so much of the United States' nation building project relies on (Calderón, 2014). When ghosts are never gone, when they never leave, destabilizing fractures appear in the United States' nation building narrative and national subject subjectivity production.

The Odyssey further illustrates the threat of ghosts as contaminants that facilitate the return of the repressed. When the sorceress Circe commands Odysseus to journey to the Underworld, Odysseus "wept, and lost all will to live and see the shining sun…sobbing and rolling round in grief" (Wilson, 2018, p. 275). Odysseus is so terrified because he has to face the past which is unnaturally alive within the ghosts who "speak the truth to you" (Wilson, 2018, p. 284). In other sections of *The Odyssey,* wily Odysseus narrated and twisted events to paint specific, heroic views of himself. However, in the Underworld, the ghosts speak for

themselves and deny Odysseus the power of shaping reality to suit his needs. The ghosts Odysseus speaks to re/shape Odysseus' relationship with past, present, and future, none more so than Agamemnon, a great Greek king and general. Odysseus hears Agamemnon's story from the lips of his ghost—learning he was murdered by his wife, Clytemnestra, and her lover when Agamemnon returned from the Trojan war. In response, Odysseus cried, "Zeus has always brought disaster…through women" (Wilson, 2018, p. 293). This story will haunt Odysseus through the rest of the poem, leading him to fear own wife (Wilson, 2018) and other women who are young enough to reproduce. Reproduction is not only a site of producing the nuclear family, it is also a site fraught with danger in the Eurocentric context, leading to a view of women and women's sexuality as being unclean, untrustworthy, and uncontrollable.

Settler-colonial and alt-right temporalities fear contamination and leaks, especially when involving women, as these destabilize dominant culture's power. This is evident when Odysseus and Telemachus, Odysseus' twenty-year-old son, murder twelve enslaved maids. At this point in the plot, Odysseus gained back his son and slaughtered all the suitors, but he has not yet reclaimed his wife Penelope—the last puzzle piece to restore his nuclear family and re-contain temporality. Before revealing himself to Penelope, Odysseus must make sure all other contaminations are contained. Odysseus asks Eurycleia, an elderly enslaved woman who loves Odysseus, which of the slave girls "dishonor me? And which are *pure*? [italics mine]" (Wilson, 2018, p. 490). After learning the suitors sexually assaulted twelve enslaved maids, Odysseus orders the twelve to clean the site of slaughter, dispose of the suitors' corpses, and make sure the "house is set in *proper order, restore* my halls to health [italics mine]" (Wilson, 2018, p. 491). After the women clean and purify the site of slaughter, Odysseus and Telemachus trap the

women in the courtyard and prepare to murder them with swords. However, Telemachus stops Odysseus and decides to hang the maids instead. Wilson (2018), theorizing on why Telemachus picked this moment to disobey Odysseus, writes "one possible answer has to do with cleanliness and pollution…[hanging] maintains the 'tainted' bodies in their self-contained state" (p. 53). Through the language of purity, order, and restoration, *The Odyssey* gestures that a pure, orderly temporality requires careful, violent policing, especially of younger women, to contain contaminants that threaten total patriarchal power.

However, the Gothic structural elements of *The Odyssey* still leave open gaps for the text itself to craft a counter-story. Once Odysseus leaves King Alcinous' house after telling his story, the narration perspective shifts. The reader is no longer listening to Odysseus' retelling of his voyage. Instead, the narrator is now relating an in-time unfolding of events in the third person. With this shift, there are moments the poem challenges Odyssey. For example, when describe the maids' death, the narration uses a metaphor of trapped birds:

> As doves or thrushes spread their wings to fly home to their nests, but someone sets a trap—they crash into a net, a bitter bedtime; just so the girls, their heads all in a row, were strung up with the noose around their necks to make their death an agony. (Wilson, 2018, p. 492)

Though Odysseus portrays the girls as being unclean contaminants or pollutants, the narration compares the girls to birds—natural, beautiful creatures that often carry messages from the gods. Though Odysseus aims to portray his nuclear family temporality as the natural way of the world, the poem's pushback through descriptors of the maids reveals the constructedness of this temporality and denaturalizes it.

Rupturing Boundaries and Monstrosity

In the Gothic genre, the colonizing obsession with defining and policing borders manifests in anxieties over skin and bodily orifices as locations that either contain a monster's contamination of the status quo, or that, when broken, pollute the status quo (Butler, 1990). As these skin borders are locations that birth and guard nation-building subjectivity production, the Gothic "marks a peculiarly modern preoccupation with boundaries and their collapse" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 23) *How I Became a Ghost* utilizes this aspect of the Gothic through rupturing skin as resistance against dominant culture's inscriptions of morality and humanness.

