

CAPTIVE MINDS IN EXPULSION: CARCERALITY IN THE (MIS)EDUCATION

OF YOUNG BLACK MALES

by

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ABSTRACT

Black male students are excluded from school at rates that exceed their representation in the school population. Additionally, school disciplinary sanctions are associated with academic failure, incarceration and anti-social behaviour among Black students. This study explored the experiences and outlooks of excluded Black male youth and how they are constructed in the Ontario education system. It also delved into the ways in which the identities of Black male youth shift as a result of their time in spaces of exclusion, such as expulsion programs. A qualitative Critical Race Methodology was used to formulate deep understanding of subjectivity as it pertains to school excluded Black males. The sample consisted of 13 self-identified Black males (n=13) between the ages of 18-28 years old, who had either graduated from an Ontario Safe Schools expulsion program, completed their term, had been otherwise demitted or decided not to attend. The sample also included two Black mothers (n=2) of the participants. Individual interviews were conducted using a life history method combined with visual timelines. The findings showed that participants experienced expulsion programs as carceral spaces. The spaces significantly influence young Black men's self concepts and impose upon them what I call *carceral identities*. Furthermore, in reflecting on their interpretations of hegemonic masculinity, participants revealed a fundamental ontological rupture: the ubiquity of the carceral in the lives of Black boys for whom prison techniques and concentrated disciplinary power have permeated exclusive school spaces, causing a type of dissonance that I refer to as *carceral dislocation*. The conclusion of this work contributes to theorizations that in addition to establishing a direct path from schools to prisons, these programs are carceral spaces situating the prisons inside of the schools apropos of the school-to-prison pipeline. While this study was conducted prior to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system, the findings of this study combined with the mainstream shift to virtual schooling make a case for a radical revisioning of school discipline and uncovering the anti-Blackness inherent in education practices in Ontario.

Keywords: Black; African Canadian; anti-Black Racism (ABR); Critical Race Theory (CRT); Spatial Theory; Masculinity; Identity; Education; carceral; School-to-Prison Pipeline

DEDICATION

For my children Justice, Jaydus, and Empress – with whom, this took forever to do; without whom, I would not have done it at all. For Oleesia.

Kola Iluyomade, my friend, my inspiration, now ancestor – this is for you and all you fought, lived, and died for.

Last, but not least, this is for Evan Popoola and all of the Black students failed by schools in the western world.

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The Almighty, my ancestors – Àṣẹ

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My inspirational father, Leroy Sibblis, who always believed in me more than I believed in myself.

And my nurturing mother, Helen Sibblis, who has always been the wind beneath (and sometimes above) my wings.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The guiding questions of this research were: What are the lived experiences and subsequent self-perceptions of Black males who have been excluded from school? And more specifically: How do experiences of school exclusion and/or participation in an expulsion program and its spatiality affect young Black men's sense of identity? What follows will provide an operational definition of school exclusion, but first, though unconventional, allow me to begin where this common story ends for many Black men with similar experiences as my research participants — in the prison.

Not Quite a Prologue

As I sit in a cramped interview room in the maximum-security facility, I stare down into my lap and reflect on how I ended up here. I have been a practicing social worker for over 15 years. I was born and raised in Canada. This country's social systems are ingrained in me. I have also worked within and at the interstices of major social institutions: in child welfare as a child protection worker; in family law as a clinical agent for the Office of the Children's Lawyer; and in education as a school social worker. I think about my sons and how they might feel about me sitting here alone in this pale, grey-beige, cement box, smaller than a cell, without windows, devoid of colour and signs of life, furnished only by two short metal bench-style seats on either side of a little table; all of which are permanently affixed to the cement floor. I think about how I might feel if it were either of my sons in my place.

The spaces of the correctional complex, coined *super-jail*, feel cold, barren, and unkind. With the sound of intermittent clanks in the distance and approaching shuffling, ultimately

reaching its crescendo, I raise my gaze. And there he is—shoulders slumped and wrists bound. Escorted by a guard, 26-year-old Kevin¹ toddles toward me tentatively, with eyes wide like a frightened child, but one who seems desperate to trust. I watch as the guard unshackles his wrists. Kevin rubs them, shakes my hand, and slides into the bench. I look at his face, in his eyes. His demeanor is draped in shame and contrition. I explain my role to Kevin; I am here to listen to his story and will ultimately write a report for the courts, detailing the ways in which his life and choices have been influenced, and even limited, by systemic anti-Black² racism. The assessment and insights captured by the report are to be applied by the judge to mitigate his prison sentence.

As Kevin described his journey, which in the end led to his imprisonment awaiting sentencing, it became clear how anti-Black racism shaped his life and his experiences. It was a factor in his mother’s precarious employment, which in turn impacted her parenting; she worked long hours for little pay, resulting in her relative absence from home. She was often unavailable to care for Kevin, which led to several reports by the school to the Children’s Aid Society (CAS) throughout Kevin’s childhood. Indeed, anti-Black racism was a factor in the economic state of Jamaica, causing Kevin’s mother to immigrate to Canada in pursuit of greater opportunity, settling in a low-income community in Toronto, and in her inability to move out of it because of the pervasive poverty. Kevin grew up without a father in the home. Considering the socio-economic determinants of health, one could infer that the death of Kevin’s young father from

¹ Based on Kevin Morris of R. v. Morris, 2018 ONSC 5186 and R v. Morris 2021 onca 680, for which I wrote an Impact of Race and Culture Assessment (IRCA) report; otherwise known as an Enhanced Pre-Sentence Report including, among other components, the summaries and assessments of his school reports and experiences. His information is not anonymized here because it is public record and forms part of case law. All in other names herein are pseudonyms.

² I chose to capitalize the word *Black*, but not *white* when referring to race to denote their disparate relationship to the process of racialization. It is also in recognition of Black as a self-administered transnational, unifying, political identity of people with a shared history of struggle against white supremacy and a denouncement of the institution of whiteness itself.

cancer, was also influenced by systemic racism (i.e., limited access to healthy food and quality medical treatment, proximity and affordability of unhealthy food options, race-based stressors and injury, etc.); thus, it stands to reason that systemic racism may well have removed both parents from Kevin’s life to some degree, thereby limiting his possibilities.

Moreover, anti-Black racism was found to be operational within the social institutions in Kevin’s life—most notably, the education system. Kevin was educated in schools within the Toronto District School Board. During our talk at the prison, Kevin disclosed that school was where he came to know that he was not smart. In elementary school, he was identified as an exceptional student, with his exceptionality branded *behavioural*, specifically referencing *anger management*, and *learning difficulties*. A school report highlighted that Kevin “emulate[d] undesirable behaviour,” (Sibblis, 2018, p. 5) was lethargic when working in class, and displayed *anger anxiety* when frustrated. Consequently, Kevin was placed in a controlled *behaviour class* with Child and Youth Worker support and a capacity of eight students. In our talk, he emphasized the constant use of labels for him in elementary school, i.e., student with behaviour problems, special education student, and his placement in classes for “slower kids” (Sibblis, 2018, p.7). Kevin hated being segregated from the mainstream student population, stating: “It’s like we’re the zoo of the school” (Sibblis, 2018, p. 7). Kevin recalled becoming disengaged from school, exacerbated by being transferred from school to school for suspension programs and other controlled programs in distant locations, which created barriers to his access, particularly when the schools were in rivaling neighbourhoods.

In addition to being labelled slow and identified as having behavioural problems, Kevin reported that his teachers referred to the youth who lived in his neighbourhood as “animals” who “don’t know how to act” (Sibblis, 2018, p. 15), indirectly indicting him in their assertions.

Furthermore, the school initiated all of Kevin and his mother's encounters with the CAS, assuming connections between his poor behaviour at school and a negative home environment with poor parenting. He remembers that one teacher told him he was destined to sell drugs like his friends. Informed by these experiences, Kevin felt it impossible to imagine an existence that was not permeated by his oppression. He believed that the only upward trajectory available to him was through the street life, which ultimately resulted in his incarceration.

Kevin's story, which will be revisited at the end of this thesis, exemplifies the school-to-prison pipeline, discussed in the next chapter. Kevin and his family's life experiences are interconnected, and they are not unique, but rather they are consistent with the experiences of many Black Canadians in the following ways:

- one quarter of Black women in Canada live below the poverty line (as compared to 6% white Canadians) and 47% of continental African children live in poverty- which speaks to the systemic disadvantage of Black people, Black women, and Black immigrants (Owusu-Bempah et. al, 2018)
- in Toronto, Black people are over-represented in neighborhoods most plagued by poverty, and the associated violence, heightened surveillance, and other forms of disadvantage (Owusu-Bempah et. al, 2018)
- Black students are largely disengaged by the Canadian curriculum which does not reflect their identities or affirm their presence in an integrated, positive or substantial manner (James & Turner, 2015)
- Black students are over twice as likely to be expelled than their white counterparts or other racialized students (TDSB, 2015)

Due to the systemic and institutional impediments listed above, Black youth like Kevin are particularly vulnerable to poor academic outcomes, unemployment, lower wages, and criminalized behaviour.³ This research retrospectively explores the experiences of school's pushing out processes through the narratives of young men like Kevin.

The Positioning of School Social Work

In 2007, I was hired as a school social worker by the Peel District School Board (PDSB) to work in the new expulsion and suspension programs. My appointment was a response to the passing of Bill 212 in Ontario that year, also known as the Education Amendment Act (Progressive Discipline and School Safety). Bill 212 amended the Safe Schools Act, legislation providing a definitive set of regulations for punishments administered to students. During my time in the Fresh Start Suspension and Expulsion programs, I was struck by the sheer proportions of racialized males making up the majority of the excluded student population. For the purposes of this study which sought to capture those youth whose educational options appear restricted, *excluded student or excludee*, is defined as any student 21 years or younger who is prohibited from attending mainstream school for more than 20 days and must complete an expulsion program or equivalent in order to be re-admitted into mainstream schooling or other alternative educational programming (see Education Act, 1990). Most of the Black students in the program had undiagnosed learning disabilities, discovered only after they entered the program, suggesting that expectations of 'problem' behaviour on the part of these students may have precluded an investigation into other reasons for their performance and behaviour in school. When 'problem'

³ It is crucial to note that despite these factors, self-report data from non-Black youth shows that Black youth do not engage in more criminalized behaviour than non-Black youth (Hamilton et al., 2018; House of Commons, 2021; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2019, Maynard, 2017). My argument is simply that when they do, these are among the precipitating factors, and these factors are consistent with the broader issue of systemic discrimination in the lives of Black people in particular. They reveal the largely normalized anti-Black racism entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices.

behaviour surfaces in schools, the school's social worker is engaged to mitigate what is viewed as irreconcilable behavioural difference by therapeutic intervention, concentrating on the instillation of social skills and morality. It can be argued that social work's role in schools is driven by what Heron (2007) referred to as *colonial continuities*, which locates whiteness at the core of social work's moral imperative and can be seen most clearly through the traditional practices of the professional helper. The perpetuation of colonizing operations is reflected in school social work's *Othering* of the students by way of the emphasis and concurrent rejection of difference, as well as in civilizing efforts that are governed by ideals that may not be responsive to the student's cultural differences.

Social work in the schooling context is supposed to possess a critical consciousness of the systemic and social construction of marginalized youth, paired with a corresponding urge to challenge the presenting inequity (see Burosch, 2022); yet I believe that social work reifies those very constructions. A social worker's involvement pathologizes students, placing them as people to be managed. As an external support to the school, the social worker is perpetually torn between acting on behalf of their client—the school—which often entails the social worker's complicity in the marginalization of students; and conversely, adhering to learned social work values tied to 'helping' and combating the various forms of social injustice and oppression. The resulting cognitive dissonance illustrates what Badwall (2015) recognized as a "complex paradox: the discursive arrangements within social work education that constitute social justice-oriented practice are the same discourses that collude with and disavow the operation of racism" (p. 2). In this vein, I argue that the whiteness that constructs these students, also instructs social work.

In many ways, Kevin reminded me of the students I had encountered during my time as a school social worker assigned to the PDSB's expulsion programs. During my five plus years working within the programs, racialized males, and specifically Black males made up the majority of the excluded student population. One year I noted that of the 17 male students in the program at the site in which I operated, only one student was white, two were of Southeast Asian heritage and one was Latinx. The remainder of the students were Black males and had been placed in the program in response to significantly less serious incidents than the four non-Black individuals. In fact, unlike the others, the majority of the Black students in the program had not been formally expelled as they had not committed any act that could warrant an expulsion. Although the PDSB did not collect disaggregate statistics at the time, my observations supported studies which showed that males, particularly those who are Black, are more likely than females to perceive harsh treatment by the school system (Petiers, 2003). Also, in my experience, learning disabilities and mental health concerns surfaced in the expulsion program at a high rate among Black students, where they had not been previously detected or diagnosed.

