

H-Diplo ROUNDTABLE XXII-8

A Teaching Roundtable

On Teaching Colonialism in History

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 INTRODUCTION BY MOU BANERJEE, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON

*Decolonizing Pedagogy: History as a Reckoning with the Past*¹

“Where are *our* heroes and ancestors?” asked Chumani Maxwele, a young student at the University of Cape Town, before throwing a bucket of human excrement on the bronze statue of the British colonialist Cecil John Rhodes that held a pride of place on the campus. The date was 9 March 2015.² This was the same Rhodes who established the colony of Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe and Zambia. The same Rhodes after whom the prestigious scholarship is named that allows about 100 select students from erstwhile British colonies to study at Oxford University every year. At the University of Cape Town, after a vote by the UCT Council on 9 April 2015, the statue of Rhodes was removed. The ripples of Maxwele’s act echoed both in South Africa and globally. In January of 2016, students at Oxford demanded that Rhodes’s statue at Oriel College be taken down, which erupted in furious controversy as donors threatened to withdraw over 100 million pounds in gifts and bequests.³ At Cambridge in 2017, a young student, Lola Olufemi, wrote an open letter to the faculty asking for the inclusion of more authors from the Global South in the curriculum.⁴ Again, the storm of criticism was immediate and Olufemi was the target of vicious misogyny. A particularly incendiary headline in the *Telegraph* stated, “Student forces Cambridge to drop white authors.”⁵

These protests revived discussion on and critical engagement with a question that is fundamental to the issue of decolonizing our pedagogy. Students were asking for better representation of diverse voices, hoped for more historical contextualization of the “great texts” assigned in their curriculum, and were demanding thoughtful engagement with class, caste, race, gender and sexuality in pedagogy and in the curriculum. None of these demands was irrational or unjustified. Yet, the reactionary responses to these calls by students for sensitivity and intellectual critique of historical processes and narratives, show how much history, memory, and myth-making are in contest with one another in the global public sphere and in academia.

In the United States, the issue of decolonizing pedagogy is intimately tied to settler colonialism. But within that paradigm, the history of slavery and that of indigeneity are also entwined. Ideas of enslavement have mapped on to that of race, and the deeply confrontational relationship between the past and the present is overlaid by political myth-making and reshaping of historical narratives to reflect a distorted monolithic patriotism. These entanglements are often erased and lack acknowledgement. In the public milieu, they have increasingly engendered intellectual and social discomfort and often,

¹ My ideas on decolonizing pedagogy have evolved over time, and I owe my sincere thanks to Sugata Bose, Alexandra Mountain and Kacie Lucchini-Butcher for the many discussions I have had with them. I participated in a History Department Colloquium in November 2019 at UW-Madison with my colleagues Ainehi Edoro, Finn Enke and Brenda Plummer, on the subject, and I owe them my gratitude for all that I learnt from them that day. I also wish to thank Diane Labrosse, Andrew Szarejko, H-Diplo and my fellow panelists, for facilitating this timely conversation and for inviting me to be a part of this roundtable.

² Eve Fairbanks, “The Birth of Rhodes Must Fall,” *The Guardian*, 18 November 2015, www.theguardian.com/news/2015/nov/18/why-south-african-students-have-turned-on-their-parents-generation.

³ Aamna Mohdin et al., “Oxford College Backs Removal of Cecil Rhodes Statue,” *The Guardian*, 17 June 2020, www.theguardian.com/education/2020/jun/17/end-of-the-rhodes-cecil-oxford-college-ditches-controversial-statue.

⁴ Jason Osamede Okundaye, “The ‘Decolonize’ Cambridge Row Is Yet Another Attack on Students of Color,” *The Guardian*, 25 October 2017, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/oct/25/decolonise-cambridge-university-row-attack-students-colour-lola-olufemi-curriculum.

⁵ “Student Forces Cambridge to Drop White Authors.” *The Telegraph*, 2017, www.inews.co.uk/essentials/daily-telegraph-student-forced-cambridge-drop-white-authors-story-wrong-99956.

intense rage. Nowhere has this violent encounter between history and political mythos been more clearly delineated than the polarizing political controversy surrounding the New York Times's "1619" project that, "aims to reframe the country's history by placing the consequences of slavery and the contributions of black Americans at the very center of [the United States'] national narrative."⁶ Decolonizing pedagogy is urgently necessary in these circumstances.

Therefore, in this particular moment that we are living through, we understand, as I and the other members of this roundtable do, that the act of teaching History cannot be divorced from the political contexts of the present.⁷ It is from this perspective that we realize that the demands for decolonizing pedagogy, of decolonizing the curriculum, though seemingly unrelated to the issue of bringing down statues, are actually all intricately entangled. The issue at hand is really not about the statues, or solely about the statues. The statues, in some ways, are a metaphor for the westernized, Eurocentric, racially biased, heteronormative, economically exclusionist and hierarchical nature of higher education. The alienation felt by faculty and students of color, those identifying as LGBTQ, or those belonging to indigenous or minority groups, while they must constantly negotiate these hierarchical structures, is intellectually exhausting. Decolonizing pedagogy is, then, fundamentally an act of reckoning with the past, of questioning the structural nature of inequities, and of engaging intellectually and critically with the contexts of power relations through which knowledge is both generated and disseminated. As teachers, our engagement with young students begins with a reflection—who writes history? What are the perspectives that shape our understanding of our past? As the musical *Hamilton* poignantly expressed, "Who lives, who dies, who tells your story?"

These are recognizable themes that emerge in the thoughtful, liberal, and introspective pieces written by my fellow panelists. Ikuko Asaka movingly guides us through the texts and critical practices through which she carefully helps her students recognize that the history of the United States is also a history of "continental and overseas conquest, indigenous dispossession, exploitation of human and natural resources." Asaka rightly points out that the lack of explicit naming of the United States as "an imperial power and colonizer of other territories and peoples" obscures reality and creates the false notion that "violent territorial conquest" was simply an act of war between two equal parties fighting each other.

Christine DeLucia 'grapples' with similar issues of centering "the ways in which settler colonialism is remembered, mythologized, and mobilized" in the classes she offers on American history and Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS). For DeLucia, the students' perspective that "'colonial' signifies a past state, referencing a strictly bygone time typically equated with the era preceding the American Revolution" is connected to the common disavowal of the fact that the United States' has its own history of colonialism and neo-imperialism. DeLucia's pedagogical methodology stresses the structural violence of colonialism—she makes an extremely important point that there is a tendency to view colonizers as modern while those who are colonized and enslaved are often seen as "vanished." She quotes Philip Deloria on colonized indigenous and enslaved peoples who, "dropped out of history itself." The phenomenon is widely recognized in postcolonial historiographies of the Global South. Dipesh Chakrabarty refers to this forcible erasure as being consigned to "an imaginary waiting room of History."⁸ DeLucia further emphasizes the need for teaching comparative and intersectional histories of colonialism and decolonization, centered on submerged voices, imaginaries and geographies, of incorporating messy and textured entanglements instead of black and white binaries.

⁶ Nikole Hannah-Jones et al. "The 1619 Project." *New York Times*, 14 Aug. 2019, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html.

⁷ "History Is a High Stakes Profession." *Kentucky Historical Society*, 15 Aug. 2017, <http://history.ky.gov/2017/08/15/history-high-stakes-profession/>.

⁸ Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Introduction," *Provincializing Europe Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008): 7–9.

Jennifer Sessions meditates in her essay on the “urgent questions about *why* we teach the history of colonialism and the ethical implications of doing so.” Drawing together threads of the comparative aspects of colonialism through a study of postcolonial literatures while carefully delineating the nuanced differences in the experiences of colonialism allows Sessions to “vividly demonstrate how ... empire and colonization had shaped lives and cultures across large swathes of the globe.” A focus on culture, while encouraging scholarly attention towards political economy and the transformative influences of capitalism enables Sessions to help “students understand how their own world is shaped by the historical processes [they] are studying.” Sessions centers an understanding of “uses and abuses of colonial and imperial history,” through a critical approach towards imperial nostalgia, to help “students situate local ‘memory wars’ in a broader, global context.”

Kelly Duke Bryant, like our other panelists, views colonialism as a global project and therefore as a global historical process, which is best studied and taught on a comparative basis, *longue durée*. Duke Bryant, like Asaka, Sessions and DeLucia, emphasizes the need to help students encounter colonialism through “multiple perspectives,” which “requires critical engagement with work on local experiences of and responses to colonialism in the territories that came under colonial control.” Duke Bryant is similarly committed to incorporating multiple voices, both colonizers and colonized, subaltern and elite, in the case studies her students engage with, while emphasizing discussions on and critique of themes that include “global inequity, economic development, racism and xenophobia, military intervention in former colonies, immigration and migration patterns, or control over cultural heritage.” Duke Bryant’s reflection on the importance of decolonizing our pedagogy is a strong commitment to meaningful intellectual change—“we might just challenge students’ conventional understandings of the past, their perspective on the present, and their vision of the future.”

I want to very briefly reflect on my own pedagogy and my practices of decolonization. As a historian of South Asia, I recognize that there is an intense pedagogical and creative tension in the way I teach history. Modern South Asia simultaneously embodies both the colonial past and the postcolonial present. This is a ghostly haunting, or a superimposition of a particular kind of nostalgia for the past grafted on to the complex and layered reality of decolonized nation states engaged in negative political identity formation. Essentially, this leads to myth-making that pits India against Pakistan, Bangladesh against both India and Pakistan, Hindu against Muslim, and a thousand other permutations and combinations thereof. The present and the past thus intertwined make for a rich soil that engenders nationalist myth-making, religious intolerance and communal violence, and above all, erasures of historical narratives and a preponderance of memory wars. Decolonizing my pedagogy has meant, like my colleagues, finding an ethical balance between history and memory, while reintegrating lost and erased voices within the syllabus and in the classroom.

If I have to teach Macaulay’s infamous “Minute on Education” of 1835,⁹ I also have to incorporate a section on Rammohan Roy’s thoughts on education of Indians.¹⁰ I add a third section on the forgotten philosopher and teacher Hati Bidyalankar, who, in spite of her status as a woman and a widow, broke taboos and taught Hindu *shastras* to male students.¹¹ Similarly, when my students read about the Indian nationalist leader Mahatma Gandhi’s pioneering practice of non-violent civil resistance, I pair that reading with original archival sources on the lives and deeds of India’s women activists. And I also have to alert them that just as Rhodes’s statue was taken down at the University of Cape Town, a furious controversy erupted at

⁹ Frances Pritchett, *Minute on Education (1835) by Thomas Babington Macaulay*, www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html.

¹⁰ Rammohun Roy, “Letter from Rammohun Roy to Lord Amherst, Governor-General in Council, Dated 11 December 1823,” in Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, eds., *The Great Indian Education Debate: Documents Relating to the Orientalist-Anglicist Controversy, 1781-1843* (Richmond: Curzon, 1999): 110–111.