The novel opens with Isaac's mother taking him to witness the Choctaw elders' response to Treaty Talk—the order to leave their homes and begin the forced march on the Trail of Tears. Isaac witnesses elder women leap into a river, stomping and dancing upon the sharp stones that line the riverbed so that "blood rose from the bottom of the river, and still the women danced…the water was blood red, but the women showed no pain…[they] stared ahead like they were blind, like they saw nothing and felt nothing" (Tingle, 2013, p. 10-11). In another location, Isaac witnesses the elder men remove their shirts and rub their backs on trees. The abrasive bark tore open their skin so that:

> Blood dripped from his back and covered the ground at his feet. His face was still as a stone, as if he didn't feel the pain…Soon all the old men started rubbing their backs against the trees. When their backs were ripped open and bleeding, they sat in a puddle of their own blood. (Tingle, 2013, p. 7)

Within the Gothic, blood is a symbol of the internal self; any bodily rupture that results in blood holds the possibility, terrifying to dominant culture, of pollution. Colonizing nations inscribe monstrosity on skin when "the outside becomes the inside and the hide [skin] no longer conceals or contains" (Halberstam, 2006, p. 7). These Choctaw elders inhabit Indigenous bodies the U.S.

attempted to make monstrous and forcefully disappear and dispossess through sealing Indigenous bodies within the borders of reservations. With this, reservations became a form of skin with borders as calcified scars—a boundary that separated the inside (Indigenous peoples and societies) from the outside (settler-colonial society). However, these Choctaw elders, through intentionally rupturing their skin, refuse that containment and directly connect their bodily ruptures to their land.

In many U.S. horror films, spilled blood is often connotated as a form of pollution or violence. This connotation extends past horror movies into larger society and nation-building as a whole. For example, Butler (1990) writes, "any kind of unregulated permeability [of the body] constitutes a site of pollution and endangerment [to the dominant social system]" (p. 2545). The Choctaw elders, through rupturing the boundaries of their bodies as a goodbye to their homes, engaged in an act of survivance that revealed the instability of the dominate culture the U.S. was attempting to build through genocide. The novel itself recognizes the power of blood when, later in the plot, the bone pickers, old Choctaw women who prepare bodies for burial, say, "nothing scares *Nahullos* [white people] like bloody bones" (Tingle, 2013, p. 113). Indigenous blood causes anxiety in white people as evident through the use of blood quantum—a colonization policy dating back to the eighteenth century meant to litigate, track, and control Indigenous blood (Native Governance Center, 2022, para. 7).

After Isaac witnesses the elders shedding blood, he observes them seal each other's wounds by "patt[ing] dirt on a friend's back to stop the bleeding" (Tingle, 2013, p. 7). The men take on a new skin formed from the soil of their land. The novel offers no explanation for these actions. Isaac ends his description with the simple sentence that even though mud was packed

into the wound, “the bleeding never stopped” (Tingle, 2013, p. 7). This is another act of survivance that signals to the reader that the bleeding, the haunting and contamination, continues on, reaching through time and space from 1830 Mississippi to the reader’s current moment.

The motif of ruptured bodies and their exposed insides—blood and bones—continues throughout the whole novel. While walking through a vicious blizzard, Isaac’s bare feet freeze to the ground and the skin tears away when he attempts to move. Forcing himself to walk, Isaac left bright red, bloody footprints in the snow that terrified and hypnotized him. Later, ghost-Isaac counseled Naomi's family on how to act when the soldiers hunting Naomi arrived. He tells the family to show the soldiers the body of their five-year-old daughter, Nita, who died on the Trail. Isaac, responding to the parents’ fear, tells them, “if they [the soldiers] scatter Nita’s bones, we will gather them. If they burn her bones, we will gather the ashes. We are Choctaws. We are stronger than the soldiers” (Tingle, 2013, p. 125). Near the end of the novel, Naomi hid from the soldiers underneath a false floor in a trunk filled with the bones of the Choctaw dead—being literally buried alive by the bones of her people as she “heard the bones scatter and roll, only a few inches above her head” (Tingle, 2013, p. 110). The bone picker women who hid Naomi poured raccoon blood into the trunk so that the blood “dripped through the cracks in the floor and fell like raindrops on Naomi’s face” (Tingle, 2013, p. 113), knowing this would terrify and dissuade the soldiers.

During these moments of bodily/boundary ruptures, there is transformation. When witnessing the elder men and women rupture their bodies, Isaac had visions of two elders bursting into flames—a prophecy that foretold how the United States' colonial, nation-building violence would horrifically murder those elders, transforming them into ghosts. When Isaac

ruptures his own bodily boundaries, his dad instructs Isaac to look ahead. Isaac narrates: “Three days later my feet healed. But the healing began when I heard my father say those words” (Tingle, 2013, p. 48). Ghost Isaac’s speech about Nita’s bones transformed him, a ten-year-old boy, into a leader and agency-filled member of his Nation. When Naomi is hidden beneath bones, she is scared but emerges from the trunk into a fire, set by the soldiers, with strength and determination.