Kevin and the students I encountered, were not only made vulnerable to incarceration by the failure of the public school system to adequately educate them, but they were also made susceptible to criminality by means of their exposure to the racialized culture of discipline in their schools. The social and cultural isolation resulting from school expulsion can lead to low self-esteem and cycles of despair (Maliks & Cole, 2010) as well as magnify racial and class disadvantages (Annamma, 2014).

In the relative absence of such studies on Canadians, I reference longitudinal studies conducted in the U.K. which reveal that youth excluded from school are 90 times more likely to become homeless than those who remain at school (German, 2003). Those youth are also 10

times more likely to be in care (The Times, 1999). Youth who are excluded from school also show higher levels of drug use, anti-social behaviour, lower levels of communication with caregivers, and increased likelihood of living in communities characterized by neighbourhood disorganization (McCrystal et al., 2007). For all intents and purposes, school exclusion is a powerful component of the systematic crippling and genocide of targeted peoples.

Why This Study?

In this qualitative study, I examined the space of expulsion programs from the perspective of past attendees, like Kevin, and illustrate how these spatial properties are related to the notion of carcerality. Carceral spaces are defined as those spaces in which “individuals are confined, subject to surveillance or otherwise deprived of essential freedoms” (The Dictionary of Human Geography, 2014, p. 92). While the findings of this study focus mainly on carceral surveillance, this work also highlights elements of carcerality in terms of physical and social space, as well as the carceral nature of systems and the psyche. Furthermore, I show that there is a critical disjuncture between what these programs purport to do, and what they actually do. Ultimately, the study finds that school expulsion programs can be understood as carceral spaces with historicized significance and function, which create subjectivity in participants through spatial arrangements of exclusion and marginalization.

This study is both significant and timely given the relatively short term that suspension and expulsion programs have been in operation in Ontario, specifically they were introduced in September 2001. There is little to no data collected about the operation, effectiveness, or racial and/or gender composition of these programs, and there is a lack of public awareness about how these programs function. To date, no study exists in the Canadian context that interrogates the space and internal workings of expulsion programs, how these programs are raced, classed, and

gendered, or the long-term impacts that these programs have on their participants. The timeliness of this study lies in the existence of the subsequent “proactive” versions of the expulsion programs introduced in 2011, which allowed for the exclusion of students based on the prediction of behavioural risk. This is further discussed in the section that follows.

This project focused on anti-Black racism and in so doing, framed the problem as a vestige of chattel slavery; however, I acknowledge that other non-white, Indigenous populations have been, and continue to be, victimized by white supremacy and have been impacted in similar ways by colonialism. Other populations’ histories connect, collide, and intertwine with those of Black peoples. In the Canadian context, one would be remiss not to mention the oppression of the First Nations Peoples in discussions about colonialism and cultural hegemony. Additionally, the use of the pronoun “he” and the noun “man” in this paper is deliberate. It is an emphasis on Black young cis-gendered men since they make up a significant portion of the excluded student population in the Greater Toronto Area and throughout North America (Davis, 2003; Kane, 2006; Simmons, 2005; Noguera, 2003; Wacquant, 2000), which are the main points of reference. Despite the complexity and multiplicity of masculinities, it is also due to the confined and homogenous ways that Black males’ bodies and behaviours are often read, Black men and boys experience and are victimized by racism in different ways than Black women and girls or other racialized gender groups. The meanings affixed to the Black male body in slavery denoted a fixed cis gender identity, presumed heterosexual, and was distinct from any other body, and as such, the Black male body has come to bear unique representations in contemporary times. Moreover, James (2012) stated that student experiences and educational outcomes are mediated through both gender and race, in that they are often used as lenses through which violations are detected, distorted, and regulated. James (2012) suggested that the actions of Black male students

are contorted to reflect risk and danger, and thus support their hyper-vigilance. This study conceptualized Black masculine identity as pluralistic as opposed to monolithic. Participants were invited to explore the multiple meanings of their own Black maleness as they each reflected on what it meant to be a Black man.

Research Questions

The following research question guided this study: What are the lived experiences and subsequent self-perceptions of Black males who have been excluded from Ontario secondary schools? In pursuit of deep understanding of their self-concepts' constituents, sub-questions served to support the investigation, specifically:

1. How do Black males' participation in the expulsion program and its spatiality affect their identities?
2. How do Black males view their participation in expulsion programs as playing out in their educational, vocational, and social trajectories?

Specific Aims

The purpose of this dissertation was not only to examine how Black young men made sense of their time in spaces of school exclusion but also to explore how excluded Black male youth are constructed in the education system through their recollections. This study also delved into the ways in which the identities and behaviours of Black male youth shift as a result of their time in spaces of exclusion, such as expulsion programs. It demonstrates that through the white gaze, whiteness constructs marginalized, racialized youth as Other and continues the colonial agenda in various reinvented ways (Dumas, 2016). Through positionality its related ethics with

marginalized groups (see Parson, 2019) and within regulatory spaces, and the reimagined civilizing missions, social work plays an integral role in the perpetuation of the racist and ableist discourses that underpin the (post)colonial agenda.

Organization of Chapters

Chapter one introduces this study and its relation to social work using a case to illustrate the reach and impact of the issue interrogated. Chapter two provides the background and context for this research. Chapter two situates the problem with a review of the limited literature available about school exclusion for Black students in the greater Toronto area, supported by data from other locales of the western world. The context is deepened with an exploration into how the gap in race-based data manifest in this multicultural nation, through a discourse of nation-building and cultural hegemony—echoing the same ideologies that sanction the expulsion of Black bodies from the body politic. This chapter shows that Canada’s multicultural narrative has epistemological consequences that shape and restrict knowledge production around the issues of race in education. Finally, this chapter locates the problem within the social work scope. It illuminates ways in which the profession of social work is implicated in the social exclusion and pathologizing of Black students under the guise of helping and healing, again pandering to Canada’s assimilationist imperative.

Chapter three outlines the theoretical and conceptual framework that form the lens through which the research questions and analysis are explored. Spatial and critical race theory are explained as theoretical frameworks to understand how structural and institutional factors constrict and construct space and discuss how certain bodies come to be excluded from the education system. The connection in historical narratives between chattel slavery and

incarceration and the carceral spaces of the school that frame the Black male as a perpetual, inveterate threat needing to be disciplined and contained are examined in this chapter.

The methods and methodology used to collect and examine data are discussed in chapter four, which includes an explanation of critical race methodology as a framework for examining life histories and the stories of the study's participants. Chapter four also illuminates the inextricability of the spacetime matrix and its methodological implications, particularly with reference to the use of co-created timelines. Chapter four provides a summary of the methods utilized, a profile of the young men who participated in the study, as well as an explanation as to how the data analysis progressed and the themes evolved. Lastly, the chapter provides a researcher subjectivity statement.

Chapter five combines and presents the study's findings and analysis due to the interconnectivity between the two components in thematic analysis. Excerpts from the participants' interviews about their experiences of expulsion programs and school exclusion more broadly are featured along with both specific and summative analyses reflecting the broader content of each data set in relation to the themes: carceral space, carceral subjectivities, and carceral continuities. Chapter five illustrates themes that show how excluded Black male youth are transformed into carceral subjects through systematic spatial and racial legibilizing practices. Also described is how the spoiled and stigmatized identity that Black male youth develop through this process becomes affixed to these youth, shaping their experiences even after they leave school.

In conclusion, chapter six connects the findings to the research questions. In addition to answering the questions, there is a discussion of the meaning and value of the results through theoretical and interpretive prisms that ultimately give rise to the emergence of the newly coined

concept: carceral dislocation. This term names the phenomenon that establishes identity formation as a carceral device specifically for Black male youth. After punctuating the necropolitical act of immuring Black students, the implications of the study's claims and suggestions for future research are provided.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter, the political background of Safe Schools Programming is explained and the context within which the school exclusion of Black male youth occurs is described. Here, the limited research conducted in the area of school exclusion in Canada is discussed, as well as other geo-political locations to fill the gaps. The chapter concludes with a critique of the most comparable study to date, its methodology, and a case for conducting a racial and spatial analysis of this issue.

Expulsion/Safe Schools Programs and Legislation

To set the context, I begin by discussing Bill 212. Before the Progressive Discipline amendments, Bill 212 was also referred to as the Zero Tolerance Policy. Subsection 5(1) of the Education Act repeals subsections 312(1), (2), and (3) to mandate the provision of educational programming to excluded students. According to the Bill, “every board shall provide, in accordance with policies and guidelines issued by the Minister, if any, (a) at least one program for suspended pupils; and (b) at least one program for expelled pupils” (Education Amendment Act, 2007).

The Ontario Education Act treats the terms suspension, expulsion, and exclusion as separate conditions. According to the Act, a suspended student is one who is prohibited from both attending mainstream schooling and engaging in all school-related activities for no less than one day and no more than 20 days. An expelled student is prohibited from attending mainstream school and from engaging in all school-related activities for a period that exceeds 20 days and is

often indefinite. A student can either be expelled from the school they attended or from all schools within the board. If expelled from one school, the Education Act states that the student should be assigned to another school within the board. If the student is expelled from all schools within the board, the student is assigned to a program for expelled students in which attendance is *voluntary*. An expulsion is a more formal process than a suspension and must be decided by way of a hearing. Expulsions have no minimum age and usually occur prior to the student's 18th birthday, after which point school attendance is no longer mandatory and Ministry provisions to educate and reintegrate the student are no longer obligatory. After the age of 21, programs for expelled students and mainstream high schools are no longer an option. These students must resort to Adult Education programs should they choose to pursue formal education.

The Education Act does not explicitly define the conditions under which a student is considered excluded; however, for the purposes of this study, the definition includes suspensions and expulsions, as well as other circumstances.

In response to public charges that zero tolerance policies targeted Black students, keeping them out of schools, on the streets and causing school disengagement, the Ministry of Education pressured Ontario school boards to reduce their numbers of expulsions (Contenta & Rankin, 2009). In 2009, to respond to the safety needs, the Ontario school boards created programs that enabled school administrators and superintendents to *informally* exclude on a *proactive* basis. This means that, not only could they expel those who would normally be expelled without issuing a formal expulsion, but also those who had not committed any offence that could warrant an expulsion (e.g., at-risk, disengaged, or chronically truant students) (Contenta & Rankin, 2009). I know firsthand through my professional role in said programs, that students who are not formally expelled are housed in the expulsion programs with expelled students without

distinction. Just as zero tolerance did prior to the Education Act, this new iteration also disproportionately impacts racialized students. Although they are not permitted to attend, these excluded students remain on the roles of their sending schools or their registration is transferred to the alternative school, but they are not reflected in the numbers meant to capture expelled and excluded students reported to the Ministry (Contenta & Rankin, 2009) and are thereby rendered invisible.

If a student commits what the school principal deems to be an activity warranting expulsion under the Education Act, there is a hearing held by a Discipline Committee, comprised of trustees authorized to act on behalf of the Board. The committee decides based on the evidence provided whether it is more probable than not that the student did engage in the prohibited activity, if the student should be expelled, and whether the expulsion should apply to the student's school or at all schools within the Board. The proceeding can be held in absence of the student, student's family, or representatives. After it is determined that the student is expelled, the expulsion program is proposed to the Board. A different committee functions as gatekeeper for the expulsion programs. This committee is typically comprised of the following:

- the Superintendent of Education of Alternative Programs, who is accountable to the Board of Trustees, who are elected by citizens of the region, school, and expulsion program administration,
- senior level social workers and psychologists,
- program social worker(s), and
- a school support officer or equivalent who is a liaison between the police and the school board.

As each student is presented for the program by the sending school administrators, the committee reviews the student's charges and bail/probation conditions. During these meetings, students and their families' histories and experiences are exposed, and their futures determined.

The committee meets regularly to admit, review, and release students from the program. Decisions are made concerning when the student is ready to leave the program based on academic goals (i.e., the completion of credits) and non-academic goals (i.e., development of anger management, social and communication skills) set by their sending school. Decisions are made not only about when the student has been adequately rehabilitated—or rather normalized—but also about students' capacity to undergo such a transformation and where they shall be placed once they leave the program, if under compulsory school age. The committee demits students from the program if they present with behaviours that the program team finds too challenging and if it is deemed that they are too resistant to change. A code is subsequently entered into the Student Information System, marking the students and banning them from all schools within the board. Documentation is also included in the Ontario Student Records warning all schools in Ontario that these are excluded students, making it highly unlikely that another board in the province will admit the student. The alternative version of this program is called proactive, and it definitionally subjects students who are not guilty of an offence meriting expulsion to the same process, without the benefit of a discipline hearing. With this study, I interrogated the ways in which the discretionary exclusion of students in the absence of expellable offences resembles the dynamics of Agamben's (1998) *Homo Sacer*, which is discussed in Chapter 3.

