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Editor's Introduction: Ethnic Studies Pedagogies as Living Archives

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The contemporary context is altering the ways we live and learn. The shift towards privatization, marketization and digitalization of education intensifies the utilitarian[1] and instrumentalist function of K-12 schools and universities in the U.S., and globally. This approach to education promotes the belief that our lives should be measured by what we do for a living and how much we earn rather than how we want to live; with and for each other. For Indigenous and people of color, increasing meritocracy, individualism, and standardization in order to prepare them to compete in the global economy cannot fully address historical educational inequalities and educational violence and dispossession experienced daily in our communities. Reifying their status as non-beings, these structures of racialized accumulation by education necessitate a re-alignment with and re-remembering of radical movements for educational change. The current ethnic studies movement in K-12 is rooted in that vision and struggle and is a vital step toward developing an educational system that cultivates a desire for dreaming, building, and living differently. To help children and youth live in a world where freedom, justice and equality is yet to come, ethnic studies educators will have to develop pedagogies that are responsive to the urgency and instability produced by endless wars, mass carcerality, neoliberal militarization, state imperialism, climate change, and global capitalism. With our educational lives simultaneously becoming intensely more mediated by our everyday engagement with corporate archival technology (i.e. Zoom and Meta) and affected by the growth of state sanctioned silencing of social and historical content, it is necessary that we turn to the archive of knowledge that is within us—our histories, communities, and bodies—in order to study the wisdoms that bring our pedagogies to life and the possibilities these wisdoms carry for moving towards a humanizing and liberatory praxis. This special issue considers our ethnic studies pedagogies as living archives to draw upon the resources within ourselves and our communities that will nourish and sustain our lives, no less our future educational lives.

Notes on Ethnic Studies and Living Archive

I returned home to the dirt roads of the South End during the summer to better understand the educational lives of Black rural people in Southeast Michigan. Caught up in the web of positivist methodologies demanded by the neoliberal university, I felt pressure to discover something original or novel in the local archives that would provide evidence on how the restructuring of the public schools ruptured Black life. I arrived at the area library with optimism. The librarians there, who

[1] My reference to the utilitarian function of U.S. education draws directly from the "Proposal for Establishing a Black Studies Program." (Black Studies proposal, Spring 1968, CES ARC 2015/2, Location 2:7 TWLF box 2 Folder 7. Ethnic Studies Library, University of California, Berkeley. The Berkley Revolution: Digital Archive of East Bay 1960s and 1970s, Black Studies Proposal, Retrieved May 2, 2023. https://revolution.berkeley.edu/assets/Black-studies-proposal.pdf)

were more than generous, taught me how to use the microfilm reader and led me to several local newspapers that might reveal clues to the debates about the dissolution of the local school district. For weeks-on-end I sat alone in the enclosed air-conditioned room, only to find a couple of brief statements by local white leaders against the state's decision. While useful, I began to feel unfulfilled and disconnected. But maybe I was not looking hard enough or just alienated by the whole process.

After getting buried underneath the collection of absences and possible erasures of Black education, something urged me to turn my project toward more social forms of collective remembering that would give breath to various ontological silences. During an oral history interview with a Black township leader, I was encouraged to speak to an elder named Jewel. However, he had no way to contact her. I showed up to the senior center and asked church members that I knew from childhood. Most folks knew her, but no one had her phone number, or at least they would not give it to me without her permission. Serendipitously, I found her landline number and address. I rushed to call her but got no answer. Eager to learn from her experiences, I rode my father's bike a couple miles down the road to her home situated across from the old landfill, which sits idle due to Black community organizers who fought against environmental racism and demanded its closure. I walked up to her side porch because in the country most people do not use their front doors. I knocked nervously in anticipation. I began to walk away, when she opened the door and greeted me affectionately. It was as if we were both waiting for each other.