¹¹ Meredith Borthwick, *The Changing role of Women in Bengal, 1849-1905* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015); Tanika Sarkar, *Rebels, Wives, Saints: Designing Selves and Nations in Colonial times* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black, 2009); Durba Ghosh, *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

the University of Ghana regarding Gandhi's opinions of Africans while he was in South Africa,¹² that led to the removal of his statue as well.¹³

Students sometimes take it for granted that a modern history of the Indian subcontinent is one that is normatively populated by high caste, middle-class Hindu men who were educated through western pedagogies. They are encouraged to balance this perception with their reading of Ayesha Jalal's magisterial study of Muslim intellectual thought and politics in India.¹⁴ Students reading about caste are asked to reflect on the correspondence between the founder of the NAACP and civil rights activist W.E. B. DuBois and B.R. Ambedkar, the Indian political activist and jurist. Ambedkar, as the Chairman of India's Constituent Assembly, staunchly enshrined affirmative action and civil rights for the Dalits and 'untouchables' in India's Constitution.¹⁵ When we learn about nationalism and the imagined community, my students read the Dalit poet Omprakash Valmiki's searing poem, "The landlord's well."¹⁶ My students learn to juxtapose the histories of trade, slavery and intellectual and cultural exchange in the Indian Ocean arena, which created intricate layers of power differentials between the eastern African coast and the South Asian subcontinent. The study of wider cultural and political ties between South Asia and the Gulf countries which were protectorates of the British empire, was pioneered by Sugata Bose and expanded our understanding of what decolonization might mean in those contexts.¹⁷

When I teach the students about South Asian involvement in the two great wars, I center the experiences of the millions of Indian soldiers who fought at the bloodiest theatres of war in Europe and in the Middle-East and died very far from home. Recent research drives home the point that Indian and African soldiers were, as the historian David Olusoga says,

¹² Ashwin Desai and Goolem, Vahed, *The South African Gandhi*, vol. 9. South Asia in Motion (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2015).

¹³ Safi, Michael, "Statue of 'Racist' Gandhi Removed from University of Ghana," *The Guardian*, 14 December 2018, www.theguardian.com/world/2018/dec/14/racist-gandhi-statue-removed-from-university-of-ghana.

¹⁴ Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (London: Routledge, 2000).

¹⁵ Nico Slate, *Colored Cosmopolitanism: The Shared Struggle for Freedom in the United States and India* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012); Suraj Yengde and Anand Teltumbde, *The Radical in Ambedkar: Critical Reflections* (Gurgaon: Allen Lane, 2018); Maia Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia: How the Ghadar Movement Charted Global Radicalism and Attempted to Overthrow the British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

¹⁶ Om Prakash Valmiki (1950-2013), "Thakur Ka Kuan", translation by Archit Guha:

The well belongs to the landlord
The water belongs to the landlord
The crops and the fields belong to the landlord
The lanes that run through these neighborhoods belong to the landlord
Then what is ours?
The village?
The city?
The nation?

¹⁷ Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006); Indrani Chatterjee, *Gender, Slavery, and Law in Colonial India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Sana Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015).

“expendable, and then easily forgettable.”¹⁸ The German philosopher Max Weber spoke for himself and his nation when he angrily accused Britain and France of unleashing “a refuse of Africans and Asiatic savages.”¹⁹ My students are usually astonished to hear that Indian and African soldiers fought in both these World Wars. In any documentary or film that they have seen, or in most textbooks they have read, there is a complete erasure of soldiers of color, since popular media tends to portray and center the heroism of European and white American soldiers.²⁰

Ranjit Guha, the founder-member of Subaltern Studies Collective once spoke of the “Small Voices of History.”²¹ As our discipline increasingly incorporates methodologies of trans-national and global historiographies, it is salutary to reflect on what we lose when we focus on a panoramic macro-historical sweep rather than concentrating on dispossessed individuals and communities.²² Our students must learn how to critically question what we gain and lose in the shifting of our analytical lens, when we privilege certain perspectives and voices and erase or repress others. Recovering erased and lost voices from the archive also creates safeguards against the historical sins of presentism, parochialism and prolepsis.²³

What I am doing is what my colleagues on this roundtable have already articulated far more eloquently. We are opening up the many other ways of being in this world for our students, beyond what is familiar to them, beyond what they accept as the normative and exclusionary view. We are teaching them that history is made and remade constantly, by a shift of perspective, by a subtle tilt in the narrative.

Conclusion:

Let us ask the ‘So what?’ question. If we do not decolonize pedagogy, what happens? Voices from outside academia take over the task of creating history, ones that are reliant on mythmaking and inherited memories of difference, without nuance, complexity, compassion or intellectual integrity. The majoritarian and normative pseudo-historiographies thus produced become templates for promoting radicalized right-wing stereotypes and caricatures of the minorities, in South Asia and in the world. The possibilities of integration and accommodation of difference, and most importantly, a liberal spirit of enquiry is extinguished, leading to a narrowing of the processes of articulation of what Jacques Rancière has called “dissensus.”²⁴ The Other becomes the enemy and the strange guest at the door. The angel of history is expelled, leading to a cataclysmic collapse of the public sphere, of intellectual discourse, or possibilities of dismantling power hierarchies and the

¹⁸ David Olusoga, “David Olusoga: ‘Black Soldiers Were Expendable – Then Forgettable.’” *The Guardian*, 11 November 2018, www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/11/david-olusoga-black-soldiers-first-world-war-expendable.

¹⁹ Quoted by Olusoga, *Ibid*.

²⁰ Raghu Karnad, *Farthest Field: An Indian Story of the Second World War* (London: William Collins, 2015); Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War: A People’s History of India’s Second World War* (London: Bodley Head, 2015).

²¹ Ranjit Guha and Partha Chatterjee, *The Small Voice of History: Collected Essays* (Ranikhet: Permanent Black 2009).

²² C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Malden: Blackwell, 2004); C.A. Bayly, *Remaking the Modern World 1900-2015* (Somerset: John Wiley, 2018).

²³ Quentin Skinner, “Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas,” in *Visions of Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 57-89.

²⁴ Jacques Rancière and Steve Corcoran, *Dissensus: on Politics and Aesthetics* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016): 38. “The essence of politics is dissensus. Dissensus is not a confrontation between interests or opinions. It is the demonstration (manifestation) of a gap in the sensible itself. Political demonstration makes visible that which had no reason to be seen; it places one world in another ... the world where workers speak, and speak about the community, in that where their voices are mere cries expressing pain.”

dream of an equitable world. This is already familiar to historians—the debates around representation and diversity in the field of Medieval Studies is by now very well known.²⁵

Mark Twain said, “The very ink with which history is written is merely fluid prejudice.”²⁶ Our students need to learn and understand that marginalized voices are written out of the narratives of history, especially in the kind of pedagogy that they are familiar with in schools and sometimes even at the undergraduate and graduate level. A lot of binary divisions which they take for granted intellectually and emotionally are actually arbitrary and also excluding, by the very nature of academia and because of the ways in which academic spaces have traditionally functioned.

If we do not decolonize the syllabus and our pedagogy, we perpetuate the iniquities and traumas of civilizational hierarchies that are embedded within our social, cultural and political postcolonial heritage. In 1997, the Kashmiri poet Agha Shahid Ali presciently said in his poem “Farewell”:

*In your absence you polished me into the Enemy.
Your history gets in the way of my memory.
I am everything you lost. You can't forgive me.
I am everything you lost. Your perfect Enemy.*²⁷

What can we do, as educators who are ethically committed to decolonizing pedagogy? Exercise suspicion as an intellectual method—always ask who shapes the narratives we study and believe to be constitutive of the canon, who write the texts we cite and read in class, whose are the voices that are submerged, that leave no trace within the classroom and the university and the colonial archives. We should also exercise the mode of impartial empathy, of critical estrangement, and ask questions about why we feel connected to established majoritarian voices and points of views, and who we alienate and isolate when those intellectual and ideological alliances are treated as normative. We should lay out our reasoning while choosing texts for courses, and make sure that our students understand why they should read outside the canon, read marginalized voices, and learn to develop a critical examination of the self and of the world. Decolonizing our pedagogy is an education in empathy for our students.

Participants:

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Ikuko Asaka is associate professor of history at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her research focuses on the nineteenth century U.S., imperialism, race, gender, sexuality, and labor. She is the author of *Tropical Freedom: Climate, Settler Colonialism, and Black Exclusion in the Age of Emancipation* (Duke University Press, 2017). She is currently researching the origins of U.S. imperial engagements with islands and their racial, sexual, and labor aspects. Another project

²⁵ Jennifer Schuessler, “Medieval Scholars Joust with White Nationalists. And One Another.” *New York Times*, 5 May 2019, www.nytimes.com/2019/05/05/arts/the-battle-for-medieval-studies-white-supremacy.html.

²⁶ Mark Twain, “Pudd’nhead Wilson’s New Calendar.” *Following the Equator* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1899): 699.

²⁷ Agha Shahid Ali, “Farewell.” *The Country without a Post Office* (New Delhi: Ravi Dayal: 2013).

investigates the impact of U.S. expansion into East Asia on domestic racial and gender formations and on the development of Japanese racial identity.

Christine DeLucia is Assistant Professor of History at Williams College, and previously was Associate Professor of History at Mount Holyoke College. She is the author of *Memory Lands: King Philip's War and the Place of Violence in the Northeast* (Yale University Press, 2018), which was awarded the Berkshire Conference of Women Historians book prize, as well as articles in *The Journal of American History*, *Native American and Indigenous Studies*, *The New England Quarterly*, and other publications.

Kelly Duke Bryant is an associate professor at Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey, USA, where she teaches courses on African history, comparative colonialism and imperialism, historical methods, and other topics. She is the author of *Education as Politics: Colonial Schooling and Political Debate in Senegal, 1850s-1914* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2015). She has published articles in a variety of journals including the *Journal of African History*; *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*; and *French Colonial History*, and has contributed chapters to several edited collections. Her current research explores the history of childhood in colonial Senegal.

Jennifer Sessions is Associate Professor of History at the University of Virginia, where she teaches courses in French, European, and imperial history. She is the author of *By Sword and Plow: France and the Conquest of Algeria* (Cornell University Press, 2011) and is currently writing a microhistory of a 1901 uprising against French rule in Algeria and a biography of the equestrian statue that stood in the center of Algiers throughout the colonial period.

 ESSAY BY IKUKO ASAKA, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

I am a historian of the nineteenth-century United States. I have taught at a liberal arts college and at flagship state universities. Except for one, none of the ten undergraduate courses I have taught have “colonialism” or “imperialism” in their titles. I introduce colonialism to my students as one kind of system through which relations of power take form and transform. I define it as a system whereby one people dominate over another and their territory not only through military conquest, political rule, and economic control, but also through the regulation of intimate relationships. Teaching colonialism in my classes thus entails an unraveling of the intricate ways in which bodies are categorized, spaces are demarcated, labor is exploited, land is appropriated, and people are governed. Because of my research interests, teaching colonialism also involves situating U.S. slavery—the familiar topic mostly understood as a distinct, self-contained institution—within the broader history of Western colonialism and as part of the multifaceted process that has shaped the nation in a fundamental way: settler colonialism.

Race, Gender, and Sexuality in U.S. Imperialism

As I mention above, I have taught a course that tackles colonialism and imperialism head-on. From the title of the course, *Race, Gender, and Sexuality in U.S. Imperialism*, students come to class knowing that the course’s premise is that the United States was and is an empire. But that is as far as it goes. On the first day of class, they usually exhibit little understanding of what it means for the United States to be an empire. When I taught this class for the first time I ended up doing a lot more lectures than I had initially planned despite its advanced level. The need for extra lectures became keenly apparent when I asked the students at the start of the semester to give an example of the United States operating as an empire. More than one answered this question by citing American independence from British colonialism (“The U.S. was a British colony but left its colonial days behind when it became independent”). And those were one of the most politically conscious, racially diverse, and otherwise intellectually sophisticated groups of students I have ever taught. On the second day of class thus began my effort to demonstrate the colonial and imperial aspects of U.S. history. Alongside discussing readings by Ania Loomba and Robert Young on the definitions of “colonialism” and “imperialism,” I gave a lecture on European colonial settlements in what we now call the United States.²⁸ The history of colonization by England, France, Spain, Sweden, and the Netherlands provided a good segue into understanding how the newly independent republic engaged in similar colonial ventures: indigenous land dispossession, extraction of natural resources, profiting off the stolen land through enslaved agricultural labor, and ideological justifications of such measures.²⁹

Once we establish that the United States founded itself on the European-derived colonial roots, we explore the interconnections of the subjugation of others and the construction of racial categories and how the intertwined formations often took place in intimate domains—that is, domains of sex, bodies, reproduction, and domestic relations. I set the stage by assigning Ann Stoler’s “Tense and Tender Ties” and move chronologically through U.S. imperial and colonial projects that unfolded in intimate domains.³⁰ Some of them are as follows: the centrality of sexual encounters in the negotiation,

²⁸ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 1-19 and Robert J.C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), 16-43.