Within the Gothic genre and U.S. conceptions of horror, ghosts and monsters birthed from transformations “may be drawn from imperialistic or colonialist fantasies of other lands and peoples, but it concentrates its imaginative force upon the other peoples in ‘our’ lands, the monsters at home” (Halberstam, 2006, p. 15). In the Gothic tradition, these Indigenous characters and their transformations should be symbols of the inhuman Other. However, thanks to the flexibility of the signifier and signified in the Gothic, monsters and “hauntings [become] the act through which the denied ghosts of the American past are integrated into our national identity” (Brogan, 1995, as cited in Gore, 2011, p. 8). *How I Became a Ghost* takes this settler-colonial positionality of monster in *our* [settler-colonist’s] homes and resignifies transformations and monster into positionalities of strength, challenging settler-colonial claims to land.

In opposition to *How I Became a Ghost*, *The Odyssey* uses bodily ruptures and monstrosity to create and police the bodies of the Other—such as the Cyclops Polyphemus and Penelope’s suitors. Since Odysseus’ disappearance at sea, suitors from all over Ithaca have come to marry Penelope and lay claim to Odysseus’ wealth and property. *The Odyssey* explicitly positions the suitors, who “haunt our house day after day” (Wilson, 2018, p. 122), and their consumption as monstrous as evident in a conversation between Telemachus and Athena.

Telemachus complains about the suitors, saying, “they keep eating, spoiling my house” (Wilson, 2018, p. 113). To this, Athena replies, “This is monstrous!” (Wilson, 2018, p. 113). Not only are the suitors consuming the house’s food and wine stores, they are also consuming Odysseus’ property: his objects, herds of animals, and even, horrifically, the people Odysseus enslaved through the suitors’ sexual assault of the enslaved maids.

The suitors’ overzealous consumption grows to the point that it becomes cannibalistic. This is seen when Telemachus aligns the suitors’ consumption of his house with consumption of himself, saying “They keep eating, consuming my whole house, and soon they may destroy me too” (Wilson, 2018, p. 373). The suitors’ consumption of son—and of mother through marriage propositions—threatens to destroy the core of Odysseus’ subjectivity through destroying his nuclear family and his property. Therefore, Wilson (2018) writes, “The rage Odysseus musters against his uninvited guests seems to stem from a desperate need to preserve not only his wealth but even his identity from the mouths of those who are eating him alive” (Wilson, 2018, p. 28-29). This focus on consumption in both the original text and modern scholarship reveals that settler-colonial and alt-right subjectivities built upon antiquity and *The Odyssey* directly tie power to growing, maintaining, and consuming ownership of objects, property, and people.

Of course, this subjectivity becomes more complex when considering that Odysseus is really no better than the suitors—he acts the same way, consuming and cannibalizing others. For example, in telling his story to King Alcinous’ court, Odysseus says, “I sacked the town and killed the men. We took their wives and shared their riches equally among us” (Wilson, 2018, p. 241). However, he is shielded from the same critiques applied to the suitors due to his consumption being positioned as glorious instead of monstrous. Odysseus is celebrated for his

"multiplicity, and his slippery, boneless, self-devouring ability to change" (Wilson, 2018, pg. 62). Odysseus is so much like the suitors that he can engage in self-devouring self-consumption, in cannibalism, but he is rewarded for it.

These actions and world-views would eventually turn into tenets of settler-colonial and alt-right temporalities. This is illustrated with crystal clarity when Odysseus and his men sail to the island of the Cyclops. Odysseus describes the fertile, lush, beautiful landscape through negative connotations, saying the Cyclops, as a group, are "reckless…lacking in customs" (Wilson, 2018, p. 243) because they have not taken advantage of their island's fertility. Odysseus bemoans this and describes the island as "all untilled, unsown…with boats they [the Cyclops] could have turned this island into a fertile colony, with proper harvests" (Wilson, 2018, p. 244). Wilson (2018) makes sense of this section as a mediation on colonization in the ancient world, writing, "the Polyphemus episode…can be read as an attempt to justify Greek exploitation of non-Greek peoples…By this means, the text invites us to imagine that all non-Greek and pastoralist societies should be seen as barbaric and cannibalistic" (p. 22). Odysseus, in this moment of disgust and fear over the uncolonized island, proves himself to be a colonizer who holds perspectives that became deeply interwoven into the settler-colonial temporality. Odysseus' comments set up a colonial binary—much like the Euro-American colonial binary—that privileges developing (civilizing) a landscape for agriculture. Any other form of living is dehumanized as backwards and barbaric. Odysseus' view of the island's inhabitants connects to the Western epistemological paradigm which views knowledge and value as separate from nature and does "not see the relationship between peoples and places as significant for knowledge. In fact, the natural world is something to be feared" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 118). This fear of the

natural world manifests in the bodies of *The Odyssey*'s monsters—Scylla, Charybdis, the sirens, and the cyclops Polyphemus.