We talked that evening about the intersections of our educational experiences with youth and children, her migration from Detroit to the rural South End, and her years of community engaged activities. Through her oral history, Jewel opened a portal into the perspectives of Black women organizers who sought to ameliorate the isolation experienced by Black children and youth following the dissolution of the school district. She described the development of afterschool programming, her involvement as an organizer, and the call for young Black women and their families to take a more active role in the education of their children, as well as the differing political and institutional attitudes towards this work. Jewel and I connected around our common interest in and possibilities of preserving and restoring communal knowledge. She narrated how she and her mother collected and preserved documents about the township and particularly about Black people who lived there. Outlining their intergenerational social practice of uncovering and recovering Black community life, I became fascinated by the pedagogical implications of this practice. Reflecting on what I could learn from these methodologies, I gained a deeper understanding of the archival labor marginalized peoples develop to teach each other about life under a social system that inherently smothers knowledge about their lived experience and political perspectives, both in the official archive and through formal archival practice.

Our conversations also reminded me of the critical care in which my grandmother Josephine holds her recipes, crates of three ring photo albums, our sports trophies and newspaper clippings, and obituaries of family and community members. It all felt so familiar. Since the first unannounced visit, Jewel has gifted me a brown clasp envelope full of historical documents containing the rich history of Black educational life in the South End and we continue to connect every summer to dialogue about local history and regional politics, our shared interests in writing speculative fiction, and our commitment to educational liberation for youth and children in our community and beyond. This has made me feel at home and rooted, laying a foundation for understanding ways of

re-remembering with our ancestors, geographies, and resistance that has had a lasting imprint on my pedagogical imagination.

Our conversations sparked critical questions that feel relevant to the collective work in this special issue: What methods of documenting, recording and collecting arise when you are absent (but present and integral) from the official record and dominant cultural and historical memory? How have organizers and community involved people preserved memories and histories? What role has and should organic archival practice play in the liberation and education of people of color? What are the possibilities of a socially engaged archival practice? How can the sharing of histories and memories through storytelling, (auto)biography/ethnography, and personal reflection inform and enhance a praxis-oriented pedagogy? What collective and communal perspectives of social, political, economic and cultural life emerge when the archive is imagined as alive and with us, collective and intergenerational, engaged and embodied, rather than hidden, lost or dead? The multilayered themes in this special issue situate these questions and provide starting points for developing ethnic studies pedagogies with the ontologies, epistemologies, and methodologies of Indigenous and people of color, as a move to root our educational labor in their everyday lives, struggles, resistance, and futures.

There is a symbiotic and even parasitic relationship between archival practice and the lives of the oppressed. Archival practice is generally imagined as the holding and collecting of knowledge, in the forms of images, artifacts, ephemera, audio/video recordings and other primary sources, of which can only take place in the obscure, dusty, and silent rooms of state and national institutions. Despite its appearance of objectivity and neutrality, the "science" of this practice is steeped in western definitions of knowing, being, doing and learning and notions of positivism, liberalism, and humanism. Scholars, writers and organizers committed to decolonization and anti-racism remind us how western archival practice mobilized mythical grammars of race, ethnicity and personhood to legitimate the violence and dispossession necessary for western economic and cultural expansion and dominance. However, when the maintenance of this practice was passed down from the colonies to the imperial racial state and corporate elite to define, manage and fund what they believed to be valuable knowledge, minoritized peoples took it upon themselves, using formal and informal methods, to recoup what slavery and colonization had stolen from them: a historical, political, social life.

Much of the archival labor that takes place in ethnic studies classrooms revolve around the edges of historical restoration. There is an effort to dig up every little-known piece of history—person, place, event, and text, juxtaposing significant and sometimes anonymous representations of Indigenous and people of color to the abundance of Euro-American male heroes, inventors, saviors, and sympathizers. This primarily serves to connect a more inclusive version of history to the realities and perspectives of children and youth for the purpose of developing healthy identity and sociopolitical consciousness. Interacting with relevant knowledge and becoming aware of omitted cultural pasts enables a *remaking* of the future, to the extent the collecting and preserving the buried genius of racialized and ethnic peoples center their self-determination and active participation in holding the U.S. accountable to its purported democratic principles and practice (Schomburg, 1925)[2].

[2] "The Negro Digs Up His Past" by Arthur Schomburg was introduced to me Professor Carl Grant, during a brief conversation I had with him on the presence of Black death in culturally responsive curriculum. I am forever grateful for connecting me with this fundamental essay on Black life and historical archive.