²⁹ See for example, Susanah Romney, *New Netherland Connections: Intimate Networks and Atlantic Ties in Seventeenth-Century America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Jennifer Morgan, *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Carol E. Hoffecker, Richard Waldron, Lorraine E. Williams, Barbara E. Benson, eds. *New Sweden in America* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995).

³⁰ Ann Laura Stoler, “Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies,” *The Journal of American History* 88:3 (2001): 829-865.

contest, and reconfirmation of colonial rule in the western and southwestern borderlands;³¹ domesticity and its role in indigenous dispossession and family separation;³² regulation of racial mixing for white settler monopoly of resources;³³ colonial public health in Hawaii and the Philippines;³⁴ white women's cultural consumption and political use of the colonized;³⁵ woman's suffrage as an imperial imperative;³⁶ white and African-American women's missionary work at home and abroad;³⁷ control of women's reproduction in Puerto Rico.³⁸

By the end of the semester students have a fairly good grasp of U.S. imperial and colonial projects carried out through intimate relations.

Global Gender and Sexuality

I teach colonialism in a more indirect fashion, too. For almost ten years I have taught a Women's Studies course on global gender and sexuality under different titles at different institutions. The course introduces students to practices and traditions of gender and intimacy that existed before the emergence of the modern dichotomies of gender, sex, and sexuality and examines the processes by which Western gender and sexual binaries crossed borders and generated contests and negotiations in the reconfiguration of social relations in local spaces. At the center of this 'reconfiguration' is Western colonialism. For example, British colonial rule changed traditional gender systems in Igboland eroding women's political

³¹ Pablo Mitchell, *Coyote Nation: Sexuality, Race, and Conquest in Modernizing New Mexico, 1880-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); Deena Gonzalez, *Refusing the Favor: The Spanish-Mexican Women of Santa Fe, 1820-1880* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

³² Margaret D. Jacobs, *White Mother to a Dark Race: Settler Colonialism, Maternalism, and the Removal of Indigenous Children in the American West and Australia, 1880-1940* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

³³ Lauren Basson, *White Enough to Be American?: Race Mixing, Indigenous People, and the Boundaries of State and Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

³⁴ Warwick Anderson, "States of Hygiene: Race Improvement and Biomedical Citizenship in Australia and the Colonial Philippines" in Ann Stoler, ed., *Haunted by Empire: Geographies of Intimacy in North American History* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 94-115; Michelle Moran, "Telling Tales of Ko'olau: Containing and Mobilizing Disease in Colonial Hawai'i," in Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, eds., *Moving Subjects: Gender, Mobility, and Intimacy in an Age of Global Empire* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 315-333.

³⁵ Fiona Paisley, "Performing Interracial Harmony: Settler Colonialism at the 1934 Pan-Pacific Women's Conference in Hawai'i" in *Moving Subjects*, 127-47; Kristin L. Hoganson, *Consumers' Imperium: The Global Production of American Domesticity, 1865-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).

³⁶ Kristin Hoganson, "'As Badly off as the Filipinos': U.S. Woman Suffragists and Turn-of-the-Century U.S. Imperialism," *Journal of Women's History* 13 (Summer 2001): 9-33, and Louis M. Newman, "Women's Rights, Race, and Imperialism in U.S. History, 1870-1920," in James T. Campbell, Matthew Pratt Guterl, and Robert G. Lee, eds., *Race, Nation, and Empire in American History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 157-179.

³⁷ Laura Prieto, "'Stepmother America': The Woman's Board of Missions in the Philippines, 1902-1930," in Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Kathryn Kish Sklar, and Connie A. Shemo, eds., *Competing Kingdoms: Women, Mission, Nation, and the American Protestant Empire, 1812-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 342-66; Derek Chang, "Women, Empire, and the Home Mission Project in Late Nineteenth-Century America" in *Competing Kingdoms*, 293-317.

³⁸ Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

and economic power.³⁹ Also, traditional homoerotic activity in South Asia came under assault during the British colonial period. A colonial penal code grounded in Christian sexual morals not only criminalized male-to-male sexual relations but remained in the law after India's independence until it was repealed in 2018.⁴⁰ Here students learn that the antigay policy of a non-Western society such as India or Trinidad and Tobago, which many of them assumed to have derived from its 'backwardness,' is in fact a legacy of the British colonial law. Those students who are globally minded and active in LGBTQ issues now see the impact of colonial regulation of intimacy on the very current problem they see in the news: anti-homosexuality laws and raids in non-Western countries.⁴¹ While students initially enroll in this class with no intention to study colonialism, they finish the course cognizant of its continued influence in present times.

History of Slavery in the United States

Last but not least, I teach colonialism in an African American Studies course on U.S. slavery. The history of slavery in the United States was deeply intertwined with the trajectories of European and American colonialism. I emphasize this point with lectures on the history of the African diaspora and Europeans' use of African labor to promote their extractive colonial projects in the Atlantic islands and then the Americas.⁴² I also explain how slavery constituted an essential part of the U.S. settler colonial project, a project that removed indigenous people off their land and put Black enslaved labor to cultivate the land for economic as well as political benefit of the white settlers.⁴³ And this dynamic was not limited to the South and had been in operation before the birth of the nation. By learning colonialism and slavery together, students are able to see that the ownership of Black people as property, an abominable institution of racism and exploitation in of itself, was also part of the system of domination that encompassed indigenous as well as Black people. Students in this class, most of whom are students of color, appreciate this larger settler colonial picture. As is the case with the course Global Gender and Sexuality, these students had no intention or expectation to study colonialism. But discussion of the settler colonial nature of U.S.

³⁹ Ifi Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands: Gender and Sex in an African Society* (London: Zed Books, 1987) and *Daughters of the Goddess, Daughters of Imperialism: African Women, Culture, Power and Democracy* (London: Zed Books, 2000). Alongside Amadiume's work, I have students read a portion of Marc Epprecht's *Heterosexual Africa? The History of an Idea from the Age of Exploration to the Age of AIDS* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008) to discuss Amadiume's dismissal of same-sex eroticism among women in Nigeria.

⁴⁰ Enze Han and Joseph O'Mahoney, "British Colonialism and the Criminalization of Homosexuality," *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 27 2 (2014): 268-288. A monograph by the same authors on this topic came out in 2019, titled, *British Colonialism and the Criminalization of Homosexuality: Queens, Crime and Empire* (London: Routledge, 2019).

⁴¹ Students read current commentary that questions the claim that the West has forced homosexuality on non-Western societies. See Silvia Tamale, "Homosexuality is not un-African," *Aljazeera America*, 26 April 2014, <http://america.aljazeera.com/opinions/2014/4/homosexuality-africamuseveniugandanigeriaethiopia.html>; Kathryn Lam and Géraldine Renaudière, "The Rise of the Extreme Right in Europe: The Gender and Sexuality Dimensions of Anti-Immigrant Discourse," *CritCom, A Forum for Research and Commentary on Europe*, 17 September 2014, <https://critcom.councilforeuropeanstudies.org/?s=kathryn+lam>; Ben Westcott, "The homophobic legacy of the British Empire," *CNN*, 11 September 2019, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/09/11/asia/british-empire-lgbt-rights-section-377-intl/index.html>. I have students read on Western colonialism's role in the criminalization of homosexual activity before showing the film *Dangerous Living: Coming Out in the Developing World* (2003) available at Kanopy. The film offers a vivid picture of the anti-gay persecutions in non-Western societies but attributes the oppressions to traditional draconian sexual morals of "the developing world."

⁴² See, for example, David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016) and Herbert S. Klein and Ben Vinson, III, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean, Second Edition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁴³ Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity* 1:1 (January 2015): 52-72.

slavery, without exception, grips their attention and elicits a passionate conversation. Over the years I have realized that many students feel empowered to be able to pinpoint and name a system that deeply embedded racial inequalities in this country.

Calling It What It Is

In conclusion, I want to share three insights I have gained from my experience of teaching colonialism. First, I have been lucky with the audience in my endeavor to introduce colonialism. Almost all of my students are, to different degrees, aware that racial exploitation and subjugation constituted a big part of modern history. While it is true that these students are not necessarily informed or knowledgeable about colonialism, they are very receptive to learning about it because they welcome an explanation of marginalization and subjugation in the past and present. Second, it is very important for U.S. college students to know that colonialism is a global phenomenon that also involved their country. I emphasize this point because it reflects the ongoing effort among U.S. empire scholars including myself to justly acknowledge the United States as an empire forged and sustained through global connections. As the editors of the recently published *Crossing Empires: Taking U.S. History into Transimperial Terrain* rightly points out, that acknowledgement is not universally shared among U.S. historians.⁴⁴ My goal in teaching U.S. colonial and imperial history is to promote the recognition that the United States engaged in continental and overseas conquest, indigenous dispossession, exploitation of human and natural resources and that modes of colonial and imperial rule flowed into and out of the United States, making it a significant actor alongside other more obviously imperial powers and their colonial ventures. Finally, moving forward, my next challenge is to incorporate colonialism in my U.S. survey course. I can imagine it would be a completely different game. The students in big history survey courses do not necessarily share the concerns of the students in, say, African American studies. Some of them, I am sure, are averse to the notion of the United States being an imperial power and colonizer of other territories and peoples. I see one obstacle against the effort to educate such students. It is the common obscuring of violent territorial conquest under the label of 'war.' From the Black Hawk War, to the U.S.-Mexican War, to the Spanish-American War, the imperialist nature of these aggressions is often concealed by the connotation of two equal parties fighting each other. The first step to effectively teach U.S. colonialism is to rectify this practice and call it what it is.

⁴⁴ Kristin Hoganson and Jay Sexton, eds., *Crossing Empires: Taking U.S. History into Transimperial Terrain* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2020).

ESSAY BY CHRISTINE DELUCIA, WILLIAMS COLLEGE

A striking image circulated through global media in June 2020 of Than Tsidéh, a member of Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, dancing atop a pedestal that formerly held a statue of Juan de Oñate.¹ In the late sixteenth century Oñate, a Spanish colonizer, attempted to violently subjugate Pueblo people who resisted conquistadors' incursions. In retaliation for resistance at Acoma Pueblo, Oñate and his party perpetrated a massacre, enslaved many Acoma survivors, and cut off the right feet of Acoma men, thereby creating an enduring legacy of trauma among Indigenous communities in the Southwest. The statue honoring Oñate northwest of Santa Fe, New Mexico had attracted protests for years, including the deeply symbolic severing of its bronze foot by activists in the late 1990s. When county officials removed the Oñate statue this summer—ostensibly for its own protection—amid Black Lives Matter and other protests that have brought down statues of slave traders and Christopher Columbus, it signaled just how much of a change is underway about how settler colonialism and Indigenous resistances are conceptualized and contested.

These recent developments will be important additions to my undergraduate history courses when classes resume in the fall. All of my teaching in American history and Native American and Indigenous Studies (NAIS) grapples with colonialism, particularly settler colonialism, with its emphasis on Euro-colonial claiming of Indigenous lands and displacement of Indigenous people. I am also interested in the ways in which settler colonialism is remembered, mythologized, and mobilized. Below I describe strategies for helping students critically engage with pasts, presents, and futures of settler colonialism as well as decolonization. I am mindful that as a settler scholar, the choices I make in syllabus design, writing assignments, and class activities need to be especially attuned to how 'History' is produced and remade.