The background on the aforementioned Bill 212 provides the context for the discussion of three key relevant areas found in this literature review namely: (a) an exploration of the most

relevant regional studies and reports pertaining largely to the differential administration of school punishment based on race; (b) an introduction and explanation of the school-to-prison pipeline construct, its utility and its limitations; and (c) a critique of the only Canadian study to date, which focuses on the inner workings of Safe Schools programs, highlighting the problematic way in which the participants who were excluded students, were constructed by the researcher. This literature review, however, is restricted by the dearth of race-based data pertaining to the Canadian education system. The following section, placed prior to the exploration of school discipline research, contextualizes the relative absence of race-based data in Canada by explaining the political narratives that support the stance that disaggregate data are divisive and counter to Canadian national goals.

Social Work Knowledge Production: Race-Based Research

This section's value lies also in its demonstration of how systemic and structural racism on both national and institutional levels operate to obscure and maintain itself, which supports this study's theoretical framework featured in the next chapter. Furthermore, in this section, there is a brief discussion about the manner in which the restrictions placed on the type of data that can be collected, coupled with the multicultural political climate, influences social work knowledge production and limits the Canadian social work knowledge base; all of which have bearing on this study and illustrate the need for further studies of this nature.

Much of the statistical data pertaining to race and schooling forming the basis for this study derives from U.S. research. This is owing to the relative paucity of Canadian research in the area of racialized students, their treatment, and their experiences in educational institutions, despite Canada's glaring similarities to other countries examining the same issues. The most commonly cited studies about the differential treatment and outcomes of racialized populations

in school communities derive from Britain, the US, and Australia (see, Connell, 1995; Kane, 2006; Noguera, 2001; Renold, 2004; Skelton, 2001; Welch, 1988), which share much in common with Canada in terms of colonial history, Anglophone culture, western orientation, heterogeneous ethnic composition, and attitudes about race (i.e., white supremacy and subscription to racial hierarchies), and education. As British settler societies, the US, Australia, and Canada share the expressed characteristics of their colonizers, adopted through the process of their triumphant colonization.

Ogbu and Simons (1998) argued:

the dominant groups in settler societies have certain beliefs and expectations in common, including the belief in opportunity in their appropriated territory for self-improvement, individual responsibility for self-improvement, and expectations that people in society should more or less conform or “assimilate,” especially in language and culture. (p. 162)

These expectations of assimilation and conformity are handled similarly in many ways by Canada and the US, which have a distinctive connection because they share a landmass and natural resources; particular aspects of culture, heritage, and language; exclusive political relations/alliances; and have similar demographics, economies, and capitalist structures.

The multiculturalism policy was announced in the House of Commons on October 8, 1971, by then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, in response to the influx of immigrants from non-European countries at the time (Bannerji, 2000). The rather vague policy, which declared as its general objective the provision of government aid to immigrants seeking to participate in and contribute to Canadian society (i.e., by learning one of the two official Canadian languages), was aimed at protecting the two-nation, French-British composition of Canada, by appeasing separatist francophone Canadians while incorporating those of non-British, non-French origin

into the Canadian social order and public institutions (Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1971 as cited in Li, 1999). The Multiculturalism Act passed in 1988, expanded on the original objectives to include the notions of freedom of cultural choice, respect for diversity, cultural understanding, appreciation for diverse Canadian cultures and the promotion of multiculturalism as a fundamental feature of Canada (S.C. 1998, c. 31 as cited in Li, 1999). Hence, the birth of Canada's mosaic political culture.

Protecting the National Narrative

Embedded within the discourses of multiculturalism in Canada are themes of tolerance, sensitivity, and accommodation. The dominant culture, however, sets and enforces parameters for said cultural tolerance, stipulating which differences and idiosyncrasies of Others are considered tolerable, and reinforcing the underlying premise that the dominant Anglophone/Francophone cultures are superior (Henry et al., 2000). Also couched within multiculturalism rhetoric are the notions of equal opportunity, harmony, and colour-blindness, which serve to conceal structural and systemic racism, cultural hegemony, as well as the unequal relations of power which persist in a democratic liberal society (Dei & Kempf, 2005; Mohanty, 1993, as cited in Kalbach & Kalbach, 2000). Henry et al. (2000) also asserted that liberalism, full of paradoxes, “simultaneously supports the unity of humankind and the hierarchy of cultures” (p. 297). Canada upholds the ideals of liberal democracy, which on the surface, negates the existence of racism, but in actuality “there is a fundamental tension in Canadian society between the ideology of Canada as a democratic liberal state and the racist ideology that is reflected in the collective belief system operating within Canadian cultural, social political and economic institutions” (Henry et al., 2000, p. 289). These tensions surface in discursive spaces, such as the

school, and impact decisions such as whether to collect race-based statistics to support research on the race differential within Canadian institutions.

Razack (2002) argued that “in North America, it is still the case that European conquest and colonization are often denied, largely through the fantasy that North America was peacefully settled and not colonized” (p. 2). Denying colonization existed buttresses the image of “Canada, the good” and causes any discourse on race and racism to converge and conflict with discourse about Canadian identity, national unity, and multiculturalism to the extent that when racism is exposed, it is taken up with a ‘no cause for panic’ approach and explained away as an isolated event caused by a handful of social deviants, an unstable economy, or die hard “undemocratic” traditions which are steadily disappearing (Kalbach & Kalbach, 2000). A denial approach undermines any pursuit of systemic anti-racist change (Dei & Kempf, 2005).

Circuitous, umbrella terms such as “visible minority,” introduced by employment equity legislation and the 1996 Canadian Census in reference to all “persons, other than Aboriginals, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour” (Employment Equity Act, 1996), obscure differences between racial groups including racial hierarchies and racist constructions. Moreover, in their conflation of all diverse groups as Other, they make it difficult to ascertain the disparities in treatment, outcomes, and access to equity and opportunities among racial groups (Statistics Canada, 2001; Wortley, 2005, p. 46). As van Dijk (2000) suggested “the New Racism wants to be democratic and respectable, and hence first off denies that it is racism... Real Racism, in this framework of thought, exists only among the Extreme Right” (cited in Kalbach & Kalbach, 2000, p. 292). South of the border, the US appears to make more concessions about the consequences and legacy of their racist history, which might allow them to take a candid look at issues of race through, among other things, the collection of disaggregated statistics.

Informal Ban on Race-Based Statistics

The informal ban on the collection of race-based statistics in Canadian institutions spanning over a decade from 1997-2007 spawned much debate in its time and was critiqued as an “excuse for not systematically investigating allegations of racial bias within the criminal justice and education systems” (Wortley, 2005, p. 43). Those against the collection of race-based statistics argued that since race is insignificant at the biological level, efforts should be made to eliminate the concept of race from social discourse. They believed that the collection of race-based statistics perpetuates thinking in racial terms, which creates the conditions for racial divisions and inequalities (Wortley, 2005). That being the case, the claim is that the collection of disaggregated data is somewhat responsible for the consequences of thinking in such terms. Proponents felt that racial hierarchies are a reality that are embedded in the social structures of daily life and that the measurement of differential experiences, treatment and outcomes across racial categories is necessary to track and address them in efforts to achieve greater social justice (ASA 2003 as cited in Wortley, 2005). Despite the resistance in Canada to collect disaggregated statistics, racial bias has been identified in employment, education, housing, and criminal justice decision making in Canada (see Dreidger & Halli, 2000; Fleras & Elliott, 2003; Henry et al., 2000; James, 2003; Kalbach & Kalbach, 2000; Li 1999; Wortley & McCalla, 2003). This debate, according to Dei and Kempf (2005), “highlights the resistance to an informed discussion of race, and the possibilities for new and transformative analysis on race and racism in Canada” (p. 66).

On the collection of disaggregate statistics, the Ontario Human Rights Commission stated that “appropriate data collection is necessary for effectively monitoring discrimination, identifying and removing systemic barriers, ameliorating historical disadvantage and promoting substantive equality” (OHRC, 2005b, 44 as cited in Wortley, 2005). In the face of this, Canada

still celebrates a political culture that on the one hand purports to value diversity and uphold the principals of egalitarian society, and on the other hand sabotages those ideals by supporting statements like the one made in 2002 by Julian Fantino, then Chief of the Toronto Police Services, who proudly declared, “we do not do racial profiling...there is no racism... We don’t look at, nor do we consider race or ethnicity, or any of that, as factors of how we dispose of cases, individuals, or how we treat individuals” (quoted in the Toronto Star, 2002, para. 1, 4-5). The fact is, as Wortley (2005) avowed, “ignoring the issue of racism, pretending that issues of race and racial discrimination do not exist in the country, will not make the problem go away” (p. 59). Furthermore, Wortley (2005) called on Canadians to “take our heads out of the sand and confront these issues with honesty and objectivity” (p. 59).

Race-Based Data and School Boards

The TDSB stopped the collection of race-based statistics in 1997 and did not begin collecting them again until the 2006-2007 school year. The information from the research resulting from this reinstatement, though limited due to the gap, can be found in this chapter. Conversely, this paper does not contain race-based data specific to education in the Peel Region, which provided the impetus for my program of study, because neither PDSB, nor their Catholic counterpart, the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board kept race-based statistics. This, however, is changing. As a result of pressure from the community and subsequent direction from the Ontario government, the PDSB administered their first student census in 2019.

Many social workers within the PDSB have indeed been co-opted into the colourblind discourse of multiculturalism, whereby they service individuals/groups based on subjective need and fail to recognize the disproportionality of social issues that racialized students face (Sibblis, 2007). In a study conducted prior to this dissertation, some participants denied that race was a

significant factor in the construction of at-risk, disengaged, or problem students, which comprised the majority of their client base (Sibblis, 2007). Some interviewees expressed that though some issues specific to visible minority groups might exist at the PBSB, these did not necessitate school social work attention and the fact that there are no race-based statistics to substantiate the claim justified their inattention to it (Sibblis, 2007). Yet others felt strongly that the model within which they practiced, restricted to individual casework, could not effectively confront issues of marginalization and racism (Sibblis, 2007). One such social worker ardently spoke out about the racist practices and structures, stating that, notwithstanding the PDSB's heterogeneous racial and ethnic composition of the board, much like Canada at large, the PDSB "runs around the whole issue of racism and diversity" (Sibblis, 2007, p.44).

An Historical Account of Safe Schools Programs in Ontario

Two decades ago, a study presented statistics, indicating that students received 17,371 suspensions in Toronto in the 2000-01 school year (Brautigam, 2002). During the 2001-02 school year, there was a 40% increase, bringing the number to a staggering 24,238 suspensions (Brautigam, 2002). Additionally, there were approximately 150 expulsions from Toronto schools (Brautigam, 2002). Former Ontario premier, Kathleen Wynne then a school trustee who sat on expulsion hearings at the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), lamented on the significant increase in suspensions and expulsions which she had seen rise since the implementation of the Safe Schools Act (Brautigam, 2002). Premier Wynne added that a disproportionate number of the students who suffered consequences from expulsions were Black males (Brautigam, 2002). The disturbingly high numbers ultimately resulted in a push for schools to decrease the number of suspensions and expulsions administered (Brautigam, 2002).

The results of a logistic regression analysis conducted in 2003 using Toronto high school student data indicated that minority students were more likely than white students to perceive discriminatory treatment in the forms of teacher behaviour, school suspension practices, the use of police, and police conduct (Petiers, 2003). In general, Black students were the most likely to perceive discriminatory treatment, followed by South Asian students, and then students from other racial groups (Petiers, 2003).