Ethnic studies come with the awareness that racism and colonialism is a persistent force that requires alternative methods for interpreting our relationship to history. Reading Schomburg amidst the calculated neoconservative backlash to recent social movements for racial justice, reinforces the need to prioritize the social and historical agency of oppressed people (Tintiangco-Cubales et al. 2022). The investment and adoption of a colorblind "post racial" anti-woke ideology silences "the full story of human collaboration and interdependence" because it exposes how narrow versions of history conceal the violent impulse of global white supremacy and the extractive nature of its epistemology (Schomburg, 1925). Here the past is justifiably feared because it gives life to the present. More than ever, it is necessary that our pedagogies bring to life the historical presences of diasporic peoples and their intellectual and direct activism against the enduring production of social and premature death. When the archive of movement building is a constant thread, reading the movement for Black lives and fights for Indigenous sovereignty help children and youth define and imagine alternative meanings of life and living that empower them to sustain solidarities for a decolonial and multiracial movement for a world without racist colonial nationalist rule.

Following Lisa Lowe (2015), "the archive invites inquiry into what is to be recovered and under what conditions" (p.85). The motion toward a practice of collective recovery occurs within the confines of present social, political, economic, and cultural, and spatial dynamics and interventions. The maintenance of global racial capitalism and settler colonialism often coalesce around a politics of recognition and representation in order to convince the masses that free markets can make freedom and liberty possible for all. Within this unequal and unforgiving system, claims that the Civil Rights movement ended racial oppression, or the international protests of Summer 2020 sparked by the murder of George Floyd brought about a racial reckoning are simplistic and crafty attempts to camouflage the ways the neoliberal racial state and corporate foundations profit and arrest the politics of grassroots organizing.

Under these vexed conditions, ethnic studies approaches to archival work benefit from a politics of refusal that forcefully rejects incorporation into the present social order (Omowale, 2018). Refusing to allow our lives—joys, pains, and political victories—to be used to advance the reordering of the social world generates contradictory links, between for example Walmart, Starbucks, and other corporate celebration of marginalized histories, communities and experience and the exploitation of prison labor; between the Fourth Industrial Revolution, its scores of digital and social advancements (autonomous technologies and artificial intelligence) and the excessive mining of raw materials such as copper, silicon, and plastic and the return of expropriation in Global South; and between calls for gender and ethnic educational equality in developing nations and the disregard for the Rights of the Child in the U.S. Embracing pedagogies that engage in participatory acts of recovery (e.g. youth participatory action research) provide children and youth a method to interrogate the violence, theft and inhumanity associated with the conservation of white supremist patriarchal capitalism. If we understand that diasporic peoples are not absent nor marginal to the archive but integral to its development, the silences and invisibility cannot be dismissed (Omowale, 2018). This allows for the development of archival practices that aim to recover our humanity from the conditions of non-being, while acquiring methods for engaging in and negotiating the present.

An archival praxis that rewrites historical narratives and challenges contemporary conditions as a route toward living more fully and justly involves an intentional and embodied reclaiming of our social lives—the quotidian, everyday (inter)actions of survival and resistance that emerge from our homeplaces, street corners, barbershops and salons, churches, factory floors, labor camps, and school hallways. This work is brought to life through a critical engagement and relationship with stories, storying, and storytelling, "as a way to hold on to the rebellious methodological work of sharing ideas in an unkind world" (McKittrick, 2020, p.7); that talks back to images and evidence of permeant subjugation and impoverishment. Stories *prompt* ethnic studies to recuperate our lives (McKittrick, 2020). When we call upon the knowledge we carry with us there is reclamation of living, learning and storying differently. Legislative bodies that resurrect the science of reading and other literacy programs that emphasize basic skills and standards across common content areas are motivated by the potential to hide forms of reading, writing and speaking that unmask how our lives are shaped by daily interactions with intersectional, interlocking and (inter)national oppression. Of course, this is a neoliberal project aiming to revive at-risk and culture of poverty narratives, and though it reeks of profit motives that impoverish the purpose of education to the vocational needs of the free market, it is important that we story this as a move to singularize, regulate, and censure the archive, to give it one stable author, named Euro-America.