In Odysseus' telling the cyclops Polyphemus is made monstrous not only through his resistance to develop his land, but also through unsanctioned consumption of Odysseus' men. Polyphemus, having trapped the men in his cave,

> …showed no mercy [he] seized two [men], and knocked them hard against the ground like puppies, and the floor was wet with brains. He ripped them limb by limb to make his meal, then ate them like a lion on the mountains, devouring flesh, entrails, and marrow bones, and leaving nothing. (Wilson, 2018, p. 249)

Odysseus takes revenge on Polyphemus in order to police his monstrous body and open a path for Odysseus to escape not only with his life, but also with the Indigenous inhabitant's resources—his sheep and cheese. Odysseus and his remaining men shoved a red hot stake carved from olive wood into the Polyphemus' eye, narrating, "we whirled the fire-sharp weapon in his eye. His blood poured out around the stake, and blazing fire sizzled his lids and brows, and fried the roots" (Wilson, 2018, p. 252). Robbing Polyphemus of his sight, Odysseus creates a bodily rupture. While this rupture allows Odysseus to escape in the short term, this rupture also created a rupture in the social order that haunts Odysseus in the form of Poseidon's rage, which ultimately sentences Odysseus to wander lost at sea—losing all his men and honor before returning late to Ithaca.

Polyphemus' eye is not the only permeable border in *The Odyssey.* Odysseus is often so overcome with emotion that he consistently has tears pouring forth from his eyes, breaking the boundaries between what modern readers would view as his internal and external self. Part of the reason *The Odyssey* is such a compelling and unsettling text is because the textual realities of Odysseus' quick-flowing tears are at odds with the values and epistemologies of settler-

colonialists and alt-right conservatives—epistemologies that "emerged from Greek philosophy…[where] the knowledge worth having detaches knowers from places, from their particularities and subjectivities" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 110). Odysseus' tears are slippery ruptures that insist on attached and emotional subjectivity, creating a sense of horror and unsettling confusion in contemporary readers who function within settler-colonial and/or alt-right temporalities. Much of *The Odyssey* does fit with settler-colonial and alt-right temporalities, such as *The Odyssey*'s violence towards women, strict social and class hierarchies, slavery, war, toxic masculinity, and hyper-fixation on the nuclear family. However, Odysseus' tears are at odds with contemporary Eurocentric and patriarchal views of masculinity, ultimately unleashing a moment of dissonance, of a leak-through or a haunting. With this rupture, *The Odyssey* splits in a sort of double-vision, similar to a concussion, where readers simultaneously see two versions of reality that call into question if boundaries and borders of knowledge are truly impregnable.

Grief

Grief, like monstrosity, is a key vehicle of the nation building project and a technology of subjectivity production—designating who is human and who is Other through the deaths a nation grieves or does not grieve (Butler, 2004). For a long time in the United States' collective memory and federal policies, the death of an Indigenous person was not considered a grievable death—therefore positioning Indigenous peoples as non-human Others. For example, after the Battle of Greasy Grass (also known as Custer's Last Stand), the U.S. erected a battlefield monument honoring Colonel Custer within five years of the 1876 battle ("Little Bighorn Battlefield," n.d.). Work on a similar memorialization of the Indigenous Nations who fought and died for their freedoms did not begin until 1999 and was completed in 2013, 137 years after the battle ("Little

Bighorn Battlefield," n.d.). The losses of the Indigenous Nations were not grieved and consecrated in the American collective memory until exceptionally recently.

This is why *How I Became a Ghost* is such an important work. In it, readers bear witness to moments overflowing with profound grief: the deaths of family and friends, the physical pain of a forced march in the middle of winter, and genocidal removal policies. The characters are constantly in various moments of grief. Thanks to *How I Became a Ghost*'s narration structure, readers are in grief alongside the characters. For example, when Isaac's grieving family retrieves his body, Isaac, watching as a ghost, realizes "what a burden I would be for my family. They would never leave my body behind for animals to fight over my bones. Choctaws never leave their family's bones behind" (Tingle, 2013, p. 89). While watching his family grieve, Isaac wants nothing more than to comfort them. However, instead, he takes "a deep breath and watched" (Tingle, 2013, p. 90). With this, the reader, whether Native or non-Native, also takes a deep breath and watches grief in action. In presenting Indigenous characters as living grievable lives, *How I Became a Ghost* does the important political work of humanizing subjectivities that the U.S. nation building project has historically presented as non-human.

Grief in *How I Became a Ghost* reshapes the curricular and temporal landscape as grief and mourning are periods of inescapable transformation, "the full result of which one cannot know in advance" (Butler, 2004, p. 21). This is because grief, as Isaac observed while watching Naomi cry over the news of her sister's death, "is hard. Lives are changed forever by grieving" (Tingle, 2013, p. 98). Grief and mourning build and reshape subjectivities through forcing recognition of relationality—how people define and know themselves in relation to those they mourn (Butler, 2004). Through *How I Became a Ghost*'s intentional implication of the reader

within the narration, the novel ensures the reader will experience grief not as depoliticizing (Butler, 2004), but as a trigger to a transformational period where the reader, especially settler-colonial readers, must locate ourselves and our legacies within this history of genocide and dispossession. Further, this self-location reveals readers' ethical responsibility to this history and all those lost in the violence of colonization.