More recently, the 2020 murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in the U.S. by white policer officers as well as the brutal beating of Defonte Miller and death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet in Canada have reinvigorated the Black Lives Matter movement and have sparked new discussions about the prevalence of anti-Black racism within not only policing but in all major Canadian institutions (Benet & McMillan, 2021; Christián et al., 2022; De Shalit et al., 2022; Potvin, 2020). Additionally, with the growing discourse on equity replacing that of equality⁴ in Canada, there has been an uptick of issues related to racial injury incurred in and through institutions, which has given way to a series of studies focusing on Canadian Black students' first-hand experiences (Grey et al., 2016; James & Turner, 2015; McMurtry et al., 2008; TDSB, 2015). While these studies have captured the experiences of students who are not excluded, they do not contextualize the experiences of expelled Black students whose voices are presented for the first time in this study and whose voices represent an important addition to the extant literature. First, the Canadian literature is presented, prior to segueing into research conducted in the United States. Although the first study listed predates contemporary discourse,

⁴ Equality, in this context, means each individual or group gets the same resources and opportunities; whereas equity means that each individual or group gets the resources and opportunities required to achieve equal outcomes (Cook et al., 1983).

it is a seminal work on criminogenic factors for racialized youth in Canada and worth noting for its findings pertaining to the education system.

McMurtry et al.'s (2008) report on youth violence was comprised of an extensive literature review and the results of community consultations involving over 750 respondents. The report (McMurtry et al., 2008) identified education as the “root of the immediate risk factors” and explored five problematic elements of Ontario’s education system, including the Safe Schools policies and the ways in which the education system contributed to the criminalization of youth. The report also noted that suspensions and expulsions contributed to what is now referred to as the school-to-prison pipeline (McMurtry et al., 2008).

In their report, James and Turner (2015) found that Black youth in the Peel Region reported feelings of isolation and marginalization in the public education system. By way of 103 respondents, the following factors were noted as contributors to students’ feelings of exclusion: (a) teachers’ low expectations of Black students, (b) the relative absence of positive Black people and Black culture in the curriculum, (c) more encouragement of Black students in sports than in academic studies, and (d) the streaming of Black students towards studies identified as ‘basic’ and away from courses such as math and science or others that would align them along an academic track (James & Turner, 2015). Most relevant to this study is the report’s establishment of the differential discipline of students based on race and the ramifications of the presence of police in schools, which struck fear and mistrust in Black students (James & Turner, 2015). Furthermore, James and Turner’s (2015) findings prompted the PDSB to conduct a study using focus groups of 87 male student participants in grades 11 and 12 during the 2015-16 school year (Gray et al., 2016). Similar to James and Turner (2015), Gray et al. (2016) found that Black

students experienced feelings of social exclusion, racism, and discriminatory treatment by school faculty and peers.

James and Turner's (2015) report also included concluding remarks expressing that the challenges faced by Black youth in the Peel Region are similar to those experienced by youth in Toronto. The region of Peel has the second largest Black student population in the expansive Greater Toronto Area (James & Turner, 2017), after Toronto, which has the largest school board in Canada and the fourth largest in North America (Canadian Association of Public Schools–International, 2020). It is for this reason that this research focused on the Toronto District School Board and their Safe Schools programs, as well as the PDSB and their Fresh Start Programs.

TDSB's (2015) study centered on their grade 9 cohort of 2006-2011 found that Black students are more than twice as likely as their white peers to be suspended at least once during high school, 42% compared to 18%, respectively. TDSB (2015) also reported that the dropout rate for Black students is almost twice that of their white peers, 20% compared to 11%, respectively. Further, 16% of white students are identified with non-gifted special education needs as compared with 26% of Black students (TDSB, 2015), which supports several U.S. studies that demonstrate Black students are overrepresented in special education designations (Farkas et al., 2020; Morgan et al., 2017; Shealey & Lue, 2006; Vallas, 2009).

James (2019) prepared a report focused on Black students' perceptions and experiences of the PDSB. James' (2019) study included 44 male and female Black students from grades 4 through 12, who shared similar sentiments regarding the pervasiveness of anti-Black racism and the double standard applied to school disciplinary practices that other Black students identified in previous reports (e.g., Gray et al., 2016; James & Turner, 2015). In terms of Black male students, James (2019) noted that “much of this can be attributed to **anti-Black racism** where Black male

students feel unwelcome, unwanted, undervalued, and unable to perform academically or engage meaningfully with their school” (bold words included in original) (p. 5).

On February 28, 2020, a provincial ministry review report of the PDSB was released to Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, in response to charges of rampant anti-Black racism in operation within the board. The review was conducted under the guidance of Patrick Case, the Education Equity Secretariat. The reviewers received information from over 300 individuals, including board trustees, board senior administration, staff, principals, teachers, students, and their parents. Board documentation, demographic information, legislation, regulations, policies, and guidelines were also reviewed. The report revealed that while Black students make up only 10.2% of the secondary school population at the PDSB, they make up approximately 22.5% of the students receiving suspensions. Black secondary students at the PDSB received 2.2 times more suspensions than the overall percentage of PDSB secondary students who were suspended in the 2018-2019 school year and their discipline is more likely to involve police (Chadha et al., 2020).

Furthermore, approximately 78% of the PDSB’s secondary school suspensions between 2013 and 2019 were categorized as “other,” meaning that they did not fit within the Ministry of Education’s set categories of reasons for suspension (Chadha et al., 2020). Chadha et al.’s (2020) findings supported other studies (Skiba et al., 2002; Solomon, 2004; Vavrus et al., 2002) which reported that the higher rate of expulsions meted out for Black students is not a reflection of a higher rate of expellable offences, but rather a reflection of the arbitrariness and discrepancy in the interpretation of Black students’ behaviour as compared to the behaviour of white students. The reviewers reported that the Black students they interviewed spoke about this arbitrariness in the creation, invocation, and application of codes of conduct (Chadha et al., 2020). Chadha et

al.'s (2020) report stated that school staff, faculty, and administrators attested to this behaviour and disclosed that they had observed their colleagues fail to consider mitigating circumstances for Black students and provoke Black students to escalate the situation and elicit negative reactions from them. Participants said that Black students were regarded as “prone to misbehaviour” (Chadha et al., 2020, p.10).

While there is a relative lacuna in Canadian studies about the racial divide where school discipline is concerned, countless U.S. studies have shown Black students are being suspended or expelled from school at rates that exceed their representation in the school population (Carrol, 2009; Farmer, 2010; Parsons, 2008; Wallace et al., 2008). These disproportionate numbers might suggest that racialized Black students exhibit more anti-social behaviour, warranting such disciplinary measures; however, studies found there to be no evidence to support that idea that Black students were punished more because they acted out more. Rather, Black students were penalized more frequently and severely for more subjective and less serious reasons (Brown, 2007; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Shaw & Braden, 1990; Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba et al., 2011; Wallace et al., 2008) due to the amount of individual-level discretion school officials and teachers employ in acknowledging and interpreting behaviour (Ferguson, 2000; Vavrus & Cole, 2002). Skiba et al. (2002) found that white students were significantly more likely to be disciplined for smoking, leaving without permission, or obscene language and vandalism, whereas Black students were more likely to be referred to the office for disrespect, excessive noise, threat, and loitering. In reviewed studies, Black students felt that exclusions were liberally imposed and unduly harsh (Brown, 2007; Rudduck et al., 1996; Way, 2011). Black students felt they were found guilty without sufficient evidence, and that permanent banishment from their school was an unreasonable punishment (Brown, 2007; Rudduck et al., 1996; Way, 2011).

Research indicates that students who perceive school discipline as fair are judged to be better behaved (Way, 2011). By contrast, “students who are in schools with more school rules and students who view school rules as strict are rated as more disruptive by teachers” (Way, 2011, p. 363). Black students in impoverished neighbourhoods may be perceived as confrontational more frequently, since the schools in those neighbourhoods tend to have more rules and harsher, less flexible disciplinary practices (Brown, 2007). Furthermore, students escalate behaviour in response to disciplinary actions they feel are unjust or confrontational (Brown, 2007), and it was found that students who receive exclusionary forms of discipline are more likely to commit offences at school, such as participating in physical fights, carrying weapons, smoking, and using alcohol and other drugs (Schiraldi & Zeidenberg, 2001). American studies measuring academic outcomes used extant data and examined past school issues as a predictor for future school issues (Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2009; Pritchard & Williams, 2009; Rocque & Paternoster, 2011; Stoddard et al., 2010). Disciplinary sanctions were found to be both symptoms and causes of failure; remediation, and suspension, all together shown to be negatively linked to academic failure among Black students in middle and high schools.

As illustrated through Kevin’s story, the manner in which students are treated in school can indicate that they are not valued as students or liked as individuals (Brown, 2007; Pomeroy, 1999). While studies like Gray et al. (2016), James & Turner (2015) and McMurtry et al. (2008) reveal perceptions of Black students in mainstream educational programs in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Canadian researchers for those studies neglected to speak to students who access schooling from within expulsion programs as well as those who had been otherwise excluded from school. Expelled and excluded students represent those that have been failed by the system and who likely possess the most valuable insights about their treatment and its ramifications.

Omitting expelled and excluded students' voices can be seen as epistemic violence—the erasure, rejection, omission, or disregard for students' ways of knowing, thereby discrediting and further marginalizing their experiences.

The School-to-Prison Pipeline

The school-to-prison pipeline is one way scholars have explained the disproportionate number of Black students who experience exclusionary school punishment, as well as public schools' simulation of the criminal justice model (Casella, 2003; Shen, 2021; Wald & Losen, 2004). The school-to-prison pipeline is a linear construct used to theorize the movement of disadvantaged students along a trajectory beginning with unsupportive schooling and ending with their imprisonment (Simmons, 2005). This pipeline is strengthened by institutional parallels to prison in the form of zero-tolerance policies, which are heavily relied upon in schools servicing large numbers of Black students, in addition to high stakes testing and staff cuts, leading to teacher stress (Brown, 2003; Gordan et al., 2001a; 2001b). With the school-to-prison pipeline, three types of students are systematically pushed out of schools and ultimately into the youth and criminal justice systems: (a) those with learning disabilities; (b) those from racially minoritized groups; and (c) those with low socio-economic status who do not receive the school's educational and/or social supports they require (Wald & Losen, 2004).

Black males are funneled into the school-to-prison pipeline at a higher rate than any other group and are four times more likely to go to prison after being pushed out of school than their white counterparts who drop out (Gordan et al., 2001a; 2001b; Skiba, 2001). American and Canadian studies reveal that Black males are also more likely to remain in prison due to disproportionately longer sentences (Cole, 1999; Owusu-Bempah & Wortley, 2014; Western et al., 2002). Racial disparities can be examined from either the educational backgrounds of adult

convicts as Kevin's case illustrated, or from the trajectory of students (Simmons, 2005), which was the purpose of this study. School-to-prison pipeline theorists have also suggested that zero tolerance policies deter students from the path of education by dispensing suspensions and expulsions, taking them out of schools and, by default, placing them on a path to prison (Gordan et al., 2001a; 2001b). Moreover, it has been widely argued that schools are becoming more like prisons (Ferguson, 2000; Fine et al., 2004; Parenti, 2000; Watts & Erevelles, 2004), especially due to the use of physical and social exclusion (i.e., suspension and expulsion) as punishment (Fabelo et al., 2011; Skiba, 2000). Just as alleged and convicted offenders are removed from society and the general population, these practices served to remove offending students from the student body for the purposes of reallocating and profiting from public school funding (Fine et al., 2004; Giroux, 2003; Noguera, 2008).

While prior to the killing of George Floyd and the political movement that ensued, a couple of studies applied the school-to-prison pipeline to the observed trajectory of Black and Indigenous students in Canada (Salole & Abdulle, 2015; Solomon, 2004), it was largely viewed as a U.S. phenomenon until the raising of collective consciousness brought about by Black Lives Matter (Christián et al., 2022; Pasternak et al., 2022; Potvin, 2020). It has now been accepted as a legitimate means to describe the experiences and outcomes of Black and Indigenous students in Canada, yet there are still very few studies examining the school-to-prison pipeline in the Canadian context (Bernard & Smith, 2018; BLAC, 2022; Shen, 2021). Numerous works out of the United States have examined the various facets of the school-to-prison pipeline through ethnography and other field research (Ferguson, 2001; Nolan, 2011). Ferguson (2011), for example, offered a textual account of how Black male children/youth are constructed as bound for jail by school staff. Additionally, Nolan (2011) illuminated the entrenchment of the school

system in the culture of criminal violence (Davis, 2003; Noguera, 2003) through excessive policing by exploring the phenomena of police being employed by racialized and/or urban schools to maintain order.