On the other hand, ethnic studies approaches to stories are intrinsically polyvocal. They are connected, passed on from one generation to the next. They are shared with those we live and learn with like a never-ending game of telephone that bridges our understanding to the current context, and to one another. Stories are adaptive and flexible. We bend them and play with them to imagine how things were and how they can be something else. They are not formulaic but formed out of cultural and historical knowledge and experience. The structures are built on disrupting prescription, like blues and jazz singers, hip hop performers, and graffiti artists, who use improvisation to enunciate what we sometimes cannot explain yet feel deeply. Stories help us deal with the complexities of our lives and open us up to re-remembering the nuances of homeplace. We can unpack what it means to desire "nice things" even when the "nice things" often reproduce social and ecological damages without shame, guilt, or banishment. In all that it does to assist us in the process of getting to know ourselves, realities, politics, and identities, stories are most powerful at helping us hold each other, fostering tenderness that exceeds accountability. Stories collectively empower, uplift spirits, heal wounds, and affirm being while simultaneously directing us to move toward possible collective futures. Stories must be permanent in our practice.

These budding understandings and interactions identify an engaged, embodied and experiential archival practice that leans into the possibilities of an archive that refuses to be dead, that views life and living of those who have struggled and resisted racial oppression and (neo) colonial state imperialism, as valuable sources of knowledge. Because ethnic studies requires not only thinking but action (Lozenski in Tintiangco-Cubales et al. 2022), the work ethnic studies educators do with the holding of history and sites of memory is never severed from real life, it is connected to our liberation, organizing, materialities, social practices, and futures (Imarisha, 2018).

When the archive is reduced to objects meant to be discovered rather than the traces that make up our human experience and cultural production, the silencing of social and historical knowledge is made possible and normalized. Recognizing this as the dominant approach of the power structure, there is a need for those who seek to transform our society and educational system to bring forth ways to hold history and ways of remembering that tap into our human capacity,

foregrounding how our histories are interconnected and memories are intertwined. With this as the ground on which we take up the archive as a living record, creative performance, and social transmission[3] of who we are and how we want to live, this special issue invites thinking about our relationships to living archives.

Encountering Ethnic Studies Pedagogies as Living Archives

The contributors of this issue demonstrate various entry points to commune with ethnic studies pedagogies as living archives. They are K-12 teachers, teacher educators, educational researchers, independent scholars, organizers, poets, artists, public historians, and graduate students. Their empirical studies, conceptual essays, praxis reflections, deconstructed lesson plan, visual art, and poetry best represented the call to work alongside the archives of our communities, classrooms, and institutions for the purposes of extending the possibilities of ethnic studies praxis in K-12 settings. Included in this issue are critical engagements with the themes to demonstrate pedagogies as living archives that attend to the senses as well as the spirit and to carry out the journal's dedication to work beyond the constraints of mainstream publishing[4] and research practice; in fact I would like to propose that all the works are recognized as studies because all the projects consist of systematic processes of and for inquiry. There were many ways to curate these articles as living archives and I have sorted them by differing themes before presenting them here. But the articles can also be read "out of order." They are grouped by the following themes: ethnic studies educators as living archives; living archives and ancestral and heritage wisdom; homeplace as a living archive; public institutions and living archives; and living archive as educational politics to extend our thinking on ethnic studies pedagogies and to address the intellectual and political implications of this work. In what follows, I present some brief reflections on individual works to situate contributions. Each section takes a praxis orientation, of which the reader will find examples of theory, practice and reflection. Each section ends with artwork, poetry, and song, as interlude, a pause, a transition, to give space for contemplation and dialogue.

The exploration of ethnic studies pedagogies as living archives begins with the efforts of K-12 classroom educators. Since this journal seeks to provide space for us to imagine and work towards the possibilities of ethnic studies with children and youth, it felt fitting to start with the lives of ethnic studies educators, to contextualize their experience, wit, struggle, and resistance and what we can learn from them about what it takes to bring ethnic studies pedagogy to life.

In "Lessons From the 1st Ethnic Studies Educators in O.C," Jose Paolo Magcalas foregrounds the wisdoms of seven secondary educators who through their commitments to anti-racism, decolonial pedagogies, and community engaged learning created the first ethnic studies courses at their

[3] This approach to the living archive draws from: Sabiescu, A. G. (2020). Living archives and the social transmission of memory. *Curator: The Museum Journal*, *63*(4), 497-510.