As stated by Butler (2004), "when one loses, one is also faced with something enigmatic: something is hiding in the loss, something is lost within the recesses of the loss" (p. 21-22). *How I Became a Ghost*'s use of Gothic elements and narration structures offers readers a way to reach what is buried and repressed within the losses and murders the U.S. perpetrated—a way to facilitate the return of the repressed. Through this facilitation, *How I Became a Ghost* refuses ahistorical curriculum, classrooms, and understandings of ourselves and of the United States' history. Further, this refusal is a refusal of the ahistoricism of the alt-right temporalities currently attempting to gain more influence in education.

On the other hand, *The Odyssey* provides a model for the repression and forgetting of grief. Though *The Odyssey* is overflowing with the tears of characters describing their grief when thinking of lost comrades, Odysseus says "It is rude to keep on grieving" (Wilson, 2018, p. 428). When Odysseus is disguised as a beggar and talking with Penelope for the first time in twenty years, he watches Penelope dissolve into her grief over his absence and says, "stop ruining your pretty skin with tears, and grieving for your husband, brokenhearted" (Wilson, 2018, p. 433). Odysseus asks Penelope to repress her grief, knowing that he will soon reveal his supposedly true self—the kind of Ithaca. The epic also presents grief as cannibalizing and poisonous. Menelaus, Helen's husband, describes all the warriors lost during the Trojan War and says, "I sit

here in my palace, mourning all who died, and often weeping. Sometimes tears bring comfort to my heart, but not for long; cold grief grows sickening" (Wilson, 2018, p. 155). Menelaus is poisoned by his grief, whereas Penelope's grief cannibalizes her as, "Grief wrapped around her, eating her heart" (Wilson, 2018, p. 175). Grief alters these characters on a physical level, just as Butler (2004) theorized. However, *The Odyssey* often offers a snake-oil ointment to heal these changes—turning back time.

There are multiple moments throughout *The Odyssey* where Athena plays with time to transform Odysseus from a worn soldier, to a bent-backed, ancient beggar, to a strong, handsome warrior in his prime just as he was when he left Ithaca for Troy twenty years ago. *The Odyssey* describes Odysseus' final transformation, where he revealed his supposedly eternal/internal, true identity to Penelope, as:

> And then Athena poured attractiveness from head to toe, and made him taller and stronger, and his hair grew thick and curly as a hyacinth. As when a craftsman who Athena or Hephaestus has trained in metalwork, so he can make beautiful artifacts, pours gold on silver—so she poured beauty on his head and shoulders…he looked like an immortal. (Wilson, 2018, p. 499-500)

However, the epic poem does not present this temporal shift as natural; instead, the poem itself recognizes the strange out-of-timeness of Odysseus' transformations. For example, before Penelope knows Odysseus is back, she predicts that "Odysseus himself must have old wrinkled feet and hands like these. We mortals grow old fast in times of trouble" (Wilson, 2018, p. 436). Odysseus' transformation is unnatural, but is simultaneously sanctioned by the gods. This temporal transformation, along with Odysseus' murder of the suitors and the twelve maids, successfully turns back time and crowns Odysseus' past his present. He has reclaimed not only his home and nuclear family, but also his youth. The epic ends with a form of amnesia, the forgetting of grief, birthed by Odysseus' violence and Athena's temporal transformations. With

this, *The Odyssey* lays the foundations for a settler-colonial and alt-right temporality that is hyper-obsessed with domination through reproducing the past and white-supremacy in the future—a form of temporal immortality and subjectivity built "on the fantasy of permanent patriarchal dominance over a carefully regulated human household" (Wilson, 2018, p. 61).

Overall, Athena turning back time is a temporality of forgetfulness. If time is turned back, there is no need to grieve—however, this temporality of forgetfulness has unintended consequences. Earlier in the epic, Helen, the only mortal woman in *The Odyssey* to possess mystical powers, gives her guests a drug mixed with wine that makes people forget their grief. This drug "take(s) all pain and rage away, to bring forgetfulness of every evil" (Wilson, 2018, p. 159). This removal of pain and grief goes to terrifying lengths where the partaker "will shed no tears that day, not even if her mother or her father die, nor even if soldiers kill her brother or her darling son with bronze spears before her very eyes" (Wilson, 2018, p. 159). The epic poem positions the level of forgetfulness, the amnesia, brought on by these drugs as a form of healing because Helen got the drugs from "skilled doctors…Healer's people" (Wilson, 2018, p. 159). However, by forgetting grief wrought by war, the characters lose their relational ties that build "fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility" (Butler, 2004, p. 22-23). Social ties unravel and communities unravel. These consequences are seen in Odysseus' tale of encountering the Lotus-Eaters. When Odysseus' men ate the Lotus fruit, they "lost the will to come back and bring news to me. They wanted only to stay there, feeding on the lotus with the Lotus-Eaters. They had forgotten home" (Wilson, 2018, p. 243). Further, even though Athena turns back time and frees Odysseus from the grasp of aging, the ghosts of those Odysseus spoke to in the Underworld or that he killed throughout his life still exist. They still haunt—ultimately refusing

Odysseus' temporal desires. Likewise, curriculum that engages in a temporality of forgetfulness does not actually vanquish undesirable ghosts and communities. The ghosts and their histories still exist and still refuse dominate culture's temporal desires.