Students often arrive in North American history classes with preconceptions that 'colonial' signifies a past state, referencing a strictly bygone time typically equated with the era preceding the American Revolution. There tends to be a quaintness to these expectations, bolstered by regional signage that uses 'colonial' in a reductive manner stripped of all context and complexity—down the road from our campus is the Colonial Plaza shopping area and Colonial Village residential neighborhood, for instance.² Many students' perspectives have also been shaped by popular national narratives that disavow the United States' own colonialist underpinnings or its growth as an empire.³ (International students, particularly from places that have undergone decolonization in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, frequently bring different perspectives.) Countering these assumptions, my courses spotlight the ongoing quality of settler colonialism in the United States and globally and the ways it continues to structure everyday lives and futures. As Patrick Wolfe defined it, "settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event." Wolfe's stress on how settler colonialism "destroys to replace"—pushing out Indigenous people to make space for colonizers who desire already-inhabited lands—is useful

¹ Samuel Gilbert, "Protests Target Spanish Colonial Statues That 'Celebrate Genocide' in US West," *The Guardian*, 24 June 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/jun/24/protests-target-spanish-colonial-statues-new-mexico>; James Brooke, "Conquistador Statue Stirs Hispanic Pride and Indian Rage," *The New York Times*, 9 February 1998, A10.

² The Colonial Village name and history of racialized exclusion is being revisited; see Stephen Dravis, "Barrett Answers Williamstown Residents' Call for Law to Address Racist Covenant," *iBerkshires.com*, 18 July 2020, <https://www.iberkshires.com/story/62667/Barrett-Answers-Williamstown-Residents-Call-for-Law-to-Address-Racist-Covenant.html>.

³ Daniel Immerwahr, "The Center Does Not Hold: Jill Lepore's Awkward Embrace of the Nation," *The Nation*, 29 October 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/jill-lepore-these-truths-this-america-review>; Joyce E. Chaplin, "David McCullough's Idealistic Settlers," *The New York Times*, 13 May 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/13/books/review/david-mccullough-pioneers.html>.

scaffolding for introducing students to the dispossessive logic of settler colonialism and its continuing influence.⁴ The framework that Wolfe lays out attains even more force when situated alongside critiques articulated by Indigenous intellectuals and amid growing bodies of historiography and pedagogy developed by NAIS scholars.⁵ Historian Nick Estes (Kul Wicasa), for example, draws on tribally specific ontologies and political philosophies to argue that “settler colonialism...calls for the annihilation of Indigenous peoples and their other-than-human kin.”⁶

In asking students to reckon with colonialism, the overall shape of a syllabus is crucial. I want students to understand how comparatively late an arrival colonialism has been in the Americas, and to develop clear views of just how many millennia of dynamic Indigenous experiences occurred before Euro-colonial incursions into the hemisphere. This approach pushes back against still-prevalent Western scholarly claims that Euro-colonial peoples have been the *agents* of history, setting in motion transformations in otherwise static Indigenous contexts. I have experimented with historical periodization of my courses so that they commence not in 1492, or 1607, or 1620, or any other milestone defined by Europeans’ attempted conquests but instead in ‘deep time’ or ‘time out of mind.’ Using distinct Indigenous oral traditions that speak to longstanding grounding in and responsibility for specific homelands, we spend substantial time reframing foundational expectations about chronologies and epistemologies.⁷ Together we interrogate commonplace yet problematic terms like ‘prehistoric’ (which is often used to signify pre-Euro-colonial pasts), and discuss approaches like ethnography, oral history, and archaeology as potential modes of inquiry into thousands of years of diverse Indigenous societies.

A necessary corollary to this sustained focus on early Indigenous histories is an emphasis on Indigenous modernities. Too many textbooks and popular histories still present narrative arcs that presume the eventual disappearance of Native people and nations, portraying their experiences after roughly the late nineteenth century as marginal or altogether absent, giving way to the predominance of colonial peoples and states.⁸ As Dakota historian Philip J. Deloria has characterized it, “according to most American narratives, Indian people, corralled on isolated and impoverished reservations, missed out on modernity—indeed almost dropped out of history itself.”⁹ Deloria’s work counters this erasive or declensionist framing by retrieving other stories of Indigenous individuals’ and communities’ intentional, proactive shaping of modernity. It is especially important for me to introduce these concepts at Williams College, which is located in a region carrying entrenched New England colonial mythologies of supposed Indigenous ‘vanishing,’ as White Earth Ojibwe scholar and historian Jean O’Brien has detailed—the purported retreat of Indigenous people to ‘make way’ for settler colonial

⁴ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8:4 (2006): 387-409, esp. 388. For an overview of settler colonialism’s pertinence to early American histories, see “Forum: Settler Colonialism in Early American History,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 76:3 (July 2019): 361-450.

⁵ Susan Sleeper-Smith, Julianna Barr, Jean M. O’Brien, Nancy Shoemaker, and Scott Manning Stevens, eds., *Why You Can’t Teach United States History without American Indians* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); Sandy Grande, ed., *Red Pedagogy: Native American Social and Political Thought*, Tenth Anniversary Edition (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015).

⁶ Nick Estes, *Our History Is The Future: Standing Rock versus the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance* (New York: Verso, 2019), 16.

⁷ Margaret M. Bruchac, “Earthshapers and Placemakers: Algonkian Indian Stories and the Landscape,” in Claire Smith and H. Martin Wobst, eds., *Indigenous Archaeologies: Decolonising Theory and Practice* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 52-74; Rosalyn LaPier, *Invisible Reality: Storytellers, Storytakers, and the Supernatural World of the Blackfeet* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2017).

⁸ Christine DeLucia, “The Vanishing Indians of *These Truths*,” review of Jill Lepore, *These Truths: A History of the United States*, in *Los Angeles Review of Books*, 10 January 2019, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-vanishing-indians-of-these-truths>.

⁹ Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 6.

presences.¹⁰ Challenging such teleologies is essential to all of my courses, where I offer students consistent ways to engage with the continuing presence, power, creativity, and agency of Native people into the twenty-first century.

It can be a difficult task in a single semester to simultaneously foreground the continuance of Indigenous people, nations, and histories while also reckoning with the displacements, traumas, and violence wrought by settler colonialism. I am always seeking materials that traverse these topics in sensitive ways and enable students to see Indigenous endurance and resilience as formed partly—though not exclusively—in relation to the upheavals of colonialism. One effective resource is the film *Ās Nutayuneān: We Still Live Here*.¹¹ The documentary's primary focus is tracing the revitalization of the Wôpanâak language among present-day Wampanoag communities. En route the film gives a primer on the ripple effects of New England settler colonialism: epidemic diseases ravaged coastal Indigenous communities well before arrival of 'Pilgrims'; the seventeenth-century military violence of the Pequot War and King Philip's War destabilized regional power dynamics and decimated surviving Native communities; English attempts to expropriate land from tribal communities left Native people with rapidly diminishing sustenance resources. Colonial authorities removed Native children from their kinship networks, placing them into English homes as indentured servants where they were disconnected from language and culture, while Protestant missionaries coerced Native people into religious conversions. I embed this film within readings and classroom activities that enable students to confront granular as well as large-scale effects of New England settler colonialism in the Northeast, along with Wampanoag communities' commitments to carrying forward culture, identity, and resilience amid the strictures of twenty-first century colonialism.

The film also equips my classes for encountering original print culture sources like *Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God* (1663), the first Bible printed in British North America. Our college library Special Collections contains a copy of this key text in the Massachusetts language, which students can interact with knowing that it is far more than a rare book. While Puritan missionaries intended this book to acculturate Native people to English and Christian ways and beliefs, Native people are now activating it in the service of very different goals. This text is now being used as a vital linguistic resource to bring back Indigenous languages that had become dormant or 'lost.'¹² Such complex trajectories assist students in understanding that the intentions of settler colonizers often played out very differently on the ground, where Indigenous people have recurrently exercised their own ambitions, goals, and plans for future thriving.

Given how central land is to any analysis of settler colonialism, I have developed a range of activities that help students move beyond generalized views that Native people either simplistically, straightforwardly 'sold' all their lands to colonizers, or were naïvely duped and extorted out of these lands. Instead, I aim to help students understand at much more fine-grained levels shifting forms of power, sovereignty, relationality, and decision-making that shaped these place-based interactions. To choose one example from my introductory courses, I bring in handouts of a transcription of a 1653 land document from "Nanotuck" in the mid-Kwinitekw (Connecticut) river valley region, which references a complex interaction between Native leaders in the extremely fertile valley, and Anglo-American colonizers in western Massachusetts who sought access to

¹⁰ Jean M. O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians Out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

¹¹ *Ās Nutayuneān: We Still Live Here*, prod. Anne Makepeace (Oley: Bullfrog Films, 2010).

¹² For a digitized version of this text, see John Eliot, James Printer, et al., *Mamusse wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God naneeswe Nukkone Testament kab wonk Wusku Testament* (1663), available through John Carter Brown Library /Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/details/mamussewunneetup00elio>; "How to Revive Massachusetts' First Language," *Boston Globe*, 25 March 2017. I gratefully acknowledge Lisa Conathan (Head of Special Collections at Williams College Libraries) and Kim Toney (Nipmuc community member and Head of Readers' Services at American Antiquarian Society) for fruitful conversations about appropriately contextualizing and mobilizing this resource.

and ownership of these same lands.¹³ Parsing the document in small groups, then as a class, we note that the document manifests many Indigenous place-names that orient readers to an extensive Indigenous geography. It introduces multiple parties—including Chickwallop, a male Native leader, and Awonunsk, a female leader—who negotiated with John Pynchon, a politically and economically influential English colonizer based at Agawam (Springfield, Massachusetts), surfacing vital considerations of gendered authority. It reserves various rights for the Indigenous people to “plant their present corne fields [sic],” albeit for a limited time-frame, showing considerable Indigenous agency in laying out the terms of place-connections. It prescribes that Indigenous parties receive in exchange “One Hundred fathom of wampum [shell beads used in diplomacy and as instruments of exchange]...& ten Coates (besides some small gifts”), leading students to query how we know if Native parties actually received those items? The document uses an English legal template to ensure what English colonists understood as full title transfer of land ownership; and it attempts to prevent Indigenous people from pushing back against colonial presences. Moreover, the Native leaders place their pictorial marks on the document, displaying variable fluencies with English literacy and raising questions about what was (mis)understood in this cross-cultural interaction.

Working closely with documents like this challenges students to tease out a multiplicity of actors, voices, and perspectives from a space of intense cultural and political collision as well as relationship-building. It offers an occasion to reflect on archives as inflected by colonialist processes of remembering and legitimating specific regimes of power. The exercise has prompted students to look into locales like Williamstown, Massachusetts, where our campus is located, and other parts of the United States, to learn more about the underlying histories and contestations of land, indigeneity, and settler colonialism.