[4] The journal takes a stance similar to what is articulated in this quote: "Independent journals give open access to academic knowledge to anyone interested, and charge neither the readers nor the authors. Some practice openness in the review process, too, aiming to make it more transparent, collegial, or evaluated by voices beyond academia. The latter is part of a larger aspiration shared by all the collectives that have contributed to this forum – to create spaces for different voices and ways of knowing, making unheard voices more visible." Delat, C., Network, E. P., Earth, U., & Chertkovskaya, E. (2021). Alternatives to mainstream publishing within and beyond academia. *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization*, *21*(4), 117-142.

school sites. Through a culturally responsive methodology, Magcalas draws from his relationship with these teachers, focusing on their lessons, projects and activities to respond to the question of what ethnic studies educators *actually* do in their classrooms. We learn that ethnic studies can be brought to life by classroom engagements that center the development of sociocultural knowledge of self and community through arts and action. Magcalas provides an example for school districts and educators who seek to institutionalize ethnic studies where it is assumed to be not welcomed.

Similarly, in "Intergenerational Pláticas as Ethnic Studies Freedom Dreaming in Kern County," Tim Monreal, Felisa Patiño-Longoria, and Marlene Herrera ask us to consider the implications of ethnic studies in spaces where the legacies of white supremacy are maintained by the community and the state. Their writing emphasizes the possibilities of tracing our ethnic studies desires and practices through collective reflection. The use of intergenerational *pláticas* presented in their work show how situating our positionalities can be generative and essential for building solidarity in white and rural spaces and between higher education and K-12 schools. The critical conversations in this article prompt us to think about how we might intentionally develop intergenerational relationships to advance the vision of ethnic studies pedagogies.

Former and current K-12 teachers and women of color scholars, Cindy Cecilia Mata, Sara Jasmin Díaz-Montejano, Mariana E. Ramírez, and Alice Im offer us an important frame for how ethnic studies teachers can draw upon their lived experiences and embodied knowledge to confront the technologies that restrict the growth of community centered approaches to education, in "Cultural Intuition as a Guide: Pedagogical Resonance in Ethnic Studies Teaching and Learning." Their insightful approach to employing cultural intuition encourages educators to trust their commitment to justice as a way to talk back to pedagogical approaches that encourage teachers to prioritize apolitical and standardized reflections on teaching and learning. This use of cultural intuition can be a powerful tool for unsettling the positivism entrenched in educational spaces. As you transition to the next set of articles read "Let's Vibe" by Marisol Ruiz to attend to the energies you are holding after reading with ethnic studies educators above.

There is no ethnic studies without the educational dreaming of our ancestors. The next group of articles work from the premise that ethnic studies spaces can be transformed by cultivating ancestral (heritage and communal) knowledge forcefully stripped away through colonization, but preserved, adapted, and inherited by the descendants of the colonized, enslaved, and racially and ethnically oppressed. Our journey on the ancestral plains begins with the work of Anita E. Fernández, M. Sean Arce, José A. Gonzalez and Mictlani Gonzalez: Xicanx Institute for Teaching and Organizing (XITO) and their article "TIAHUI: A Decolonial Framework for Pedagogy & Practice." Arising out of the well-documented political struggle for ethnic studies in Tucson, AZ and drawing from their experiences with educational and community institutions, their framework, TIAHUI, is a model for how we might consult with the ancestors as both an action to decolonize educational systems and to rehumanize communities that live and learn in/with/for them. The application of Indigenous wisdom works to establish a relationship with this knowledge that can be used to foster critical views of and organizing against the dehumanizing structures that are supported by schools and other state institutions. This visionary work can compel students and teachers to not only better understand their own history but to take it upon themselves to make a new one.

Lisa Mendoza Knecht and Sylvia Mendoza Aviña apply their ancestral wisdoms to demonstrate their pedagogical commitment to ethnic studies. In "Oral Histories and Pláticas as Ancestral Conocimientos and Ethnic Studies Pedagogies," sisters, Knecht and Mendoza Aviña present a compelling reflection on how oral histories and ancestral knowledge can be used to rupture the culture of maleness and whiteness that permeates educational spaces. Using the four elements (*tierra*, *aire*, *agua*, *fuego*) present on their ancestral altars as a frame for their pedagogical offering poetically connects us to the relevance of the ancestral knowledge for ethnic studies spaces. They outline how an engagement with the ancestors opens a space for critical inquiry, vulnerability, compassion, healing, connection to communities, femtorship, and solidarity. This work evokes a practice of caring for one another that is modeled by our care for the memories of our ancestors.