Mercy and Revenge

Butler (2004) asks, "If we are interested in arresting cycles of violence to produce less violent outcomes, it is no doubt important to ask what, politically, might be made of grief besides a cry for war" (p. XII). *How I Became a Ghost* and *The Odyssey* answer this question through portrayals of revenge and mercy. *How I Became a Ghost* forwards a response of mercy and haunting, and *The Odyssey* argues that collective amnesia and forgetfulness is the only way to arrest the cycle of violence birthed from grief.

In *The Odyssey,* Odysseus' rage and desire for revenge on the suitors leads him to trap the suitors "in the snares of death" (Wilson, 2018, p. 477), a murderous rampage that ends with Odysseus surrounded by piles of corpses and "all smeared with blood. After a lion eats a grazing ox, its chest and jowls are thick with blood all over; a dreadful sight. Just so, Odysseus has blood all over him—from hands to feet" (Wilson, 2018, p. 490). However, violence and grief do not disappear with slaughtering the suitors. Instead, it inspires more grief from the "inconsolable" (Wilson, 2018, p. 521) families of the dead. The families' grief turned into a cry for war and revenge, leading to an armed standoff between these men and Odysseus, Telemachus, and Laertes, who is Odysseus' father. All are prepared to kill. Athena, turning to Zeus, asks how he would like to resolve this vengeful conflict. Zeus says:

> He [Odysseus] has already punished all of the suitors, so let them [Odysseus and the suitors' families] swear an oath that he will be king forever, and let us make sure the murder of their brothers and their sons will be forgotten. Let them all be

> friends, just as before, and let them live in peace and prosperity [italics mine]. (Wilson, 2018, p. 523)

This comment speaks to how practicing a politic of forced forgetfulness leaves the status quo, as symbolized by Odysseus, in power *forever.* The politic of forced forgetfulness creates an eternal temporality that reproduces oppressive power dynamics in the past, present, and future as past, present, and future are all collapsed into one static, never changing eternity.

How I Became a Ghost's portrayal of violence, grief, and mercy offers a strategy for rupturing the eternal temporality created in *The Odyssey*'s ending. For a settler-colonial reader, one of the most confusing aspects of *How I Became a Ghost* is that many of the Indigenous characters lack a furious desire for revenge. In settler-colonial stories where the protagonist or their loved ones are harmed or murdered, the protagonist would begin a hell-bent, obsessive journey of vengeance, such as in *Legends of the Fall,* the *Kill Bill* duology, or *The Punisher.* However, though the U.S. soldiers in *How I Became a Ghost* committed many crimes that would warrant the justice of revengeful haunting, this is never Isaac's goal. Instead, his goal and the goal of the other characters is to rescue Naomi and, through the rescue, make "our people proud. That is the highest honor a Choctaw can ever earn, to make the ancestors proud" (Tingle, 2013, p. 115). This focus on fostering relationality instead of enacting vengeance is the first glimmer of a path to arrest cycles of violence birthed from grief (Butler, 2004).

Nonetheless, one Indigenous character in the novel, Joseph, does desire revenge. Joseph, telling his story of escaping from the soldiers who murdered his grandparents, enslaved him, and who are now enslaving Naomi, says, "I didn't know if I wanted to stay alive or not. I was so angry. I wanted to kill them" (Tingle, 2013, p. 65). This is one moment where *How I Became a Ghost* shows whispers of desires that transgress the usual expectations for how protagonists

should act in middle-grades novels—ultimately distancing itself from simple readings that argue victims of violence forgiving the perpetrators is the only way to heal from grief. Though Joseph's desire for revenge does not result in the murderous blood bath of *The Odyssey*, his anger of the broken promises of treaties results in "the seeds of haunting, an engine for curses" (Tuck & Ree, 2013, p. 651).

Rather than vengeance, the young Indigenous protagonists—Joseph, Naomi, Isaac, and Nita—offer mercy when they save Leader's life, the white soldier who symbolizes the policing power of the United States' laws as the other U.S. soldiers were "bound by law to follow [him]" (Tingle, 2013, p. 132). At the end of the novel, Joseph and Naomi run through the forest to flee from Leader, who is chasing them on horseback and blind with anger over Naomi's escape. Leader's horse bucks him off, sending him crashing headfirst into a rock so that "blood gushed from a gash on his forehead" (Tingle, 2013, p. 135). It is significant that Leader, who symbolizes laws, reveals his body's permeability through a rupture on his head—a universal symbol in the Western paradigm of rationality, reasoning, and objectivity, which are characteristics that form the foundation of Western value systems. Through rupturing his own head, Leader creates a symbolic rupture in the Western epistemological paradigm, revealing the system as constructed rather than a natural universal.