The Nanotuck document introduces Native leaders as “ye chiefe & proper owners of all the land” in the region, providing an entry point into reckoning with Indigenous sovereignties. A key facet of teaching settler colonialism involves what it has entailed to be an autonomous, self-determining Native *nation* or other type of polity, and how Euro-colonial actors (mis)perceived these formations. Many undergraduates are inclined to describe Native entities as ‘communities,’ ‘groups,’ ‘tribes,’ ‘cultures,’ or ‘societies.’ Few are initially conversant with the concept and practice of Native nationhood, or the protracted struggles of Indigenous nations to affirm political distinctiveness and governance in the face of Euro-colonial legal efforts to diminish or deny them. A major theme in my courses, then, involves study of evolving forms of Indigenous sovereignty. We take stock of how Indigenous diplomats traveled to colonial and imperial centers of power to advocate for their communities’ interests: Mohicans, Mohawks, Cherokees, Creeks, and many others. These political representatives even moved transatlantically to interact with European sovereigns as peers—or to strategically manipulate colonizers’ perceptions of them as subordinate subjects—and in doing so challenged colonial authorities’ attempts to circumvent their sovereign statuses.¹⁴

Many undergraduates are familiar with the U.S. Constitution from their high school history or civics classes but have never previously considered how this founding document frames Indigenous politics. We close-read and contextualize Article I, Section 8, which states that “Congress shall have the power” to “regulate Commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with the Indian tribes.” Certain U.S. leaders in the late eighteenth century understood “Indian tribes” as distinct polities, and the Constitution laid groundwork for relationships to be channeled through the U.S. *federal*

¹³ “Part of Northampton, Easthampton, and Westhampton,” orig. in Hampden County Records, Liber A; Folio 15, in *Indian Deeds of Hampden County: Being Copies of All Land Transfers from the Indians Recorded in the County of Hampden, Massachusetts, and Some Deeds from Other Sources Together With Notes and Translations of Indian Place Names*, ed. Harry Andrew Wright (Springfield, 1905), 26-27. I also have introduced students to manuscript land documents in the Williams College Archives/Special Collections. For critical context on “land deeds,” I have assigned Lisa Brooks, Chap. 1, “Namumpum, ‘Our Beloved Kinswoman,’ Saunkskwa of Pocasset: Bonds, Acts, Deeds,” in *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip’s War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 27-71.

¹⁴ Coll Thrush, Chap. 3, “Alive from America: Indigenous Diplomacies and Urban Disorder, 1710-1765,” in *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 68-98; Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

government, not the individual states. This nation-to-nation level of interaction continues to shape federal Indian law and policy today, posing a major challenge to U.S. claims of political hegemony. What does it mean, to phrase it otherwise, for students to understand the United States as existing, tenuously, *amid* hundreds of autonomous Native nations?¹⁵

Moving into the nineteenth century, we grapple with Marshall Trilogy of U.S. Supreme Court decisions: *Johnson v. M'Intosh* (1823), *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831), and *Worcester v. Georgia* (1832) all gave clearer shape to how Native nations and lands figured into relations with the U.S. states and federal government. These cases affirmed Native nations' jurisdiction over their own lands and protected these lands from private sales to settlers, while also establishing a paternalistic guardian/ward dynamic of "domestic dependent nation" status. In the twentieth century we examine the resurgence of Indigenous nationalisms following U.S. policies of attempted "termination"; the emergence of Red Power activism that called upon the United States to uphold treaty obligations; and ways that Indigenous rights have been forcefully reasserted in the famous fish-in cases in the Pacific Northwest and returns of tribal whaling.¹⁶ We also trace how the U.S. federal recognition process—a colonialist system of 'proving' tribal status through a laborious bureaucratic process—has introduced painful dynamics into how tribal communities and nations navigate identities and political standing.¹⁷ This fall I will update my syllabi to include the pivotal *McGirt v. Oklahoma* U.S. Supreme Court decision of July 2020, which emphasizes the ongoing force of tribal sovereignties and jurisdictions. *McGirt* affirmed the continuance of reservation lands set aside for the Muscogee Creek Nation in 1866 and carries major implications for the upholding of treaties.¹⁸

I approach all of these eras and themes with a strong eye toward comparative colonialism. My curriculum reckons with the different forms that colonialism assumed in geographically wide-ranging parts of North America as well as Atlantic and Pacific Worlds, shifting away from homogenizing views of colonialism as static across time and space. I encourage students to explore the extremely localized dynamics of how diverse Indigenous societies confronted, resisted, and reshaped Euro-colonial aspirations and extractive projects, as well as formed pan-Indigenous solidarities. Moreover, I press my classes to avoid too-neat binaries of 'Indigenous' and 'settler' that do not adequately account for the asymmetries experienced by enslaved and free African-Americans, Asian-Americans, and other groups excluded from the privileges of 'whiteness.' Settler colonialism developed in tandem with enslavement of people of African descent, and created uneven forms of power and access for people of color.¹⁹ At a time of urgent thinking and action inflected by Black Lives Matter, reckoning with these intersectional and sometimes oppositional histories is even more essential.

¹⁵ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Gregory Ablavsky, "Species of Sovereignty: Native Nationhood, the United States, and International Law, 1783-1795," *The Journal of American History* 106:3 (December 2019): 591-613.

¹⁶ Charles F. Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006); Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2019); Joshua L. Reid, *The Sea is My Country: The Maritime World of the Makahs* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

¹⁷ Amy E. Den Ouden and Jean M. O'Brien, eds., *Recognition, Sovereignty Struggles, and Indigenous Rights in the United States: A Sourcebook* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

¹⁸ Julian Brave NoiseCat, "The *McGirt* Case Is a Historic Win for Tribes," *The Atlantic*, 12 July 2020, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/mcgirt-case-historic-win-tribes/614071/>; podcast by Cherokee journalist Rebeca Nagle, "The Ruling," *This Land*, 16 July 2020, <https://crooked.com/podcast/the-ruling>.

¹⁹ Tiya Miles, "Beyond a Boundary: Black Lives and the Settler-Native Divide," 417-426; and Stephanie E. Smallwood, "Reflections on Settler Colonialism, the Hemispheric Americas, and Chattel Slavery," 407-416, both in "Forum: Settler Colonialism in Early American History," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 76:3 (July 2019); Jared Hardesty, *Black Lives, Native Lands, White Worlds: A History of Slavery in New England* (Bright Leaf, 2019); Christine M. DeLucia, Chap. 7, "Algonquian Diasporas: Indigenous Bondages,

While it is vital for my classes to reassess Western and Euro-colonial epistemologies, it is equally significant to foster learning about other means of conducting research, writing, and analysis. Early in my Native American Histories survey course I introduce “decolonizing methodologies”—the title of Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s influential book²⁰—and how NAIS scholars have cultivated alternate theories and practices. We explore a range of approaches, each with its own literature and direction of engagement with settler colonial projects. Community-based participatory research centers community knowledge systems and goals; ‘braiding’ techniques weave together multiple ways of knowing; place-based research recovers and reactivates Indigenous geographies. We delve into the praxis of tribally run museums and cultural centers as well as non-tribal repositories and interpretive spaces; material culture studies methods that prioritize Indigenous makers and caretaking practices; collaborative and non-invasive archaeological projects; and restorative approaches to museum collections and repatriation. We also center Indigenous archives and uses of documentary/writerly technologies.²¹ Altogether, these decolonizing methodological forays enable students to move beyond colonialist knowledge practices and into other domains of ‘doing history.’

I will conclude with a few remarks about mobilizing campus resources as learning labs. Almost every higher education campus in North America contains original materials and iconography that can prompt conversations about settler colonialism, with a great deal of immediacy to students’ daily experiences. At Mount Holyoke College, my previous institution, I worked with students and Art Museum staff to learn more about the college affiliates who in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries exported colonialist Protestant missionizing to Hawai’i and other global sites, where their actions precipitated enormous upheavals. The “Missionary Cabinet” at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum presently contains many material items that circulated back to New England as a result of these highly fraught histories. These items raise questions about ownership, meaning-making, repatriation, and the duties of care owed to items acquired or appropriated from global communities.²²

Fugitive Geographies, and the Edges of Atlantic Memories,” in *Memory Lands: King Philip’s War and the Place of Violence in the Northeast* (Yale University Press 2018), 289-324; Ned Blackhawk, “‘Dey Take Indian For Slave’: Visions of Enslavement in Marcus Rediker’s *The Slave Ship* and Barry Unsworth’s *Sacred Hunger*,” *Atlantic Studies* 7:1 (March 2010): 27-32; Circe Sturm, “Race, Sovereignty, and Civil Rights: Understanding the Cherokee Freedmen controversy,” *Cultural Anthropology* 29:3 (2014): 575-598; Iyko Day, *Alien Capital: Asian Racialization and the Logic of Settler Colonial Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Manu Karuka, *Empire’s Tracks: Indigenous Nations, Chinese Workers, and the Transcontinental Railroad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2019).

²⁰ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies* (New York: Zed Books, 1999).

²¹ Alyssa Mt. Pleasant, Caroline Wigginton, and Kelly Wisecup, “Materials and Methods in Native American and Indigenous Studies: Completing the Turn,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 75:2 (April 2018): 207-236; Elizabeth Hoover, *The River Is In Us: Fighting Toxics in a Mohawk Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2017); Sonya Atalay, *Community-Based Archaeology: Research with, by, and for Indigenous and Local Communities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Jennifer Denetdale, Chap. 11, “‘You Brought History Alive for Us’: Reflections on the Lives of Nineteenth-Century Diné Women,” in *Empire and Liberty: The Civil War and the West*, ed. Virginia Scharff, exhibition curated by Carolyn Brucken (Oakland: Autry National Center of the American West in association with University of California Press, 2015), 190-206; R. Eric Hollinger et al., “Tlingit-Smithsonian Collaborations with 3D digitization of Cultural Objects,” *Museum Anthropology Review* 7:1-2 (Spring-Fall 2013): 201-253; Matthew Liebmann, *Revolt: An Archaeological History of Pueblo Resistance and Revitalization in 17th Century New Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014); Lisa Brooks, “Awikigawôgan ta Pildowi Ôjmowôgan: Mapping a New History,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 75:2 (April 2018): 259-294; Margaret M. Bruchac, “Lost and Found: NAGPRA, Scattered Relics, and Restorative Methodologies,” *Museum Anthropology* 33:2 (2010): 137-156; Rae Gould, Chap. 7, “NAGPRA, CUI and Institutional Will,” in *The Routledge Companion to Cultural Property*, eds. Jane Anderson and Haidy Geismar (New York: Routledge, 2017), 134-151; Jean M. O’Brien, Chap. 1, “Historical Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies: Touching on the Past, Looking to the Future,” in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, eds. Chris Andersen and Jean M. O’Brien (New York: Routledge, 2017), 15-22.

²² I thank Aaron Miller, Kendra Weisbin, and Ellen Alvord, curators and educators at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, for facilitating these conversations and object studies in such sensitive and forward-looking ways. Offering context to the

As mentioned, I presently teach at Williams College, situated in Mohican homelands of western Massachusetts. The college is just beginning to institutionally reckon with its entanglement in histories of colonialism and to take steps toward different forms of engagement with present-day Indigenous communities and nations, particularly the Stockbridge-Munsee Community Band of Mohican Indians. There is a mural in a social space that depicts the college's eighteenth-century benefactor, Ephraim Williams, Jr., drafting his will. Facing it is a mural that envisions Williams, the Mohawk leader Hendrick Theyanoguin, and British as well as Native allies on the eve of the Battle of Lake George (1755). I have gathered students in this space for discussion about where the Williams family attained its wealth and power—settler colonial land speculation, military service at forts, slaveholding—and what it means for this colonial bequest to be the college's foundation and namesake. This setting also activates dialogues about how educational institutions visibly affirm certain histories while de-emphasizing or erasing others, and invites students to articulate what future decolonized pathways might entail.²³

In *Our History Is The Future*, Nick Estes argues that “radical Indigenous historians and Indigenous knowledge-keepers aim to change the colonial present, and to imagine a decolonial future by reconnecting to Indigenous places and histories.”²⁴ The work of education and social transformation is multi-faceted, taking place in the streets, out on the land, in classrooms, and in many other locations. I hope my remarks offer some touchstones for taking on this project and collaborating with students to bring about alternate understandings.