Simmons (2005) offered a compelling critique of the school-to-prison pipeline in her thesis, citing its prime limitation; it polarizes the school and prison, presenting them as a dichotomy with schools positioned at one end of the linear progression and prisons at the other. Simmons (2005) asserted that “a theory that links schools and prisons by chutes and ladders is unable to account for the sites at which the institutions collide and coagulate” (p. 8). Simmons’ (2005) work examined a program that illustrated this collision, hybridizing the two institutions -- the prison and the school. Simmons (2005) aptly referred to this program as the “prison school,” where “two distinct institutions with antithetical purposes were to become one” (p. 118). The controversial school program, since terminated, was located in New Orleans and developed by a sheriff, a white prison authority, to “rupture the school-to-prison pipeline... [and] save the students from themselves” (Simmons, 2005, p. 90). At the time of Simmons’ (2005) study, only Black students were enrolled in the alternative school, which sat on the New Orleans’ Parish Criminal Compound in an abandoned prison building with a single entrance, surrounded by barbed wire and ironically, was also the former site of a school for Black students during the days of segregation.

Researching the Internal Operations of Safe Schools Programs

Fellow Canadian school social worker, Dwyer (2012) conducted the only Canadian scholarly study to date on the inner workings of Safe Schools suspension and expulsion programs in Ontario, given their relatively short tenure. Dwyer’s (2012) research critiqued behavioural responses to school violence and argued for the transformation of marginal

pedagogical spaces with the use of a humanities-based curriculum to convert expelled students into empathic, responsible *world citizens* who can reflect on their transgressions and are, hence, less likely to commit future violence. Dwyer's (2012) study is evocative of the goals of early prisons: "As indicated in the designation 'penitentiary,' imprisonment was regarded as rehabilitative and the penitentiary prison was devised to provide convicts with the conditions for reflecting on their crimes and, through penitence, for reshaping their habits and even their souls" (Davis, 2003, p. 26). According to Dwyer (2012), the humanistic approach promotes learning and critical thinking rather than superficial behaviour modification.

Like the label 'criminal,' the labels assigned to excluded students, such as 'at-risk youth' and 'problem student' are socially constructed and determined by subjective assessments in which race is a significant factor (Casella, 2003a; Ferguson, 2000). The value-laden discourse of risk is a powerful, pervasive, and motivating construct reliant on the binary of and distance between the exalted savers and those who incessantly need saving, imputed along racial lines (Fine, 1993; James, 2012). Although Dwyer (2012) noted the overrepresentation of racialized male students in suspension and expulsion programs, race analysis was not a factor of the overall study. Instead, Dwyer (2012) identified school violence and hegemonic masculinity as foci. Dwyer's (2012) position embedded assumptions about the culpability and ethical deficiency of expelled students; it omitted a critical interrogation of the composition of the expelled student body and the social, political, and economic context responsible for the program's population. Dwyer's (2012) findings also suggested complicity with the constructed labels and current structure that marginalizes students via spaces of exclusion. The suggestion that these racialized school excludees would benefit from the instillation of humanism, requiring the development of

morals and their minds in order, to control their behaviour, harkens back to historical understandings of Black bodies lacking humanity.

Chapter Summary

Chapter two provided an overview of the most relevant studies related to this research and explained the dearth of Canadian studies in this area. Key in this chapter was the pervasiveness of racism and specifically anti-Black racism in not only the school system but embedded within the Canadian political ideologies and in research itself, as evidenced by the last study discussed herein. The insidious and normative nature of the racism that emerges in this chapter is consistent with the central claims of Critical Race Theory, as discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE
THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

For this study, inquiries were grounded primarily in critical race theory and secondarily in spatial theory to understand how structural and institutional factors constrict and construct race and space for young Black men. Critical race theory (CRT), emerging in the 70's via a group of activists, lawyers, and legal scholars, namely Derrick Bell, Alan Freedman, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Angela Harris, and Mari Matsuda, posits that law and the legal system are inherently racist structures operating to maintain existing power relationships between white people and racialized people (Kolivoski et al., 2014). CRT has six central tenets: the first is the idea that racism is normal; the second is that racism primarily benefits white people physically and materially; the third is that race and racism are social constructs, meaning they lack biological basis but they exist through social arrangements, responses, and consequences; fourth involves the notions of differential racialization, the hierarchy of race and the time-based fluidity of racialized meaning; the fifth tenet pertains to the multiplicity of identities in any one person, and their intersecting nature; and the sixth tenet is that racialized people possess an exclusive perspective or voice and that their histories and experiences of oppression qualify them to speak about race and racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

The Utility of Critical Race Theory

As a framework for this study, CRT is useful in that it anchors the focus on institutional structures and the racism embedded within, as opposed to racist individuals or groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT aids in the conception of school as a place in which racism is fundamentally operational and normalized through policy, practice, curriculum, organizational

hierarchies, etc. I use spatial theory to deepen this assertion by showing how racism is operational in the spatial arrangements of school, particularly the expulsion programs. The ways in which white people benefit from the structural and institutional racism can be seen in the significant academic outcome disparities and disproportionalities addressed in the previous chapter. With reference to the aforementioned fourth tenet: the social construction and uptake of race and racism presupposes the wielding of power by those who developed and promoted it. Foucault's (1977) concepts⁵, specifically discourse and subjectivity, are helpful here in thinking through the racialized meanings unwittingly worn by the participants and other Black males in school that serve to justify their mistreatment. Their intersectional identities, as Black, male, youth, of lower socio-economic status, not only suggest complexity, but also contributed to the ways that school officials viewed them and managed them. This study's focus on participants' stories and counter-stories is consistent with CRT as a methodological approach (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001).

Moreover, CRT proposes a framework for its application specifically to the field of education, which deliberately shifts the paradigm of deficit "to explain educational disparities, to an approach that uncovers how inequities of access, power, and resources in the educational system perpetuate the achievement gap" (Hernández, 2016, p. 170). The five themes, which constitute some of the theoretical underpinnings of my methodological approach, are:

⁵ While some of the concepts attributed to Michel Foucault's work proved instrumental in helping me with my task of elucidating the disciplinary experiences of Black males in schools as institutions, I take a strong stance against adopting his work as a theoretical framework and endorsing him as a revered "intellectual 'monument'" (Heiner, 2007, p. 314) because of his own anti-Black and exploitative behaviour both personally and professionally. Furthermore, it is my position that all social life, and my work particularly, is deeply raced and Foucault neglected to explicitly attend to race in his work. As such, I instrumentalize some of his concepts because of their general popularity to further my Black liberationist agenda, similarly to the way Foucault used the work of the Black Panthers (Heiner, 2007). I, unlike Foucault, have referenced the source. Part of the activism of this work is the foregrounding of Black and minoritized voices and interrupting such instances of epistemic violence or epistemic injustice (see Fricker, 2003).

understanding individual experiences, challenging dominant ideology, commitment to social justice, experiential knowledge and voice, and interdisciplinary perspectives (Hernández, 2016, Solórzano, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). James (2019) noted, “with reference to the experiences of Black people, CRT, in accordance with anticolonialism, anti-racism, feminism and other critical theories, insists on naming anti-Black racism (ABR) and in so doing formulate theory and pedagogy that work against anti-Black racism” (p. 43-44). Such formulations occur with careful consideration of the various identity markers and social locations that perpetually intersect with race in nuanced and unstable ways.

More specifically, discussing the education system in terms of anti-Black racism rather than the more generalized anti-racist discourse has distinct implications for the development and implementation of policy in education (Dumas, 2016). Indeed, theorizing anti-Blackness in schooling is about more than disproportionality, disparity, diversity and inequitable access to education resources, but “fundamentally and quite specifically, a concern with the bodies of Black people, the signification of (their) blackness, and the threat posed by the Black [*sic*] to the educational well-being of other students” (Dumas, 2016). The latter was the main thrust of this study and the focus of the latter half of this chapter. While CRT provides foundational analysis and strategies, it does not adequately attend to the phenomenon of anti-Black racism. I propose that there are additional tenets to compliment CRT that Critical Anti-Blackness as an emancipatory theory could offer as descriptive and prescriptive tools. Such tenets, in my view, would include: a) the saliency of the Black as a shifting categorical yet unshifting ideological racial category; b) relatedly, the persistent conflation of *the Black* and *the slave*; c) Blackness as situated at the bottom of the hierarchy and as most distal to whiteness; d) consequently, the anti-Black racism of other races and populations; e) the Black body as outsider, absented from the

realm of the human and civility, f) the Black body as corporal and deviant; and what I call the ubiquity of carcerality in Black life which would include both the hyper-visibility and the surveillance of the Black body as well as the manner in which segregation transforms to maintain the oppressive status quo (e.g., via expulsion programs, school districts, city planning, etc.). It would also include socio-geographical contextualization, such as the erasure of Blackness and anti-Blackness in Canadian nation building and in the Canadian national narrative as discussed in chapter two. While perhaps not exhaustive, the addition of these ideas, which are discussed in detail in the proceeding section, provide a more comprehensive theoretical framework for this and many similar studies.

Towards Anti-Black Racism/Anti-Blackness Theory

The following sections of this chapter explore the theories supporting the conceptual framework of this study and contribute to the development of ABR as an academic approach to studying past and contemporary social phenomenon involving Black persons. This section is organized according to key components of the findings (see Figure 4), namely: (a) Male Black Body, (b) Carceral Space and Carceral Archipelago, (c) Prison, (d) School, and (e) Expulsion. This section focuses on the construction of the Black male subject and conceptual spaces relevant to this study. It theorizes how the Black student is racially and spatially constructed, beginning with an explanation of how Blackness and the objectification of the Black body takes place. Exploring the historically traceable objectification of the Black subject, the section also examines carceral geographies and the mutually constitutive relationship between space and the Black body, ultimately locating school disciplinary spaces in the *afterlife of slavery* (Hartman, 2007). The specificities of chattel slavery, its spatiality, and its spatial afterlife sets anti-Blackness apart from other forms of racism. Whereas CRT offers legal analysis which holds that

racism is woven into law and other institutions, ABR accounts for the positioning of the Black body as external to the realm of law and order as I explain using Agamben's (1998) state of exception.

Male Black Body

Fanon (1952) said "The Black man is not" (p. 206). The infamous statement was borne out of Fanon's (1952) powerful analysis of colonization's effects on both the identity and body of the colonized subject and can be interpreted any number of ways: from the Black man is a contradiction and is indeed not recognized as a man at all to an assertion of equality in declaring that the Black man is a negation and *is* no more than the white man because both are social and cultural constructions defined by their history. To say that the Black man is not a man, is to evoke questions about what constitutes the human and *who* determines that criteria. According to Fanon both the Black man and the white man must redefine themselves; however, only the white man wields the power to order, categorize, and define what is human. In summarizing Hegel's (2018) concept of man, he noted:

Man is human only to the extent to which he tries to impose himself on another man in order to be recognized by him. As long as he has not been effectively recognized by the other, it is this other who remains the focus of his actions. His human worth and reality depend on this other and on his recognition by the other." (p. 191)

Fanon considered racism to be the very denial of this recognition, and therefore understood this recognition is absent within the colonizer/colonized relationship. Black people are thereby reduced to objects. This mode of reasoning demonstrates how Black male students are viewed for the purposes of this study; they are constructed and known as Other, posing a threat to the

nation state and white supremacy, positioning them outside the realm of redemption and utility, thereby justifying their exclusion.

Black Masculinities

“The Black *man* is not.” The varied and complex ways in which masculinities are created, regulated, and reproduced within the school setting has received significant attention in the literature since the 1990’s (Connell, 1995; Francis, 2000; Mac an Ghail, 1994; Renold, 2004, Skelton, 2001). Black masculinity, however, is viewed as a specific and seismic societal problem in the Western world. Walcott (2009) perceived conversations about Black masculinities as shaped by neoliberalism’s managerial regime constructing Black masculinities as underperforming and in need of programs for better management. He adds that “such is particularly so for poor, redundant, and “wasted” masculinities that appear to have nothing to contribute to the global engines of capitalism” (p. 79). The dominant discourse of Black males depicts them as violent, angry, socially irresponsible miscreants. Conversely, the Black male’s white male counterpart claims the identities of being young, innocent, rational, and mature as his exclusive property (Jackson, 2006).

In *Looking White People in the Eye*, Razack (1998) articulated the dilemma in discussing racialized identities. On the one hand, homogenizing descriptions of racialized groups has an over-simplifying and limiting effect which also recenters dominance; for example, the Black masculinity discourse marginalizes or erases sexual minorities within the group. On the other hand, in speaking of racial identity in terms of the complexity and individuality one runs the risk negating the facts of racism and systemic oppression. It is with these dangers in mind that I, with my insider/outsider positioning as a Black woman, tread lightly in my theorization of Black masculinities. My hope is that this work does not inadvertently Other and essentialize the Black

man, aid the capitalist project, or reinforce, reinscribe, and reify such destructive discourses. Consequently, I chose to focus on how the social constructions and discourse work, rather than what they are. This study highlighted the participants' interpretations of how they were viewed as Black male students, and their own notions of Black masculinity. The young men interviewed were acutely aware of how they were characterized as Black males by the general public and had to navigate the ways that these traits conformed with, or controverted their inculcations of general masculinity via family, media, and other socializing agents.