As Leader is laying on the ground stunned, the wolf that killed Isaac suddenly appears. As Naomi, Joseph, Nita, and Isaac watch the wolf creep towards Leader, they decide, "we cannot let this happen" (Tingle, 2013, p. 136). Joseph transforms into the panther, a symbol of his monstrosity in the eyes of settler-colonialists, and kills the wolf before it kills Leader. In this intervention, the characters pick mercy rather than revenge, the exact opposite of Odysseus'

decision. On the first reading, this section rings like a false reconciliation, where the Indigenous characters save the white man in order to facilitate his character growth, allowing the white perpetrator to walk away with more knowledge and humanity. This reading calls to mind Sleeter and Grant's Human Relations approach to multicultural education, which values mutual respect, peace, harmony, and a let's all get along approach to Native/non-Native relations (Stanton, 2015). This approach practices a form of amnesia and forgetfulness, just like the end of *The Odyssey* when Zeus commands the groups to "all be friends, just as before…[and] live in peace and prosperity" (Wilson, 2018, p. 523). However, Tuck and Ree's (2013) discussion of mercy in the frame of haunting, ghosts, and revenge, reveal more complex layers within the characters' decision to save Leader's life:

> Mercy is a gift only ghosts can grant the living, and a gift ghosts cannot be forced, extorted, seduced, or tricked into giving. Even then, the fantasy of relief is deciduous. The gift is an illusion of relief and closure. Haunting can be deferred, delayed, and disseminated, but with some crimes of humanity—the violence of colonization—there is no putting to rest…Mercy is the power to give (and take). Mercy is a tactic. Mercy is ongoing, temporary, and in constant need of regeneration. Social justice may want to put things to rest, may believe in the repair in reparations, may consider itself an architect or a destination, may believe in utopic building materials which are bound to leak, may even believe in peace. Mercy is not any of that. Mercy is just a reprieve; mercy does not resolve or absolve. Mercy is a sort of power granted over another. Mercy can be merciless. (648-649)

The mercy granted by Naomi, Isaac, Nita, and Joseph does not mean that order (the settler-colonial temporality) is restored; mercy is not a return to the status quo like *The Odyssey*'s politic of forgetfulness. Rather, mercy is a show of power and resistance that solidifies the pathways of haunting. This is evident when Naomi, watching Leader cower after the wolf attack, says that he "needs to know who saved his life" (Tingle, 2013, p. 137). Nita, Isaac, and Joseph reveal themselves to Leader who "shook in fear" (Tingle, 2013, p. 137). In this moment, the reader

realizes that in life as in the Gothic, "there is no redemption…just ruins and the ghosts that haunt them" (Groom, 2012, p. 36).

When Leader recovers, he tells Naomi, "You have earned your life today…You can return to your parents. But there will be another day" (Tingle, 2013, p. 138). Leader's statement seems to create a prophecy/promise that the might of the U.S. government and military will return and finish the job of murdering and replacing Indigenous peoples. However, the Gothic's slipperiness of words, prophecies, and promises flips Leader's prophecy/promise, spoken to an audience of ghosts and bodies made monstrous, into a promise that Indigenous hauntings of the U.S. government and settler colonists will continue. This moment does not create an unchanging eternal temporality that upholds the status quo like *The Odyssey*; instead, it creates a temporality that, like haunting, refuses to stop. Indigenous survivance will continue and stretch into forever—cementing Indigenous futurity. As such, *How I Became a Ghost* offers the accountability and visibility haunting brings as an answer to Butler's question.

A Gothic Framework of Healing

> *[Looking] at what actually was and is, beyond the blinders that the "dead Indian" narrative has imposed, means reckoning with the relentless attacks on our sovereignty and the suffering it created. But it also brings into view the indigenous and resourceful counter attacks we have mounted over the decade, in resistance to the lives the state would have us live. (Treuer, 2019, as cited in Hopkins, 2020, p. xviii).*

> *The opposite of dispossession is not possession. It is not accumulation. It is unforgetting. It is mattering. (Morrill, Tuck, & the Super Futures Haunt Qollective, 2016, p. 2)*

The Gothic reveals a pathway to resist ahistorical teaching that causes curricular violence. Curricular violence occurs through education that engenders students with a historical consciousness that only remembers certain nation-building events while practicing collective amnesia around other events such as the United States' genocide of Indigenous peoples. To heal curricular violence, teachers must take on a Gothic historical consciousness that honors unsettled histories (Zembylas, 2013) and views unsettling as an active learning process (Stanton, 2019) when planning and selecting curriculum.