Another example of how ethnic studies pedagogies can draw on the knowledge and practices of our ancestors is articulated in Santiago Andrés Garcia and Priscilla Yvette Hernandez's "Animal Artifacts and Narratives of the Mesoamerican Clay-Figurine Project." Their work proposes that ancestral animal knowledge can be an important tool for understanding one's past and for reshaping the future. This article shows us how community college students mold animal objects with their hands to help promote a healthy relationship with history and to provide a way to narrate the social agency of displaced peoples. Together these objects act as a living museum of struggle and collective restoration that sustains one's connection to Indigenous ways of interpreting our world.

This section is completed with Marisol Ruiz and Nancy Perez's "Plantita Knowledge: A Journey of Writing a Healing Text." As actual lesson plans used with youth, Ruiz and Perez introduce a practice that draws upon our ancestral wisdoms about the earth and their healing properties to rebuke the damaging educational praxis that our schools reproduce through the exclusion of multilingualism and non-western knowledge. Having students study plant knowledge for its medicinal value and purpose and its relationship to the history of their communities can help students learn ways to nourish and repair their collective spirit. This approach also indirectly encourages students to engage in critical questions about environmental preservation, industrial pharmaceuticals, and language revitalization. Following the conjuring of our ancestral wisdoms, sit with Lani Cupchoy's "Butter Fly Release" to meditate with the unfettered moves of your ancestors.

While the previous section envisions how we find place in our global homes, the next set of articles conceptualize our pedagogies as living archives by analyzing the experience of *homeplace* (hooks, 1990). This section reminds us that our pedagogies must be place-based and that we should develop our pedagogies to address situated struggles occurring in the quotidian spaces of interaction and power. These articles consult with women of color feminisms, which demands that we take the structures of social life seriously. It begins with "Sensing Home and Archiving the Self: A Black Feminist Autoethnographic Mapping to/through Ethnic Studies Pedagogies" by Chelsea Bouldin. Her intriguing work brings to ethnic studies pedagogies a Black feminist autoethnography as intervention for mapping the ways educational spaces, in particular predominantly white institutions, impact Black women's educational experiences and identity development. Drawing upon the self as an archive, she extends the notion of self-making as a process that unfolds spatially, through embodied interactions and reflexivity. Storying the encounter with her first Black woman professor illustrates the importance of professors of color and their wisdoms. Though schools reproduce intersectional violence, ethnic studies spaces have the potential to aid in the

development of social identity and awareness by tapping into the presence of teachers and teacher educators of color and their constructions of home in their classrooms.

Building on this framing, we move toward homeplace in "Feminista Reflections of a COVID Food Project: Disrupting Pedagogical Norms, Theorizing from Homespace, and Healing Collectively" by Dolores Delgado Bernal, Cynthia Alonso and Yessica Avila Barojas. This article expresses how what nourishes our bodies and the histories embedded in the dialogical processes of making cultural dishes are essential sources of knowledge. During these often mundane processes, there are lessons about and alternative ways to explain life and living at the intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and citizenship that surface in our social lives, at kitchen tables with our mothers, sisters and aunties. This article offers us an example for how ethnic studies educators might embed familial knowledge into our classroom settings. However, they remind us not to romanticize this knowledge, and instead to sit with discomfort and messiness of it all to bring about a more nuanced understanding of notions of for example, motherhood and queerness, all the while finding healing for assuaging the social damage commonly experienced on educational terrain.

In the next article we learn that the homeplace can be a site of witnessing ethnic studies pedagogies. The geographies of education here take us to the South, at HBCUs to learn about the meaning of ethnic studies there. Mother and daughter, Meghan and Priscilla Green in "Witnessing the Pedagogical Impact of Ethnic Studies Through an Intergenerational Collaborative Autoethnography," reflect on their life histories as students in the Deep South and their relationships to ethnic studies and K-12 teaching. Drawing from endarkened feminist epistemologies, their intergenerational testimonies observe how ethnic studies pedagogies are passed on from generation to the next through dialogue in homeplace. This work demands that we consider the conversations between children and parents about their experience with and struggles for relevant education; here arising in the forms of African American literature or practices of fugitivity. Additionally, this article unearths some central inquiries related to the histories of ethnic studies in minority serving institutions, where there seems to be much needed study about the possibilities and tensions that come to light in spaces that are presumably relevant to their students. This rings true for not only universities, but racial and ethnic themed K-12 schools.