Foucault's (1977) concept of subjectivity and the corresponding notion of identity are drawn upon to facilitate an understanding of how the experiences and spaces of school exclusion as well as the associated constructions of Black students affect the way they view themselves. This study sees identity as a product of psychological, cultural, and social processes by which we freely construct and express our senses of self. Foucault (1977) stated that bodies function as signifiers of meaning imposed on them by way of subjectivities. Subjectivity refers to the ways that we must situate ourselves, or are situated, in relation to power. Subjection of the body can occur through instruments of violence, non-violent physical interference, or discourse.

Foucault credited the production of subjects to the exclusionary practices of juridical systems of power which also falsely claim to merely represent those subjects in language and politics (Butler, 1990). Foucault's subjectivity, then, constituted through discourse in a poststructuralist theoretical approach, is an individual's conscious and unconscious mutable sense of self as distinct from the physical body, at different times, in different situations. This sense of self is set in relation to matrices of power to which the individual is subject. Identity, however, is a truncation of the multiple possible modes of subjectivities, temporarily limiting it to a particular frame, giving the individual a more consistent sense of who they are across time

and situations. Similar to what Foucault referred to as *subject position*, Hecht et al. (1993) formulated identity as a socially generated construct developed by alignment with, and in contrast to various groups, contingent upon boundaries, norms, and meanings. Subjectivity and identity are relevant to such processes of cultural struggle because, like culture, they are points of social reference, constituted by language as opposed to merely being expressed *by* language (Kelly, 2013).

Fanon (1952) provides a critical examination of self-definitions and both correspondingly and contrastingly, how bodily inscriptions are cast. To him, subjectification would be his understanding of himself as mediated by dominant whiteness. Black masculine identity development calls for the simultaneous acknowledgment and the countering of the discourses and imposed identities that threaten Black masculinity. Male Black youth comprise a particular population of young people who must reckon with personal identity, the socially constructed, essentialist notions of Black males, ageist prejudice, and fear pertaining to adolescents in general. Additionally, male Black youth must contend with the interaction between those imposed classifications and the individuals comprising them. Said interaction takes place because social constructions change individuals' experiences of themselves, resulting in either an embodiment or rejection of the putative labels and classifications (Fanon, 1952; Ferguson, 2001; Hacking, 1999). Social construction of self is principally instantiated in adolescence, a crucial stage of identity development (Erikson, 1968), and it contributes to the way young people imagine life now, and in the future (Farmer, 2010).

In this study, the body is seen as significant, both literally and symbolically. For the modern nation-state, the potential for an embodiment, specifically that of a Black man, to represent an inherent threat is politically potent. Foucault (1977) introduced the notion of a body

politic, which is “a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons, relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge” (p. 179). Foucault explained the process by which the human body is produced by knowledge as an object upon which modern meanings are projected (Da Silva, 2001). Foucault’s concept of the body and its utility is predicated on specific interpretations of power as relational and subjectivity as encompassing agency, despite its mediation by external authority. Foucault argued that “the body is...directly involved in a political field; power relations have an immediate hold upon it; they invest it, mark it, train it, torture it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform ceremonies, to emit signs (Rabinov, 1984, p. 173). The body, according to Foucauldian theory, is an economic strategy rather than property. Political investment of and in the body are enabled through relations of power and domination for the purposes of economic use and labour power; however, the body reaches optimal utility only insofar as it is both a productive body and a subjected body (Foucault, 1977).

Fanon (1952) is used to interrogate Foucault for the critical examination of the formation of corporeal inscriptions and self-definitions. Fanon (1952) illustrated his own subjectification through descriptions of encounters with racist white society:

The Negro is an animal, the Negro is bad, the Negro is wicked, the Negro is ugly; look, a Negro; the Negro is trembling because he’s cold, the small boy is trembling because he’s afraid of the Negro...the lovely little boy is trembling because he thinks the Negro is trembling with rage, the little white boy runs to his mother’s arms: “Maman, the Negro’s going to eat me. (p. 93)

Through these encounters, Fanon (1952) develops metacognition. He is cognizant of the perception that he is not quite human. His colonial self is disparate from his conception of himself, a manifestation of Du Bois' double consciousness, is made salient by the manner in which others view him. The discussion that follows examines how Fanon and his ilk come to be constructed as wicked animals to be feared, scientifically mediated, and objectified; as the non-human with inclinations to consume the human; as that which is to be exploited, excluded and protected against.

Anderson's (2007) exploration of 18th and 19th century Western constructions of race highlighted classical humanism and its prominence in the age of the European Enlightenment and modernity. Other authors, such as Da Silva (2001), Stoler (1995), Wynter (2003), and Walcott (2012) emphasized the pivotal relationship between race, racism, and modernity. The departure from religion and tradition as the main structures of governance in the 18th century gave way to new modes of thinking which prioritized new ideas and concepts, such as individuality and agency as a means to human perfectibility, democracy, the nation state and capitalism—all made possible by the freedom that secularism enabled (Da Silva, 2001; Wynter, 2003). Indeed, the modern conditions were ruled by universalism and the principles of rationality, equality, and freedom, which were presumed universal (Da Silva, 2001).

Western philosophy recognizes Man as distinct from animal in his possession of a soul, self-consciousness, and his capacity to be rational and make history. Basically, “the human is human insofar as s/he is essentially more than a human animal” (Anderson, 2007, p. 194). Anderson (2007) stressed that the human could be understood or recognized in two ways: in binary terms as separate from nature, and via movement progressively out of nature. The former depends on an oppositional construct of animal nature and concerns an external process of

juxtaposing the corporeal followed by physical separation. This concept of humanness as binary will be discussed in greater detail in this chapter. The latter, which I take up in the following section, involves internal processes of transcendence out of the corporeal.

Since the native peoples of colonized lands were absent from written and printed history, despite having their own ways of documenting and acknowledging the past, they were cast as inferior, and “at the mercy of the Devil” (Wynter, 2003, p. 111), being without religion, advanced knowledge, and self-consciousness. The absence of documented history also gave way to polygenist thought and supported a climate whereby the European conception of Man “over-represents itself as if it were the human itself” (Wynter, 2003, p. 260). Wynter (2003) asserted that this was a formative step toward racism as we know it today. In the words of Walcott (2012), “what constitutes European modernity is a complicated story of genocide, slavery, ecocide, and most strikingly, the production of a new world not just for those colonized and enslaved but for those engaged in the project of expansion as well” (p. 345). The idea that the colonization of time and space, as Wynter outlines, prompted a system of categories which disqualified Africans from humanness, thus rendering them appropriate for enslavement, is fundamental to this research.

Race and Space: The Spatiality of the Black Body

In unmapping, there is an important relationship between identity and space. What is being imagined or projected on to specific spaces and bodies, and what is being enacted there? Who do white citizens know themselves to be and how much does an identity of dominance rely upon keeping racial Others firmly in place? How are people kept in their place? And finally, how does place become race? (Razack, 2002, p. 5)

The questions that Razack (2002) posed are fundamentally engaged when considering the spatiality of the non-human and identity formation, which make them useful in an analysis of the coloniality of education. The above critical questions are explored primarily through the works of Fanon, Da Silva, and Mohanram. The discussion about the Black body in space that follows is grounded in Anderson's second criteria for being human: the movement out of nature.

As noted earlier, humanness has been understood to involve a transcendence of, and a movement away from, nature—both external nature and internal or corporeal nature (Anderson, 2007). Meaning one can only be properly human if in possession of the ability to move out of the body and become mind. As mind, the human is an agent in the world, self-controlled, and free of primal struggle. What is more, humans learn through reason, to control their untamed animality—characterized as dangerous, violent, irrational, and libidinous (Anderson, 2007). Ego, the mind's power is what conquers the body's strength.

It is important to note that the transcendent essence of the human entails a drive to improve, cultivate, and civilize (Anderson, 2007)—all of which are features of modernity and constitutive of the capitalist project. It follows then, that race and racism, as “formative features of modernity and deeply embedded in bourgeois liberalism” (Stoler, 1995, p. 9) are inexorably bound up in this hierarchizing initiative used to allocate power and property. With the advancement of science and technology, the Industrial Revolution created a rift between Africans and Europeans (Anderson, 2007). Due to Africans' perceived lack of innovation and scientific curiosity, Europeans considered them to be “backwards” or unevolved, which shifted the discourse about the roots of these differences from environment and culture to biology and race in the 19th century (Anderson, 2007). When attempts to “civilize” the African populations, who they considered savage failed, Africans came to be seen as beyond improvement (Anderson,

2007). In the Africans' resistance to transcend nature, they disrupted the definitive uniqueness of the human. The African populations threatened the prototypic human's superior status, their set-apartness from the rest of nature, and in so doing, they threatened the construction of humanity's right to exploit everything rendered non-human—a right fundamental to the system of accumulation currently known as capitalism.

As compelling as the pre-capitalist system was, the European settlers could not risk its collapse, and so, in reckoning that Africans were too uncivilized to even aspire to progress, a “new paradigm of irredeemable difference took hold” (Anderson, 2007, p. 195). Given that these populations were absent of “history” with nothing linking them to the biblical origin story, polygenesis was the obvious explanation; hence irredeemable difference evolved into innate deficiency. This explains the ‘deficiency perspective’ factor in the perforated box in Figure 4. Anderson (2007) argued that the “doctrine of irrevocable difference between groups of people, in which their relations of inferiority and superiority were innately fixed in terms of evidence of separation from nature” (p. 195) initiated the 19th century essentialist, hierarchical logic of race.

In his explication of Eurocentric Orientalism's performative creation of Self and Other, Said (1978) argued that the cultural construction of the colonized Other as subordinate and inferior produces the colonizer's position as the normative standard by contrast. Anderson (2007), however, contended that humans were “rendered intelligible by separating them based on ranking the measures of civilization” (p. 194). In interpreting Said (1978), it would appear as though the theory is incompatible with Anderson's (2007), yet I posit that the ranking system or racial hierarchy quantifies the distal/proximal spatial relationship between the non-white Other to the white subject as the pinnacle of civilization. As such, I examine how this gets reproduced in and through regulatory spaces such as prisons and schools. Said (1978) highlighted the spatial

element to the appraisal process consistent with Foucault's notion of dividing practices, when noting that conceptualizations of the Other "help the mind to intensify its own sense of itself by dramatizing the distance and difference between what is close to it and what is far away" (Said, 1979, p. 55). The essence of the European came to be known to the Europeans themselves in contrast to the European's denigrated construction of the savage non-European Indigenous and African essences, secured by discourse which elevated some knowledge about the Other and suppressed or negated others (Anderson, 2007; Fanon, 1952; Said, 1979). Here, I am focused on the dichotomy between whiteness and Blackness.

Da Silva (2001) furthered the discussion on the construction of race and spatiality by illuminating how Black bodies and white bodies signify distinct types of 'modern subjects.' Similar to Said (1979), Wynter (2003), and Fanon (1952) who purported that the colonizer employs his faculties to define the human self and the Other, Da Silva (2001) rejected claims of universality and independence pertaining to conceptions of the human and acknowledged that "...the racial produces human beings as fundamentally mediated (as opposed to self-present, self-transparent, self-determined) beings" (p. 435). Further Da Silva (2001) stated that via the colonizer's mediation, the racial constructs the *particularity* of European (white) bodies as the most perfect living beings, and the peculiar traits of European bodies and the technological conditions of European space as signifiers of their cultural perfection, ...[It] produce[s] them as the privileged signifiers of universality (p. 435).

In substantiating Da Silva's (2001) assertion that race gains political significance, not because it refers to visible markers of difference on the body but because those markers indicate invisible traits, namely qualitatively distinct levels of human consciousness, the racial injustice undergirding the inherent contradictions in largely accepted accounts of modernity are revealed.