A Gothic historical consciousness is also a valuable add on to other trauma-informed pedagogies as the Gothic offers tools and frameworks to address generational traumas through facilitating truth-telling. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) views truth-telling as valuable because “speaking the truth about pain, violence, and trauma exposes the collective amnesia that dominant-group members and the nation-state have perpetuated. Healing cannot happen without truth telling” (Hopkins, 2020, p. 91). Classrooms can engage in truth-telling through welcoming ghosts into our classrooms—ultimately inducing a pedagogical pathway for justice; a pedagogy that “invents the future rather than fixing the past" (Zembylas, 2013, p. 70). Through unfixing the past, a Gothic historical consciousness has the potential to inoculate teachers and students against alt-right temporalities; this is especially important as alt-right organizations and politicians gain more power across the globe, which coincides with a rise in neo-Nazism and white supremacy (Valencia-García, 2020).

Though the alt-right and conservative think tank fueled culture wars claim to heal violence, traumas, and historical wounds, their form of healing is calcifying the wounds into scars, which is a practice of collective amnesia about the causes and the implications of the

wound. This allows the violence that originally inflicted the wound—such as white supremacy—to continue on unchallenged, thereby preserving a white supremacist future. Truly healing a wound caused by colonization and racism requires confronting all of its ugliness and depth—seeing the wound for what it is and cleaning it out through truth-telling.

A Gothic historical consciousness can also shake awake fatalistic, petrified leftists whose inaction and silence support the rise of the alt-right. Freire (1970) discusses how some leftist temporal constructions cause leftists to become depressed and despondent, believing that nothing they do will change conditions of life for the masses. However, as the Gothic, especially the Indigenous Gothic, has the power to continuously write futures, then a Gothic historical consciousness could give people the courage needed to confront white supremacy and other attacks on human rights. Further, using the Gothic to fight ills in society such as colonization, racism, sexism, and homophobia can build connections between people and with ghosts. Through these connections, the Gothic can restructure relationality. In Stanton's (2019) review of Sabzalian's (2019) book, *Indigenous Children's Survivance in Public Schools*, Stanton asks, "What if students learn the difference between relationships (as a potentially static thing) and relationality (as a process that needs active attention and participation)?" (p. 148). Through a Gothic historical consciousness that does not flinch away from grief, from the ugly, and from the broken aspects of society, students can experience grief not as a call to war (Butler, 2004), but as a tool that reveals deep relationality that shapes who we are. Grief that people honor rather than run from crafts a community that engages in humanization rather than Othering dehumanization.

In the grief brought to light by the Gothic, education stakeholders can finally look clearly at the relationality and ethical responsibilities between groups of people historically kept separate

in mainstream tellings of the United States' national story. For example, Hopkins' (2020) analysis of Indian Education for All (IEFA) in Montana revealed that although IEFA has promise, its application has ultimately furthered colonization's aims. Hopkins (2020) writes that "unless IEFA makes colonizing history explicit and seeks to dismantle it, IEFA will risk reproducing and maintaining an ongoing agenda to colonize Indigenous minds, bodies, and lands" (p. 40). In acting on ethical responsibilities to one another, educational stakeholders must be truthful, face generational grief and trauma, and historicize Montana's colonizing history.

However, it is crucial that healing is structured with Indigenous voices and survivance at the center. Settler-colonialists cannot force forgiveness as a form of healing because trust between settler-colonists and Indigenous Peoples "is a fragile thing. It stands on a razor's edge. Indigenous peoples reserve the right to refuse the reconciliation process…All [stakeholders] realize that there is no guarantee for success" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 107). Only in telling the truth about this history and its ongoing legacy can settler-colonial education stakeholders begin to earn trust through dismantling education's "deep, insidious colonizing agenda" (Hopkins, 2020, p. 46). When pedagogies of hauntology (Zembylas, 2013) are brought into the classroom, they work to help teachers and students interrogate how "different forms of remembrance engender radical openness to the other" (Zembylas, 2013, p. 83). Through summoning ghosts and the specters of grief, settler-colonists can properly accept our inheritances through coming to terms with the haunting specters (Ruitenberg, 2009).

To heal requires raw confrontation with the wounds in which the perpetrators accept responsibility and act on that responsibility. If schools accept ahistorical curriculum and pedagogy which push temporalities of forgetfulness, students will continue to suffer and feel

powerless. Instead, educational stakeholders must welcome and implement pedagogies and curriculum rooted in a Gothic framework that centers and honors Indigenous voices, survivance, and desires while guarding against exoticization of these histories and voices (Tuck, 2009; Tuck & Ree, 2013). When educators use curriculum as a pathway to make the ghosts often ignored in curriculum visible (Ruitenberg 2009), students broaden their memories and can historicize and trouble the subjectivities, status-quo, and social structures that are normalized and naturalized. A Gothic historical consciousness and pedagogy "abolish(s) the concept of linear time as an ontological category of historical understanding" (Zembylas, 2013, p. 79), ultimately challenging harmful discursive regimes and subjectivities built on linear temporalities while holding space for Indigenous students' temporalities and subjectivities. Through these acts, educators welcome cross-temporal learning experiences that heal and build community through making relational connections clear within specific contexts.

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