“Missionary Cabinet” were readings like David Chang’s *The World and All the Things Upon It: Native Hawaiian Geographies of Exploration* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016); Noenoe K. Silva, Chap. 4, “The Antiannexation Struggle,” in *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Sergei Kan, Chap. 7, “The Inside Passage to Authenticity: Sitka Tourism and the Tlingit,” in *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast*, ed. Paige Raibmon (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 135-156; Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir from Native North American Art from the Northeast, 1700-1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998).

²³ This mural may be relocated and its space transformed in the future, pending campus discussions about symbolism and iconography. Williams College, Committee on Campus Space and Institutional History, “Report and Recommendations on the Log Mural,” May 18, 2016, <https://president.williams.edu/college-spaces-and-institutional-history/report-and-recommendations-on-the-log-mural>; Lisa Conathan et al., “‘Take due notice of us for the future’: Native Americans and Williams College,” exhibition at Chapin Gallery, Williams College Library, Feb.-May 2017.

²⁴ Estes, *Our History Is The Future*, 18.

ESSAY BY KELLY M. DUKE BRYANT, ROWAN UNIVERSITY

Colonialism, the process by which certain countries exploited, controlled, and sometimes settled territories beyond their borders (colonies), has played a crucially important role in world history and helped shape the world we live in today. As such, every undergraduate history curriculum should highlight the theme of colonialism, and ideally, specialists of many world regions should teach it. Although the term colonialism most commonly implies European expansion into peripheries in the Americas, Asia, and Africa from the fifteenth through twentieth centuries, it can also be used to describe efforts by Japan, the United States, and others to subordinate other countries. Indeed, I would suggest that colonialism is best understood in a global context, and perhaps within a longer time frame.⁶⁹

Learning about colonialism requires students to grapple with its many legacies, ranging from global economic inequities, to campaigns for indigenous rights, to where and how asylum-seekers make claims, to debates about rightful ownership of art objects and artifacts, and so on. In this current moment, when countries around the world are reckoning with their own histories of oppression and exploitation, and when people are issuing renewed calls for their societies—and universities—to fully decolonize, this education is even more crucial. Instructors can take many different approaches to teaching colonialism in history, but I maintain that four elements should always be included: instructors should provide a balance between detailed case studies and comparative study situated in a global framework; students should engage with primary sources produced by those who became subjects of colonial rule; classroom activities should incorporate various perspectives; and instruction should lead students to consider the relevance of colonialism to the world they live in today.

Parameters, Themes, and Case Studies

As they prepare to teach about colonialism, instructors must first establish parameters for their course or unit, determining the time period(s) and world regions to include and the main organizing principle. They might choose to view world history through the lens of colonialism and empire, perhaps following Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, who use a series of case studies to show that “imperial power—and contests over and within it—have for thousands of years configured societies and states, inspired ambition and imagination, and opened up and closed down political possibilities.”⁷⁰ Instructors could emphasize how imperial or colonial subjects experienced colonialism, perhaps arguing, after Timothy Parsons, that empires are “unsustainable because their subjects find them intolerable.”⁷¹ Instead of creating a course to support one of these positions, instructors might choose to adopt a chronological approach to the history of colonialism. A textbook coauthored by Trevor Getz and Heather Streets-Salter and a primary source reader by Bonnie Smith would support this approach particularly well.⁷² In one way or another, each of these texts emphasizes the central importance of colonialism and imperialism and their legacies in our contemporary world—its conflicts, migration patterns, inequities, and global interconnectedness.

⁶⁹ Laurent Fourchard, “Colonialism,” *International Encyclopedia of Political Science* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2011), ProQuest Ebook Central; Trevor R. Getz and Heather Streets-Salter, *Modern Imperialism and Colonialism: A Global Perspective* (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011), 12. Ambitious leaders have built empires for thousands of years, of course, and some of these empires had remarkable reach and longevity.

⁷⁰ Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 7-8. See also Stephen Howe, *Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁷¹ Timothy H. Parsons, *The Rule of Empires: Those Who Built Them, Those Who Endured Them, and Why They Always Fall* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4.

⁷² Getz and Streets-Salter; Bonnie G. Smith, *Modern Empires: A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

Alternatively, historians and other humanists or social scientists might prefer to teach the history of colonialism in the world region or time period most closely aligned with their research expertise. Though students might miss certain comparative elements, they would benefit from learning about specific regional and local experiences in a course on colonialism in Africa, South and Southeast Asia, or Latin America, for example. Courses on the “new imperialism” of the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century also work well. The more narrowly defined time frame allows for greater depth, but the expansive geographic reach invites comparison, especially if instructors include Japan and the United States as colonial powers alongside European imperial states. I have most often taught the course along these lines since, as an historian of colonial West Africa, this intellectual terrain is most comfortable and familiar.

Whether introducing colonialism as a unit in a survey or other general course, or teaching a semester-long course on the history of imperialism and colonialism, I begin by asking students to wrestle with central terms and concepts. Working independently or in groups, they develop definitions based on assigned readings and prior knowledge, and we then discuss each student’s or group’s ideas as a class until we agree upon a definition for each term. I also think it is useful to introduce students to some of the scholarly debates about the nature, causes, and impacts of imperialism. I often ask them to read excerpts from works by classic theorists like John Hobson, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Schumpeter, and others.⁷³ My students and I also examine later efforts to understand how colonialism functioned, engaging with works of key mid-twentieth century scholars like Ronald Robinson or Edward Said, alongside more recent scholarship. For critique of empire by theorists who experienced it as colonial subjects, I often assign Aimé Césaire or Frantz Fanon.⁷⁴

Even as we ask students to think in the abstract about what makes an empire, how colonialism operated, and how it shaped the world we live in, it is crucial, I think, to invite them to study several historical cases in some depth. This allows students to understand how colonialism worked in practice in specific times and places and to see how the reality diverged from the ideal and did so in different ways. I have often done this by pairing a topical theme with a specific colony or region: violence and economic exploitation in King Leopold’s Congo/Belgian Congo; family relationships, childrearing, and sex across the color line in the Dutch East Indies; or colonial education and cultural change in British India, for example. Both primary and secondary sources are readily available for each of these cases, and students find the histories compelling and—often—troubling.

The study of colonialism, of course, also benefits from comparative analysis, since this highlights similarities and differences within and between empires. Students should learn that British officials in Africa often adapted or even replicated policies that earlier generations of officials had developed in India, that French experiences in Algeria shaped their outlook and approach in West Africa, and that U.S. involvement in Hawaii, the Philippines, and elsewhere grew out of the experience of westward expansion in North America. Students should also come to realize that while imperial frameworks differed—sometimes substantially—in terms of administrative approach, mechanisms of control, envisioned roles for colonial subjects, and so on, they shared certain minimal characteristics: they were meant to benefit the home country or its settlers in the colony, they depended on a relationship of domination, and they provoked various kinds of resistance.⁷⁵

⁷³ For a textbook containing excerpts from works by these and other classic theorists as well as excerpts of more recent scholarship on colonialism and imperialism, see Alice L. Conklin and Ian Christopher Fletcher, eds., *European Imperialism, 1830-1930* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

⁷⁴ I have used Ronald Robinson, “Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration,” in *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism*, ed. Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (London: Longman, 1972), 117-42; Edward Said, excerpt from *Orientalism*, in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, ed. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 132-149; Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2000); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004).

⁷⁵ For an overview, see Fourchard.

Comparative analysis can be achieved by adding a second and possibly a third case study to illustrate chosen themes. One could, for example, build a thematic unit around colonial violence, spending a week or two on the brutality of Japanese rule in Korea, a week or two on violence in the rubber-production regime in Malaya, and a week or two on the genocide against Nama and Herero people in German Southwest Africa. Alternatively, instructors might wish to construct thematic units that span regions and empires, and to devote part or all of a course to such units. Themes might include labor and taxation, racism, gender, resistance, nationalism, and many more. Neocolonialism, legacies of colonialism, and debates about the use of the term “colonial” to describe contemporary geopolitics are all logical endpoints for the unit or semester, since they clearly demonstrate the relevance of the past to the present. Instructors could invite students to consider these broad topics by exploring and debating one or two of the following issues: global inequity, economic development, racism and xenophobia, military intervention in former colonies, immigration and migration patterns, or control over cultural heritage.

No matter how they choose to approach the history of colonialism, instructors should take care to ensure that students encounter the subject from multiple perspectives. This means reading scholarship by historians of empire, of course, but it also requires critical engagement with work on local experiences of and responses to colonialism in the territories that came under colonial control. Perhaps more importantly, it means reading primary sources by people who were victims of conquest and subjects of colonial rule, and—even though it can be very difficult to do—seeking out perspectives of ordinary people, not simply turning to the more readily available testimony of elites. Instructors should also include primary sources produced by metropolitan governments, colonial officials, missionaries, members of the metropolitan public, etc. Nancy Jacobs has produced a wonderful African history textbook which offers this multiplicity of perspectives, as does Smith’s documentary reader on empire, mentioned above.⁷⁶

Course activities and teaching techniques

In teaching about colonialism, I regularly turn to class discussion, posing open-ended questions for students to discuss in pairs, in small groups of four or five, in large groups, or as a class. This works well, but the topic of colonialism also lends itself to simulations, debates, role play, and “barometer” exercises (in which students arrange themselves in the classroom based on whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with particular statements), and I try to use these impactful learning experiences whenever possible.⁷⁷ Many of these learning activities could be reworked for online courses, by using breakout groups in synchronous class sessions; by creating asynchronous debates using voice memos, VoiceThread, or other similar apps; by creating online polls; or by creatively deploying the collaborative functionality of Google Docs. After reading primary sources by French Prime Minister Jules Ferry and secondary sources on the “new imperialism,” for example, students might simulate a debate in the French National Assembly between Ferry’s pro-expansion allies and his opponents. When learning about the civilizing mission, they might play the role of officials in the British Colonial Office or French Ministry of the Colonies tasked with instructing colonial governors on how to promote cultural “evolution” in their territories⁷⁸. And when discussing cultural or social changes catalyzed by colonial schools, hospitals and dispensaries,

⁷⁶ Nancy J. Jacobs, *African History through Sources. Vol. 1, Colonial Contexts and Everyday Experiences, c. 1850-1946* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Smith.

⁷⁷ “Barometer: Taking a Stand on Controversial Issues,” Facing History and Ourselves, <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/barometer-taking-stand-controversial-issues>.

⁷⁸ On colonialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Scott B. Cook, *Colonial Encounters in the Age of High Imperialism* (New York: Longman, 1996); Burbank and Cooper, 287-329; Getz and Streets-Salter, 211-284; Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 85-100. For primary sources, see “Defending Conquest: Jules Ferry, Speech before the French National Assembly (1883),” in *Sources of the Making of the West*, vol. 2: *Since 1500: Peoples and Cultures*, ed. Katherine J. Lualdi (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s Press, 2012), 186-190; Jane Samson, ed., *The British Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 105-196. Many relevant primary sources, including the speech by Jules Ferry mentioned above, are available for free online. See Paul Halsall, ed., “Imperialism,” *The Internet Modern History Sourcebook*, Fordham University, 21 January 2020, <https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/mod/modsbook34.asp>.

churches, and other similar institutions, students could simulate a debate among townspeople in Senegal, India, Indonesia, or elsewhere about how they should respond to colonial encroachment. In the interest of promoting collaboration and peer teaching, instructors could assign a group project on which students would work for multiple weeks both during and outside of class. Student groups could create a podcast or video designed to teach younger students about imperialism, for example, or they could create a website or slideshow providing analysis of a set of primary sources related to colonialism.