Da Silva's (2001) main argument hinged on the premise that transcendentalism is a staple of modernity. Da Silva (2001) asserted that a "crucial trait of the modern episteme is the primacy of transcendentalism, which requires that all difference be re-signified as a moment in the trajectory of the transcendental being" (p. 435). Race, however, is fixed—and race fixes. If, indeed, human beings are always in a state of flux and ever-evolving, there exists nothing constant upon which to ground their humanness definitively but that very transcendentalism—which makes them modern subjects. The issue is that accounts of modernity that privilege transcendentalism, are thus privileging historicity/temporality from which the being gains the knowledge and understandings that constitute their cultural (moral and intellectual) component. The cultural element is understood to cast the being as a particular type of human being, with a way of being human that is not transcendental but rather stable, and definitive (Da Silva, 2001). Da Silva (2001) argued that race is external to these accounts of modernity, which privilege history and natural processes, but on the other hand, race, conceived of via mediation, is integral to modernity because it is a product of science, a modern concept reliant on mediation (by way of instruments, lenses, faculties) and spatiality.

Da Silva (2001) noted that the universal concepts that underpin modern conditions would suggest that body and (geographic) space are unable to replace, limit, or otherwise impact mind and time (history) within modernity. This is because modernity hinges on the notion of the mind that evolves and transcends through time as a universal process, irrespective of other variables (Da Silva, 2001). However, race as a signifier of difference, also signifies the mediate and spatial limitations; hence, because race is always already mediated and prioritizes space over the mind, modernity is conditional upon where the being originates—which negates its fundamental universality (Da Silva, 2001). From this, Da Silva (2001) deduced that "race addresses justice

even before Blackness is deployed to prevent or limit a person's enjoyment of his or her rights: the racial operates as supplement to historical accounts of modernity which privilege human consciousness' un-mediated connection with transcendentalty" (p. 435). This is implicated in the operationalization of race in nationalist discourse as a global and political category that engages the wider politics of exclusion and produces subaltern regions within modern social spaces (Da Silva, 2001; Stoler, 1995).

Like space, the body is purported to be political, as an immediately identifiable marker of difference, which accounts for the distribution or withholding of material, spatial, and temporal resources (Jackson, 2006).

Stigmatized Identity

Goffman's (1963) interpretation of the Greek term stigma refers to marked bodies indicating that the bearer was unusual or of poor moral status such as slaves, criminals, or traitors and not a whole person, but a failure—a discounted, deficient, or handicapped individual to be avoided. Correspondingly, there is an inability to distinguish object from perception, and language serves as an additional intermediary between object and perception. This becomes significant in considering the reciprocal constitution of body and space which affirms the primacy of consciousness and embodiment in producing knowledge (Merleau-Ponty, 1994); body, space, and knowledge are all confined by representation through language. The "mutually interdependent relationship between body, identity and place" (Merleau-Ponty, 1994 as cited in Mohanram, 1999, p. 18) is made evident through young people's experiences in expulsion programs.

Much of the literature explaining white supremacy, Orientalism, and anti-Black racism takes up discourse focusing on the colonizer's gaze to explain white supremacy, Orientalism, and

anti-Black racism (Jackson, 2006; Said, 1978). Orientalism is conceived as a drive for knowledge of the Other (Hiddleston, 2009) and suggests a position or viewpoint of distance from the native subject, whence the object is captured, classified, and encapsulated by the classifier's knowledge. The Orientalizing gesture reduces the object/Other to preconceptions and formulations that purport to define the entirety of the Other. In this way, the knowledge of, and discourse surrounding, the object contains and restricts that object as a form of incarceration. According to Fanon, the white man's racist system requires that he fails to recognize the Black man's skin, and the master-slave dialectic is undergirded by struggle for that recognition.

As noted, the process of linking objects together to form spaces is an exercise of power and is incumbent upon the senses and perception—primarily the gaze (Low, 2008; Merleau-Ponty, 1994) of the dominant. The colonizer gazes upon the colonized, and in so doing, simultaneously constructs alterity and affirms the colonizer's social location or relative positioning. Race and gender are similarly constituted in and by the gaze (Low, 2006) and the bodies to which they are ascribed, are assigned differential social meaning. Jackson (2006) elucidated the fact that the gaze is not an innocent or neutral act, but rather, it is a specular event, a tool for examining sites of obsessive desire that disclose the gazer's discomfort with, and abhorrence to, difference. Jackson (2006) contended that race is enacted at the moment of the gaze, which is accompanied not only by personal perceptions but also institutional inscriptions and the social consequences of institutional inscriptions. Fanon (1952) argued that the gaze destroys the (Black) self—leaving only an objectified, colonized, mediated body.

Foucault's assertion that the establishment of offences and their prosecution function to maintain punitive mechanisms and their objectives is clearly operational here. What ensued was the racialization of crime related to the high incidence of Black people committing unavoidable

offences (Davis 2003; McKittrick, 2011) because Black subsistence was in and of itself an offence. Black guilt was always already assumed. The continued compulsion to “impute crime to colour,” to use Frederick Douglass’ expression, is evident in contemporary practices of police carding (as cited in Davis, 2003, p. 30). Despite that before the abolition of slavery, the overwhelming majority of prisoners in southern states were white, Black people were held as natural criminals—a belief that was reinforced when, after emancipation, the complexion of the prison population darkened (Davis, 2003).

To attest to the everydayness and pervasiveness of carcerality among Black populations, McKittrick (2001) posited that “being with” and “being without” are naturalized racial categories. McKittrick (2001) stated that “in the Americas, free labour under bondage thus marked Black working bodies as those “without”—without legible Eurocentric history narratives, without land or home, without ownership of self—as this system forcibly secured Black peoples to the geographic mechanics of the plantation economy” (p. 948). The perpetual damning and condemning of some categories of bodies while others are not, happens through epistemological organization and is reproduced through institutions such as the courts, schools, church, and family to continue the subscription to labour power and ruling class/race ideologies (Althusser as cited in Hiddleston, 2009; McKittrick, 2011). The system relies on the colonizer keeping the colonized in a limited position throughout time, whereby the “provable inferior man is identified, he is produced and read as criminal, jobless; he is dispossessed, both symbolically and materially, and we respond with horror by returning to and visually brandishing his body in order to attest to racism” (McKittrick, 2011, p. 958), indulging a cycle of economic carcerality and re-isolation of the dispossessed. Particularly pertinent to the understanding of the hypervisible Black body and its multiple modes of carcerality is Mohanram’s (1999) point that

poverty draws attention to the body, highlighting the poor and Black as a reminder of their inability to transcend, whereas the rich white individual's mind spills over onto the body concealing and diminishing it.

Visible signifiers on the body became not only indicators of an invisible inner essence, but also a marker of place (Mohanram, 1999). In this way, bodies, landscape, and nation became interchangeable (Mohanram, 1999). Mohanram (1999) explained that “racial difference is also spatial difference, the inequitable power relationships between various spaces and places are rearticulated as the inequitable power relations between races” (p. 3). The conflation of body and nation supported the hierarchization of nations and the ranking of bodies as it facilitated the regulation of space and enforcement of territorial borders (Mohanram, 1999). Mohanram's (1999) argument is used to support my claim that Black male students' bodies mark them for exclusion and containment/carcerality, and that they are considered out of place in the mainstream spaces of the school.

Mohanram's (1999) analysis offered further insights into the political meanings that the body acquires and how rendering them recognizable through inalienable markers situates them within space. Along with the conflation of body and nation, the body is taken as a marker of where it originated, and for the Black body that is an indicator of where it belongs (Mohanram, 1999). When it is perceived as being geographically or socially out of place—that is, away from its natural environment or its national boundaries—the Black body takes on its meaning (Mohanram, 1999). Mohanram (1999) explained that the word native means fixed. Consistent with Orientalism, it refers to those who are “located at a distance from the metropolitan West” (Mohanram, 1999, p. 11). Furthermore, Mohanram (1999) cited the Oxford Dictionary which defines native as:

one born in bondage'; or 'one of the original or usual inhabitants of a country, as distinguished from strangers or foreigners; now esp. [*sic*] one belonging to non-European and imperfectly civilized or savage race'; or as 'a coloured person, a Black. (p. 11)

The Native (Black) body is fixed in a static space; it represents nature and is shaped by its natural environment.

The Black body references "darkest Africa" (Maggio, 1997), also known as "the dark continent" (Stanley, 1878), which are 19th century terms Europeans coined initially to signify the mystery of and their unfamiliarity with the sub-Saharan Africa. However, the ideological relationship between darkness, 'undiscovered,' and undeveloped or deficient is not to be ignored. Neither body nor land, which are treated as synonymous, partake in the schema of development. Conversely, the European settler is free and mobile, he takes his environment with him wherever he goes and in so doing, shapes the environments *graced* by his presence, producing Europe in non-European spaces (Mohanram, 1999). The Europeanization of other spaces is possible in part because Europeans are indigenous to temperate climates; they can move anywhere, take any place, and take anyone's place, which makes the European the Universal Subject. The environmental hardiness and limitless mobility that the European possesses detaches them from their indigenous status, makes the European a citizen of the world, and serves to unmark the white body; whereas "the rest of us are immobile, pinned, raced and incarcerated in our particular spaces" (Mohanram, 1999, p. 14). In short, whiteness is free, it moves, and is disembodied; Blackness is static, embodied, and incarcerated.

Fanon sought to be free of his body, so saturated with objectionable meaning that he felt imprisoned within and obscured by it. Hegel's (2018) master-slave dialectic reinforced the centrality of the colonizer's gaze in the development of the subjugated identity. The master-slave

dialectic stated that “self-consciousness exists in and for itself when... it exists for another...that is to say it is only by being acknowledged and recognized” (p. 229, cited in Hiddleston, 2009).

Fanon (2008) drew on Hegel (2018) in theorizing the Black man whom, without said recognition or a notion of an autonomous self from which to combat negative projections, faces grim possibilities.

Western philosopher Sartre (1948) contended that a reclaiming of the Black identity is in order. Sartre (1948) asserted that the Black man must seek his recognition by force:

The Black man is the victim, *as a Black man*, as a colonized native or as a deported African. And since he is oppressed in his race and because of it, he must first seize consciousness of his race. Those who, for centuries, have vainly tried to reduce him to the status of a beast because he is a negro, he must force to recognize him as a man. (as cited in Hiddleston, 2009, p. 45).

Fanon (1952) problematized the overly simplified call to action, in his claim that the colonizer’s over-determination of Black essence sullies Black self-perception, or rather any possibility of the proper authentic Black self-perception and alienates the Black man from himself.

Carceral Space and Carceral Archipelago

Whether the bodies of the racialized Other were to be killed or colonized, slaughtered, or saved, expunged, or exploited, they had to be prevented at all costs from polluting the body politic or sullyng civil(ized) society. (Goldberg, 1993, p. 187)

Lefebvre (1991) introduced the idea that social space is a social product and can never be neutral. Rather, it is controlled and produced by individuals acting as social agents. In this work, I have conceptualized space as the interactions between bodies as well as the organization of

bodies and the bearing that has on the meaning of the physical/geographical place. It is critical to understand that space does not simply exist but is incessantly created and recreated between bodies as they are set in relation to one another, and it is where power manifests itself (Lefebvre, 1991). Extant literature has suggested that space is conceptualized as the set of relational orderings of people, other living beings, and social goods within which we live (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986; Low, 2008). According to Foucault and Miskowiec (1986):

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, the space that claws and knaws [*sic*] at us, is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (p. 23)

Space is where our lives happen, where we exist outside of ourselves. As Lefebvre (1991) asserted “(social) space is a (social) product” (Elden, 2004, pp. 183-184) and can never be neutral. Rather, space is controlled and produced differentially by individuals acting as social agents. Low (2008) avowed the inherence of the spatial to the societal and their inextricability, explaining that spatial structures, along with temporal structures are forms of societal structures (p. 38). Given that power is operational in space between bodies, space is not merely a site of conflict, but it is in itself an object of struggle (Elden, 2004, pp. 183-184). Place, by contrast, denotes a defined area or site, which can be specifically named and geographically marked and is generally characterized by its fixity and immutability (Low, 2008; Springer, 2011).

Violence is imbricated in the production of social space (Bourdieu, 1989) and, as Springer (2011) argued, either has direct influence over the bodies within it or is temporally and spatially diffuse to constitute a more indirect, structural influence, which implies a geography of violence. It is here that many spatial theorists locate the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized by probing into the microgeographies of power and social control as a means of domination (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986; Said, 1978; Soja, 2010; Springer, 2011). Low (2006) argued that firmly anchored in our thinking about space is the fantasy of a homogeneous whole from which to alienate “the other,” the diverse, or heterogeneous (p. 119). Foucault (Ryan, 1991) believed that discipline is furthered by spatial arrangements which harness power relationships and that controlling space—that is, using technologies for the objectification of bodies and enclosure for the purposes of supervision as well as to limit the parameters of movement—enables and are enabled in the making of docile bodies. Dominant discourses involving the Black body are used to justify the structure of the expulsion program and how the space is defined and utilized. The view of the Black body as “wild” justifies containment as the preferred modality for Black bodies. In other words, carnality necessitates carcerality. “Skin situates its bearers in racially predicated societies. It sites and restricts, it denounces and delimits, it allows and disables, it fixes relations and relates fixations, it orders belief and anchors belief in order” (Goldberg, 2007, p. 289).