This section ends with Aria Gilliam's reflective essay titled "The Legacies of Memory: A Liberatory Tool." I invited Aria, my former student to contribute her thinking about the living archives, after a dialogue we had about our desires to connect with our ancestors through practices of rememory (Morrison, 2010). Her essay is a meditation on the development of practices of remembering rooted in homeplace. Building upon her grandmother's practices of tucking history in the basement, we learn that taking this labor seriously allows for growth and what she calls *(inner)standing*. Engaging with the living ancestors, for her, is a spiritual question. It involves prayer because as she articulates, remembering is heavy. As a liberatory tool, the homeplace is viewed as a site of re-remembering that disrupts the colonial gaze and structures of violence when we attend to our familial knowledge archived in our homes. Reflect. Can you remember how your grandparents' belongings were organized and what those belongings invoke you to say about their lives and the world we live in? Can you remember the everyday places that help you understand who you are and where you want to go? The break here calls for reflection with our cover art titled Adolfo, by Clara Niebla, accompanied by her painting titled Ofelia and the poem by Johanna Flores titled "Mexidorian."

As we move toward the institutionalization, or maybe a better word is mobilization, of ethnic studies in K-12 spaces, librarians, archivists, and historians and public, private, and community institutions that hold knowledge about Indigenous and people of color will play a key role in the building of a relevant education. It is advantageous for ethnic studies spaces to employ decolonizing and antiracist methodologies for examining cultural memory to contend with the current struggle over critical social cultural knowledge. This section centers relational and collaborative approaches to working with public archives and how these practices can produce community and social awareness.

Anyone who has encountered ethnic studies archives, in particular the disturbing images of violence against student protestors or powerful video footage of collective student led organizing from the 60s and 70s, understands how it evokes emotive responses. Bryant Partida and Mariana E. Ramírez outline the implications for valuing the emotional dimensions of archival work in "An Emotive Testimonio Approach to Critical Race Educational History: Building Reciprocal Relationships with and for Our Communities." Drawing from critical race educational history, using emotive testimonio unearths how the hidden curriculum obscures the historical lives of people of color and how feelings towards recovered archives can transform the participation and commitment of young people and educators. Future ethnic studies classrooms should be a community that allows students to explore what angers, saddens, confuses and inspires them, to collectively ameliorate the silences in the historical record and the work this silence does to help produce the daily attacks against their realities in educational space.

The article by Elena Marie Rosario, "Writing Puerto Rican Public History: Ethnic Studies Curriculum in Connecticut" contributes to growing knowledge about community struggle for state required ethnic studies curriculum. As case study, Rosario contextualizes community activist labor for the inclusion of ethnic studies alongside the current work she has done in community to develop lesson plans that address the state policy that requires the inclusion of Black and Latino Studies in public school curriculum. Using local archives, Rosario presents a case for a deeper understanding of Latinos and Puerto Ricans in Connecticut. Developing an engaged pedagogical relationship to archives, outlined in this article, makes it clear that ethnic studies spaces are enhanced when public historians, community organizers, and educators work collectively on curriculum. Though the next transition does not attend to the formal archive, the video stills presented by Boone Nguyen titled "The Work of Memory" galvanizes us to take a closer look at how we might repurpose our archival labor to help us capture and zoom in on the communal labor needed to preserve our ancestral knowledges as we move into the struggles of the future.

It is assumed, rightfully so, that ethnic studies has been and should be a political project. This section reflects emerging political and ethical questions that ethnic studies educators encounter as they navigate contemporary political struggles and desires for coalition and solidarity. The praxis article by Elaine Correa and Jorge E. Moraga, titled **"**Weaponizing Diversity: The Survival of Ethnic Studies Pedagogies, Resistance, and Transformation amid University's Neoliberal Project of Diversity" was chosen to launch this section because it establishes a useful critique for interrogating how universities, a space where ethnic studies educators will be trained, invest in diversity discourse as an apolitical move to incorporate the lived experiences of marginalized communities. Using Peña's (2022) logic of "The One," Correa and Moraga propose that ethnic studies engage in intentional, purposeful and meaningful activities to reject the individualist and

competitive behaviors that seep into educational practices in neoliberal learning environments. This article directs us to think about our classroom embodiments, which are the primary models, a living archive for how to (be)come an ethnic studies educator.