It is incumbent on faculty, I firmly believe, to do all we can to make our course content relevant to students' lives and to help them better understand the world in which we live. One way to do this is to explicitly ask students to interrogate the ways in which colonialism and imperialism are still with us. In my courses, I have approached this goal in a variety of ways. I have created small group activities that invite students to consider whether recent news items referring to empire or imperialism use the terms appropriately, for example. I have also asked students to debate questions about neocolonialism and international development, the colonial origins of global health, and reparations for slavery or colonialism. And I have encouraged students to think through such issues in a more sustained way outside the classroom, either by keeping a journal within our university's learning management system, in which they regularly reflect on connections between our class and current events, or by writing an essay with the same goal.

Conclusion

In *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*, Stephen Howe emphasizes the centrality of empire to world history. "Indeed," he writes, "it could be said that *all* history is imperial—or colonial—history, if one takes a broad enough definition and goes far enough back."⁷⁹ Howe's claim suggests that most history faculty have reason and opportunity to teach about colonialism—even if only briefly—should they choose to do so. I would argue that historians should teach our students about colonialism whenever possible. They should explore European colonial expansion, certainly, but they should also look at colonialism in other contexts as well—U.S. involvement overseas, China as a longstanding imperial power, the relationship between Japan's imperial goals and its entry into World War II, to name a few possibilities. Instructors should ensure that students leave their classrooms with an understanding of the centrality of colonialism to world history and the importance of its legacies in the contemporary world. In doing so, we might just challenge students' conventional understandings of the past, their perspective on the present, and their vision of the future.

⁷⁹ Howe, 1.

ESSAY BY JENNIFER SESSIONS, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

The invitation to contribute to this roundtable was deceptively innocuous: ‘could you write 1,500-2,500 words about how best to teach on the topic of colonialism in History, especially for undergraduates?’ Of course, no problem. Colonialism and empire are central to all of my teaching, from introductions to European and world history to capstone seminars on French colonialism and French-Algerian relations. Since 2008, I have regularly offered an upper-division lecture course devoted to modern European imperialism.” I spend a lot of time thinking about teaching colonialism, especially to undergraduates. But actually writing those words, particularly in this historical moment, requires grappling with not just the practical aspects of the task, which are daunting enough, but also urgent questions about *why* we teach the history of colonialism and the ethical implications of doing so.

Given colonialism’s protean character and the many possible pedagogical approaches to it—as well as the fact that I am a cultural historian on the loose in the diplomatic china shop—it seems most useful to offer not normative prescriptions but rather some reflections on my own experience teaching colonial and imperial histories in hopes of generating productive discussion. So let me begin by laying my cards on the table: I come to the study of empire and thus to teaching colonialism in large part through reading novels. A chance high school elective on the “Literatures of the English-Speaking World”—back then, the National Endowment for the Humanities offered dozens of summer seminars for school teachers, and my favorite English teacher had taken one on “Contemporary Literature from Africa, the West Indies, and the Pacific” at Indiana University in 1991⁸⁰—led me to undergraduate courses on colonial and postcolonial literature. Those books, stories, and poems by Robert Louis Stevenson and Joseph Conrad, Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, Doris Lessing and Nadine Gordimer, Chinua Achebe and Wolé Soyinka, Muriama Bà and Tsitsi Dangaremba, Salman Rushdie and Hanif Kureishi, Marguerite Duras and Ruth Praver Jhabvala, Mudrooroo/Colin Johnson and J.M. Coetzee, Erna Brodber and Maryse Condé, among others, vividly demonstrated how experiences of empire and colonization had shaped lives and cultures across large swathes of the globe. Inherently violent and structured by coercive inequalities, the colonialism depicted in these texts also gave rise to complex, diverse societies that looked like the world I knew.

Postcolonial theory later provided a more nuanced vocabulary to describe what I was seeing, but these early lessons about the analytical power of culture and the constitutive legacies of empire underpin the history courses I teach now. Whether in specialized courses devoted to the topic or broader surveys in which it is one key theme, my teaching of colonialism departs from the interdependent principles that empire “has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience,” and that “it is the colonist who *fabricated* and *continues to fabricate* the colonized subject.”⁸¹ From there follow more specific historical questions about representation and identity, accommodation and resistance, and agency and voice that have been so central in colonial and postcolonial studies. While culture remains a primary focus, the renewal of scholarly attention to capitalism and political economy has pushed me to make more room in recent years for those themes. Teaching in the Midwest at a university built on multiply colonized Native American land and now at the University of Virginia, where the memory of slavery (if not yet settler colonialism) is so present, one of my central goals is to

⁸⁰ NEH Digital Repository, Brochures: Summer Seminars for School Teachers (1990-91, 1993-95), <https://neh.dspace.direct.org/handle/11215/4069>. Comparing past and current summer seminar offerings makes vividly clear the terrible impact of the federal defunding of humanities research and education over the last thirty years. Between 1990 and 1995, NEH offered an average of sixty-four summer seminars of four to six weeks each, allowing almost a thousand K-12 teachers to participate annually. Drastic budget cuts to NEH and the National Endowment for the Arts in 1996 cut that number in half. Thirty-four summer seminars and institutes for school-teachers were offered in 1997, and the number has continued to decline since. Only twenty seminars and institutes, most only one or two weeks long, were scheduled for summer 2020, offering spaces for less than half the number of participants of three decades earlier. On the conservative campaign against NEH and NEA, see Cynthia Koch, “The Contest for American Culture: A Leadership Case Study on The NEA and NEH Funding Crisis,” *Public Talk 2* (Fall 1998), <https://www.upenn.edu/pnc/prtkoch.html>.

⁸¹ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (1978; New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 1-2; Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Richard Philcox (1963; New York: Grove Press, 2004), 1.

help students understand how their own world is shaped by the historical processes we are studying.⁸² The recent escalation of popular protests against the racist legacies of empire and resurgence of reactionary movements that are defined by imperial nostalgia and white supremacy make this an even more pressing objective. As members of a discipline as bound up in the making of colonialism as anthropology and other social sciences, historians have an obligation to help students make sense of the uses and abuses of colonial and imperial history in these movements.⁸³

The same geographical reach and contemporary salience that make it so imperative to teach the history of colonialism and empire, however, can also make it pedagogically intimidating. Like world history, teaching colonial history requires finding coherent, accessible ways “to navigate the vastness of time, place, and topic.”⁸⁴ Its conceptual and analytical challenges are compounded by the logistical difficulties of tacking between global structures and local encounters, making sense of often-unfamiliar geographies and cultures, and working through emotionally and politically fraught histories of racialized exploitation and violence, both physical and symbolic. In predominantly white institutions (PWIs) in the United States, these discussions mean exploring the colonial origins of social identities, academic disciplines, and structural inequalities in which many students are personally, albeit differently invested.⁸⁵ If “decolonization is unsettling,” as Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang insist in their critical essay on decolonial pedagogies, it is because it involves just intellectual engagement, but also acknowledging our own entanglement in persistent colonial structures.⁸⁶

Approaching the history of colonialism from a European perspective is an advantage in this respect. In the U.S. context, focusing on European colonial empires offers students some critical and emotional distance from their own subjectivity. It creates space to think and talk about historical processes that were often shared across the Atlantic, but in a context that less directly implicates American students’ senses of self. The transatlantic resonances are clear enough to offer useful points of entry into the material, while also empowering students to identify useful comparisons for themselves and sidestepping perceptions that I, as the instructor, am imposing an “agenda.” More pragmatically, I, like colleagues elsewhere, have found that emphasizing empire helps to make Europe more relevant to students in U.S. colleges, a not-insignificant consideration at a time of increasing pressure on enrollments, and serves to forge links between European history and other fields.⁸⁷ From

⁸² See Lance M. Foster, *The Indians of Iowa* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009); Marcus L. Martin et al, *President’s Commission on Slavery and the University: Report to President Teresa A. Sullivan* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia), 2018, <https://slavery.virginia.edu/>; Geremia Di Maro and Jacquelyn Kim, “Facing history head-on’ Black student activists submit demands to President Ryan’s racial equity task force,” *Cavalier Daily*, 11 July 2020.

⁴ On history and colonialism, see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); Stuart Woolf, “Europe and Its Historians,” *Contemporary European History* 12:3 (2003): 323-37; Priya Satia, *Time’s Monster: How History Makes History* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).

⁸⁴ Antoinette Burton, *A Primer for Teaching World History: Ten Design Principles* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 4.

⁸⁵ Maureen Reddy and Bonnie TuSmith, eds., *Race in the College Classroom: Pedagogy & Politics* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002); Heather Streets, “Empire and ‘the Nation’: Institutional Practice, Pedagogy, and Nation in the Classroom,” in *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation*, ed. Antoinette Burton (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 57-69; Priscilla Layne, “Decolonizing German Studies While Dissecting Race in the American Classroom,” in Criser and Malakaj, *Diversity and Decolonization in German Studies*, 83-100. On the emotional dimensions of race more generally, see Edouardo Bonilla-Silva, “Feeling Race: Theorizing the Racial Economy of Emotions,” *American Sociological Review* 84:1 (2019): 1-25.

⁸⁶ Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1:1 (2012): 1-40. See also Janet Mawhinney, “Giving up the ghost: Disrupting the (Re)production of White Privilege in Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Organizational Change,” M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1998.

⁸⁷ Alice Conklin, “Boundaries Unbound: Teaching French History as Colonial History and Colonial History as French History,” *French Historical Studies* 23:2 (2000): 216; Priya Satia, “Britain and the World: A Fix for Provincialism or a Case of Colonialism?” in roundtable “Britain and the World: A New Field?” *Journal of British Studies* 57 (2008): 693-694; Julia Brookins, “The

an ethical standpoint, fully integrating race, empire, and colonialism into undergraduate European history courses is one way to begin working to “decolonize the university” from within a PWI and to combat some of the intellectual and professional practices that have made ours one of the least diverse fields in the discipline.⁸⁸

If these broad observations apply across generalist and specialized courses alike, designing a thematic course focused more specifically on colonialism brings the pragmatic pedagogical challenges of scale, variation, and unfamiliarity to the fore. To address these in my modern European imperialism course, I have adopted several key strategies. The first, which has been a feature since its inception, is organizing the course around a series of case studies. The second, inspired by my own experience as a student, is to center each case study on a fictional text that provides a vivid narrative portrait of a particular colonial society. The last, building on my research on colonial monuments, is to foreground questions of historical and collective memory.

The course as a whole departs from the collapse of the imperial “old regime” of mercantilism and plantation slavery in the wake of the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions and the revival of empire under the banner of liberalism in the early nineteenth century. This gives it a somewhat longer chronology than many surveys of modern European empire, which usually begin with the advent of the so-called New Imperialism in the late nineteenth century. But the earlier starting point reflects my interests in the critical post-revolutionary transition period that C.A. Bayly called the “imperial meridian.”⁸⁹ From there, three-week units devoted to India, Australia, the Congo, and Algeria provide opportunities for in-depth examination of key forms of European colonial rule. The units overlap chronologically, but generally move forward from the 1830s to the 1960s, introducing new thematic and conceptual questions along the way: liberal imperialism, Orientalism, and racialized, gendered imperial identities; settler colonialism, colonial migration, and “white men’s countries”; New Imperialism, scientific racism, and colonial violence; and civilizing missions, subalternity and imperial citizenship, and decolonization. The final week explores the legacies of empire in contemporary Europe, particularly postcolonial immigration and imperial nostalgia.

This case-study structure is not without its drawbacks. In seeking to help students develop site-specific literacy, it leaves out far more than it encompasses. Despite introductory lectures and readings that situate each case study in broader global and transnational contexts, it risks reifying national and imperial boundaries. There are powerful texts and films, including some personal favorites, that just don’t fit the selected cases. But this approach has been largely successful in addressing two major difficulties I had encountered in other European history courses and in an earlier, thematic seminar on colonial culture. First, lack of exposure to the societies, cultures, and histories of the non-Western world led many students to fall back on often-racist stereotypes and generalizations about “Africa,” “Africans,” “Asia,” and so on, despite repeated exhortations to

Decline in History Majors: What Is To Be Done?” *Perspectives on History*, May 2016, <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/may-2016/the-decline-in-history-majors>.

⁸⁸ On decolonization in European studies, see the essays in Emily Marker and Christy Pichichero, eds., “Race, Racism, and the Study of France and the Francophone World Today, Part I” *H-France Salon* 11:1, <https://h-france.net/h-france-salon-volume-11-2019/#1102> and “Race, Racism, and the Study of France and the Francophone World Today, Part II,” *H-France Salon* 12:1, <https://h-france.net/h-france-salon-volume-12-2020/>; Kennetta Hammond Perry and Kira Thurman, “Black Europe: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *Black Perspectives* blog, 10 December 2016, online at <https://www.aaihs.org/black-europe-a-useful-category-of-historical-analysis/>; Kehinde Andrews, “The Black Studies Movement in Britain,” *Black Perspectives* blog, 22 June 2018; Regine Criser and Ervin Malakaj eds., *Diversity and Decolonization in German Studies* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Catharine Baker, “Postcoloniality Without Race? Racial Exceptionalism and Southeast European Cultural Studies,” *Interventions* 6 (2018): 759-784.

⁸⁹ Naomi Andrews and Jennifer Sessions, “Introduction: The Politics of Empire in Post-Revolutionary France,” *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33:1 (2015): 1-10. On the “imperial meridian,” see C. A. Bayly, *The Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (London: Longman, 1989); David Todd, “A French Imperial Meridian, 1814-1870,” *Past & Present* 210:1 (2011): 155-86.

avoid them.⁹⁰ And second, the same lack of background meant that keeping track of unfamiliar names and places crowded out higher-level concepts and analysis in reading, writing, and discussions. In this alone, the tradeoffs have been worth it.

Spending more time on fewer places has intellectual advantages, too.⁹¹ It serves to disaggregate the monolith of ‘empire’ and to highlight the particularities of different forms and sites of colonial rule, a move that is especially important to me as a historian of settler colonialism. And it creates room to examine each colonial situation from multiple perspectives, from above and from below, from the imperial and the local, in theory and in practice. What is lost in spatial reach is made up for in the kind of complexity fostered by area studies-inspired approaches.

Three weeks is hardly enough for exhaustive study, but it does leave time to explore a range of primary sources and historical interpretations that contextualize a longer central text around which each unit is organized. In the unit on liberal imperialism in British India, for instance, the central text is George Orwell’s 1934 novel *Burmese Days*, inspired by the author’s years as an officer of the Indian Imperial Police in Lower Burma in the 1920s. To prepare to discuss and write about the novel, we read essays by Andrew Porter and Jennifer Pitts about nineteenth-century liberal conceptions of empire, selections from Edward Said’s *Orientalism* alongside Thomas Babington Macaulay’s infamous “Minute on Indian Education” and British and Indian writings on *suttee*, selections from a fin-de-siècle handbook for Anglo-Indian housewives, and an article about women’s consumption of Indian goods in Victorian Britain, and a children’s book designed to teach young Victorians about the empire along with excerpts from Mohandas Gandhi’s *Hind Swaraj*.⁹² These equip students to analyze the racial, class, and gender dynamics of Anglo-Indian society as portrayed by Orwell, to consider whether the novel is an Orientalist text, and to compare British and Indian perspectives on British colonialism in the subcontinent. The unit culminates in an essay in which students use these sources to weigh whether or not *Burmese Days* supports Said’s arguments about the ways that “the Orient” defined European identities.

The power of narrative to capture the impact of global processes on human lives and relationships guides my decision to center each unit of the course on a novel or film set in the colony under consideration. If Orwell is the guiding text for our study of British India, subsequent units are designed around the Australian writer Mudrooroo/Colin Johnson’s novel *Doctor Wooreddy’s Prescription for Enduring the End of the World* (1983),⁹³ Joseph Conrad’s novella *Heart of Darkness*

⁹⁰ If I ever teach that colonial culture course again, we will begin with Binyavanga Wainaina, “How to Write About Africa,” *Granta* 92 (2005), <https://granta.com/how-to-write-about-africa/>.

⁹¹ Scholars of history education have made similar arguments for “uncoverage” in other kinds of survey courses, as well. See Lendol Calder, “Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey,” *Journal of American History* 92:4 (2006): 1358-1370.

⁹² Andrew Porter, “Trusteeship, Anti-Slavery, and Humanitarianism,” in *Oxford History of the British Empire*, v. 3, *The Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 198-221; Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); Said, *Orientalism*; Macaulay and documents on *suttee* in Barbara Harlow and Mia Carter eds., *Imperialism and Orientalism: A Documentary Sourcebook* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 1999), 54-62; Flora Annie Steel & Grace Gardiner, *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook*, 2nd ed. (London, 1902); Mary Francis Ames, *An ABC for Baby Patriots* (London: Dean & Son, 1899); Chitralkha Zutshi, “Designed for Eternity’: Kashmiri Shawls, Empire, and Cultures of Production and Consumption in Mid-Victorian Britain,” *Journal of British Studies* 48:2 (2009): 420-440; M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj or Indian Home Rule* (1909; Ahmedabad: Navajivan, 1938), <https://www.mkgandhi.org/hindswaraj/hindswaraj.htm>.

⁹³ The identity of the author of *Doctor Wooreddy* is complex. Born Colin Johnson, the author changed his name to Mudrooroo Nyoongah in 1988 in recognition of what he saw as his Aboriginal heritage. He also published under the name Mudrooroo Narogin. He was of mixed-race background and was institutionalized, along with his sister, in one of the infamous residential schools to which Indigenous and mixed-race children were sent under Australia’s white supremacist child removal policies. As a writer and academic, Mudrooroo played an important role in the development of Aboriginal literature and studies in the 1980s. His Aboriginal identity was later challenged by the Nyoongah community, however, and the family in which he claimed kinship rejected his membership. The resulting scandal called the writer’s Aboriginality into question, and it remains in limbo after his death in 2019. See Lorna Little et al,

(1899), Rachid Bouchareb's films *Days of Glory (Indigènes)* (2006) and *Outside the Law (Hors la Loi)* (2010), and Assia Djebar's *Children of the New World* (1962). The concluding week on contemporary Europe is anchored by popular recent films about the experience of young people descended from colonial or postcolonial immigrants in France and Britain.⁹⁴ Together, these fictions help students to visualize the colonial situations we are studying, while opening up important theoretical and methodological questions about the role of culture in history and the uses of literature and film as historical sources.⁹⁵ Although hardly a cutting-edge pedagogical method, it remains a wonderfully effective and engaging one. One of my favorite moments every semester is watching students who hated reading *Heart of Darkness* in high school English classes dive into sustained vigorous debate over Chinua Achebe's critique of Conrad's language and the tactics of the Congo Reform Association.⁹⁶

The final organizing strategy draws more explicit connections between past and present by examining historical memories of empire in Europe and formerly colonized countries. While this has always been a course theme, I made it the central spine of the syllabus in the most recent iteration, framing each unit with discussion of current struggles over colonial pasts. The change was inspired by the conjuncture of the growing global protest movement against colonialist symbols with my move to the UVA in 2018. The ongoing controversies about how to remember former U.S. president Thomas Jefferson's racism and slaveholding and the far-right violence in Charlottesville, including on the UVA campus, in August 2017 have made students at "Mr. Jefferson's University" highly attuned to the presence of racist monuments in the landscape and to the place of slavery and white supremacy in American collective memory.⁹⁷ The Rhodes Must Fall movement launched by students at the University of Cape Town in 2015 and the growing transnational ties between memory activists in South Africa, Europe, and the United States, as well as the mobilization of imperial nostalgia by conservatives on both sides of the Atlantic, presented both an opportunity and an obligation to help students situate local 'memory wars' in a broader, global context.

We began the course with a general introduction to monuments and museums as sites of contestation,⁹⁸ and then opened each unit with a discussion of contemporary debates over the place of the British Empire in the Brexit movement, the role of Aboriginal art in Australian land law, the renovation of the Royal Africa Museum in Brussels, and French president Emmanuel Macron's belated (and, it turns out, temporary) recognition of colonization in Algeria as a crime against

"The Mudrooroo Dilemma," *Westerly* 41:3 (1996): 5-8; Anita Heiss, *Dhuuluu-Yala (To Talk Straight): Publishing Indigenous Literature* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2003), 3-8; Maureen Clark, *Mudrooroo: A Likely Story* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2007).

⁹⁴ These films vary from year to year, but most recently, students could choose among: Stephen Frears, dir., *My Beautiful Laundrette*, 1985; Gurinder Ghadha, *Bend It Like Beckham*, 2002; Mathieu Kassovitz, dir., *La Haine (Hate)*, 1995; and Abdellatif Kechiche, *L'Esquive (Games of Love and Chance)*, 2003.

⁹⁵ The literature on history and literature, empire and culture is vast. Among the works that have shaped my own thinking and my approach to teaching the texts above, see Gayatri Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry* 12:1 (1985): 243-261; Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1994); Antoinette Burton, "Recapturing *Jane Eyre*: Reflections on Historicizing the Colonial Encounter in Victorian Britain" (1996), in *Empire in Question*, 174-183; Alison Murray, "Teaching Colonial History Through Film," *French Historical Studies* 25:1 (2002): 41-52.

⁹⁶ Chinua Achebe, "An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*" (1975), rpt. in *Massachusetts Review* 57:1 (2016): 14-27.

⁹⁷ On the events of 2017 and their relationship to the University, see Nicole Hemmer, *A12: The Story of Charlottesville*, podcast, 2018, <http://www.pastpundit.com/a12>.

⁹⁸ The walking tour developed by my colleague, Jalane Schmidt, and Andrea Douglas, Executive Director of the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center, provided an excellent model for historicizing commemorative monuments. A virtual tour can be found online at *Marked By These Monuments*, <https://www.thesemonuments.org/>.

humanity.⁹⁹ We then returned to these questions at the end of the unit, after students had had a chance to learn more about the history in question. To allow them to apply what they had learned from these discussions, I replaced the final exam with a research project that asked students to investigate the history and contemporary significance of one object or site related to the history of European empire. The impressive work that resulted from this assignment made it clear that students had grasped what Michel-Rolph Trouillot terms the “inherent ambivalence of the word ‘history,’” invoking “both ‘what happened’ and ‘that which is said to have happened,’” as well as the politics and power relations inherent in the production of historical narratives. If they took nothing else from the course, this central understanding of the nature of history itself seems an invaluable, enduring lesson of studying colonialism. It may be, as Trouillot wrote, “less visible than gunfire, class property, or political crusades,” but it is “no less powerful.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Rhodes Must Fall Oxford, *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonise the Racist Heart of Empire* (London: Zed Books, 2018); J. K?haulaniKauanui and Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism Then and Now: A Conversation between J. K?haulaniKauanui and Patrick Wolfe,” *Politica & Societ? 2* (2012): 235-258; “Renovating the AfricaMuseum. A Conversation with Gillian Mathys, Margot Luyckfasseel, Sarah Van Beurden, Tracy Tansia,” Africa is a Country blog, 29 April 2019; Jennifer Sessions, “Why the French presidential candidates are arguing about their colonial history,” *The Conversation*, 18 April 2017.

¹⁰⁰ *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon, 1995), 2, xxiii.