In "J'ey Alex, let's talk about unos proyectos": Reflections on Mestizo and Indigenous Collaboration in Indigenous Latinx Community Filmmaking," artist-researcher Alexander Feliciano Mejía draws on living archives to story the nuances of community engaged projects. In this narrative essay, Mejía conducted a film project with Indigenous communities from Central America. Lessons on the ethics of sharing visual representations of Indigenous life materialize. The ethnographic gaze regularly haunts ethnic studies spaces. Although this may be true, ethnic studies educators recognize and attend to the impacts of visually representing the wisdoms and oppression of marginalized groups. Mejía's dialogical approach to resolving this complexity provides insights for teacher educators and K-12 teachers who engage in projects that engage community struggle and social life.

The final article of this special issue is an empirical study that explores the pedagogies and politics of an educator activist collective. In "Ethnic Studies Pedagogies as Living Archives in Black and Indigenous Americans' Dual Educational Politics," what Nathan Stewart identifies as *diradicalism*, reframes educational labor as pedagogical and political acts. By envisioning the melding of these dynamics as a collective engagement, Stewart builds the case that relationality and joy are necessary for sustaining our lives and educational movement building. As state policy (liberal and conservative) arrest, circumvent, and appropriate contemporary social movements, the motivation for educational change in ethnic studies spaces must be rooted in mutual desires and communal activity. As the final interlude, Gregory Esparza's original song lyrics in "Re-spiriting Songs and People from Cultural Memory to Now/Future Harmonic Consciousness" will hopefully move you to commemorate, assemble, and dance.

Moving With our Living Archives

We have reached the point where I must provide some concluding thoughts but as I write, I prefer to imagine this work as a beginning rather than an end. As special issue editor, I am grateful for the space given here to dream and collectively build a platform for exploring the possibilities and participating in the movement for ethnic studies in K-12 settings. This space would not have been possible without the envisioning of Miguel Zavala, the support of the editorial collective and advisory board, the thoughtful copy editing by Cynthia Wise, and many others who took time to dialogue with me about the themes and who were willing to read drafts of this introduction. Back in March 2023, the authors and I convened to reflect on the themes, to build a community of shared interest and commitment, and to honor the efforts to think differently about the publishing process. As we garnered joy and contemplation, I expressed my desire for leading a humanizing and collaborative process. I hope I have lived up to these aspirations. That said, I especially would like to voice my gratitude to the authors and contributors to this issue, whose contributions I admire and endorse. I acknowledge that, despite our collective efforts to articulate ethnic studies pedagogies as living archives, there is so much more to explore and learn regarding this promising framework, including contributions of youth and elders and global perspectives. As a mode for understanding our current context, confronting the social conditions and rooting the visions of the ethnic studies movement in higher education and the growth of ethnic studies in K-12, we hope this special issue advances the ways ethnic studies pedagogies engage with living archives, extending curricular activities that offer children and youth tools for understanding how our social

world is made, sustained, and destroyed, finding ways to study interlocking systems oppression while centering communal and heritage knowledge, and developing local and international coalitions and solidarity. There are considerable implications concerning the enhancement of the pedagogical imagination and practice of ethnic studies educators in K-12 spaces (Titantiangco-Cubales et al., 2015; Sleeter and Zavala, 2020) that can be addressed by drawing from archival practice from ethnic studies scholars, community practitioners, and artist of color who are leading efforts to redress the injuries of dominant archival practices by introducing alternative work with the holding of history and sites of memory, including but not limited to queerness and archives of desire (Ramirez, 2005), decolonization and indigenous archives (O'Neal, 2015), the carceral state and fugitive archival practices (Sojoyner, 2021). Our longing for humanizing and liberatory praxis must attend to the cultivation of a *flourishing life* (Grant, 2012), that is a rejection of an instrumentalist education and a commitment to a social justice vision that vows to eliminate the role making mechanisms and technologies that reinforce boundaries of race, class, gender, sexuality, ability, and citizenship. Constant with the themes here, moving with our living archives compels a communing and conjuring, as a primary practice of re-remembering our stories and re-aligning our bodies, minds, and spirits with the wisdoms that bring our pedagogies to life.

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