Relatedly, the idea of carcerality as ubiquitous in Black life is reinforced in Foucault’s (1977) concept of the *carceral archipelago*, which explains the diffuse boundaries of technologies of power and penitentiary techniques that extend beyond the prison walls and into the other regulated spaces of the “social body,” such as school expulsion programs. The carceral

archipelago fosters the formation of what Foucault (1977) calls a “specified criminality” through the establishment of a priori delinquency attached to “subtle illegalities” (p. 301).

Modes of immobility are constitutive of slavery’s legacy. Free Black persons were subject to similar conditions that, as Du Bois (1897) emphasized, restricted them prior to emancipation.

Slaves could not vote or petition, they could own nothing, they could make no contracts, they could not legally marry or constitute families, they were “devisable like any other chattel” (Du Bois, 1987, p. 8), they could not testify in court, and they could be punished or killed at will.

Jackson (2006), who captured the sentiments of previously cited scholars, concluded that “it was during the period of enslavement that whites developed many of their greatest fears and anxieties towards Blacks, particularly toward Black males, and established safeguards for rationalizing their vulnerability and unacceptable behaviour as slave owners” (p. 16).

Hartman (1997) and Spillers (1987) examined the forms of violence and discipline supported by the designation of humanity and its accompanying invocation of rights. The Black body took on a new meaning at the advent of European humanism which supported its slavability. At once, one could justify doing anything to the Black body, or rather, was not required to justify actions within the pre-capitalistic framework, particularly with the rationale:

domination precedes accumulation, and domination needs a cultural model or a colonial matrix that legitimizes and naturalizes exploitation. The mode of production is a subset of domination. And, the mode of domination [had] been set, transformed, and maintained in the colonial matrix. (Wynter, 2003, p. 115)

It follows then that race was property, with Blackness marking object status and whiteness marking proprietorship of self and of the Black object (Hartman, 1997). The argument that Hartman (1997) presented is that legal sanctions were not enough to secure the master-slave

relationship; but that the slave's body was the vehicle of the master's power and that the "barbarism of slavery did not express itself singularly in the constitution of the slave as object but also in the forms of subjectivity and circumscribed humanity imputed to the enslaved" (p. 6). Hence, maintenance of the slave owner's power and dominance was dependent on the owner's outward displays of domination and the abasement of the slave.

Like Foucault (1977), Spillers (1987) recognized the body as a strategy—a "territory of cultural and political maneuver" (p. 66). Spillers (1987) suggested that the way we see it today is a matter of discourse, but more specifically the perpetual connectedness of everyday language to its historical context through symbolism. Spillers (1987) indicated that this transference of meaning takes the form of ethnicity which was critiqued as identifying "a total objectification of human cultural motives" (p. 66) and to that end, Negro and slave are synonymous as they denote a common status, carrying wounds on the body and/or the flesh.

Both Hartman (1997) and Spillers (1987) agreed that emancipation was only ostensibly an event of liberation, but in actuality it was a rebranding of subjugation. In Spillers' (1987) words:

Even though the captive flesh/body has been "liberated," and no one need pretend that even the quotation marks do not matter, dominant symbolic activity, the ruling episteme that releases the dynamics of naming and valuation, remains grounded in the originating metaphors of captivity and mutilation so that it is as if neither time nor history, nor historiography and its topics, shows movement, as the human subject is "murdered" over and over again by passions of a bloodless and anonymous archaism, showing itself in endless disguise. (p. 68)

Emancipation, as such, marked the point at which modes of servitude were transformed into varied forms of racial subjugation. The event was reminiscent of experiences of slavery in that the begotten liberation was also characterized by a reliance on force, duress, terror, and restriction that “confined the subject precisely through the stipulation of will, reason, and consent” (Hartman, 1997, p. 121). Here, are traces of the continuities of these forms of constraint, persecution, and putative consent, transformed in the advent of liberation, within the spaces of school exclusion. The ways in which liberalism (i.e., the promotion of individual rights and civil liberties) fundamentally involves exclusion are evident from Hartman’s (1997) work. Hartman (1997) stressed that the emancipation spurred the development of a modified definition of citizenship and a fortified sense of the nation state, which excluded the freed slave. Du Bois (1935) explained the resistance from imperial white domination, stating that to the system:

...a free Negro was a contradiction, a threat and a menace. As a thief and a vagabond, he threatened society; but as an educated property holder, a successful mechanic or even a professional man, he more than threatened slavery. He contradicted and undermined it. *He must not be* (author’s emphasis). He must be suppressed, enslaved, colonized. (p. 5)

Then perhaps, the Black man is not, simply because, as Du Bois (1935) asserted, *he must not be*.

Hartman (1997) stated:

the nascent individualism of emancipation as ‘burdened individuality; in order to underline the double-bind of freedom: being freed from slavery and free of resources, emancipated and subordinated, self-possessed and indebted, equal and inferior, liberated and encumbered, sovereign and dominated, citizen and subject. (p. 117)

Furthermore, Hartman (1997) said that the self-possession replaced the slave master's whip and collar with a compulsory contract and a guilty conscience. The freed individual was now made to feel responsible for his own inevitable demise as per the tenets of liberalism. Given that all things were considered equal, the liberal individual's responsibility for his own successes and failures displaced the nation's responsibility to ensure that rights were upheld. It was thus the duty of the freed individual to prove their worthiness for freedom as opposed to the nation's guarantee of equality and minimal livelihood.

Several critical authors have indicated that the abolition of slavery, itself a form of incarceration, gave way to new mechanisms for managing Black bodies through the penal system and legally upholding the property rights of whiteness (Brewer & Heitzeg, 2003; Du Bois, 1935; Gilmore, 2000; Gordon, 1999). Specifically, Brewer and Heitzeg (2003) stated "white racists began to rely almost exclusively on the state apparatus to carry out the battle for white supremacy...The criminal justice system became a modern instrument to perpetuate white hegemony" (p. 634). At once, the behaviours formerly considered to be effective acts of resistance to slavery (i.e., theft, escape, absence from work), once punishable privately by corporeal means, were criminalized after the abolition of slavery (Gordon, 1999). What changed was the mode and means of punishment since the "repressive power of the master became the far more devastating universal power of the state" (Gordon, 1999, p. 152). Indeed, instead of eradicating essentialist racism in the law and in the lives of Black bodies who had been enslaved, the shift gave way to more insidious, covert, and institutionalized forms of racism and oppression.

Gordon (1999) furthered this discourse by highlighting that there was no mention of imprisonment in the U.S. Constitution until the 13th Amendment declared chattel slavery

unconstitutional in 1864. The Amendment written at the very moment slavery was abolished read: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States or any place subject to their jurisdiction” (U.S Const. amend XIII, ratified 1865). Thereby concretizing the linkage between slavery and punishment through text; the “abolition of slavery thus corresponded to the authorization of slavery as punishment” (Gordon, 1999, p. 151).

Therefore, the transformation of authorized forms of servitude and punishment resulted in increased Black presence in US southern prisons; the criminal justice system played a significant role in constructing the new social status of former slaves as human beings whose citizenship was acknowledged precisely in order to be denied” (Gordon, 1999, p. 152). This endowment and opportune, concurrent stripping of citizenship has also occurred in Canada with the end of slavery and continues to produce today’s excluded student population.

Neighbourhoods and social spaces are also modes of the carceral for the Black body. Da Silva (2001) pointed out that just as whiteness and spaces of whiteness signify principles of universal equality, freedom, informing our conceptions of just, legal, and good, Blackness and the places where it resides are read as the “indigenous locus of violence” (p. 448). The carceral is inescapable among Black bodies and is as prolific as is prison life; it occurs inside and outside of the prison—in the courts, in the streets, in homes, and at schools (McKittrick, 2011). Recognized as the “unsurvival of the weakest” (McKittrick, 2011, p. 958), the brutality of racism endemic to prison life, the uricide, and community death are naturalized as inevitabilities. According to McKittrick (2011), not only is there a naturalization of the incarceration and dispossession of Black bodies, but there is also an accompanying seduction in formulating these naturalized processes within the order of human life in the Western world.

McKittrick (2011) located earlier stages of North American marginalizing spatial practices in the historic plantation and stated:

that which ‘structures’ a Black sense of place are the knotted diasporic tenets of coloniality, dehumanization, and resistance; this is a sense of place wherein the violence of displacement and bondage, produced within a plantation economy, extends and is given a geographic future. (p. 949)

In illustrating how the plantation extends into the present day, McKittrick (2011) noted that not only does the bondage and indentured servitude of a people grant mobility to others, but also some people are effectively imprisoned by the very movement of others. McKittrick’s (2011) claim is that “racial violence is not unchanging; rather the plantation serves as one (not the only) meaningful geographic locus through which race is made known (and bodies are therefore differently disciplined) across time and space” (p. 949). Furthermore, the world continues to greatly profit from socio-spatial displacement and the economized and enforced placelessness of Black bodies stemming from tethering them to land they cannot own and making them work—actions that normalized Black dispossession and white supremacy (McKittrick, 2011). This places the paradigm of the plantation economy at the centre of capitalist political economy and modernity itself.

Despite the centrality of the plantation, Blackness and its places are positioned outside of modernity, with Blackness being a “discreet (and hostile) racial category that routinely ‘troubles’ an already settled whiteness” (Morrison, 1992 as cited in McKittrick, 2011, p. 950). This is because the existence of Blackness and its places commands exclusion and hence is evidence of limitations to claims of universality. Their presence creates “pathological social spaces and

social subjects (consciousness)” in an otherwise egalitarian territory of universality (Da Silva, 2001, p. 436).

While the Canadian climate did not provide favourable conditions for the plantation itself, Canada participated in the plantation economy and employed the same plantation logics around the slavability of the Black body. Black people were forcibly trafficked into Canada for unpaid domestic and agricultural labour and were subject to the same forms of physical, psychological, and sexual violence (e.g., the selling of their children to other slave owners, beatings with chains, rape, etc.) as the Black people south of the Canadian border had experienced (Cooper, 2006; Mackey, 2010; Rushforth, 2014; Whitfield, 2010). McKittrick (1993) described “plantation futures” as a conceptualization of time-space in which the idea of the plantation is migratory and reverberates today throughout the Americas. The continuity of plantation futures is evident in the endemic anti-Blackness of North American prison systems and impoverished city sectors. The Foucauldian concept of discourse is also useful in understanding how the meanings and tropes attached to the Black body as well as its spatio-temporal references circulate through popular culture. Discourse spreads across borders and throughout time; in this case establishing Blackness as inherently dangerous and deficient in Canada in the same way that it is in the United States and Europe. Moreover, the violence resulting from modernity in the Western world creates a condition whereby the struggle and death of the Black man is naturalized—indeed the notion of the Black man always already implies struggle and (social) death or expulsion from humanity.

Prison

The carceral system [is] not only the institution of the prison, i.e., its walls, its staff, its regulations, and its violence, but the system combines, in a single figure,

discourses and architecture, coercive regulations and scientific propositions, real social effects and invincible utopias, programs for correcting delinquents and mechanisms that reinforce delinquency (Foucault, 1977, p. 271).

The processes and practices of dehumanization discussed earlier lay the groundwork for the following discussion about how the prison is conceptualized, how it operates, and how the incarceration of Black bodies accomplishes what slavery once did. It seems logical that since “prisons sit on the edge—at the margins of social spaces...the marginalized naturally inhabit the margins of social spaces” (McKittrick, 1993, p. 958). That said, prison life, both outside and within prison walls push entire populations to the margins, and in so doing, commit considerable forms of violence upon the dispossessed (McKittrick, 1993). McKittrick (1993) argued that the spatiality of prison life condemns those living in it while providing those outside the distance and safety to point to the dispossessed without touching them.

Gordon (1999) remarked that “within the U.S.—and increasingly in post-colonial Europe—the disproportionate presence of people of colour among incarcerated populations has acquired a self-evident character” (p. 151). The same can be said for Canada, despite the relative absence of research on visible minority offenders under the supervision of the Canadian correctional system (Owusu-Bempah & Wortley, 2014; Trevethan & Rastin, 2004). To interrogate the expansion of the Black prison inmate population, the sanctions that allow for the targeting of such bodies by the criminal justice system and the connections of these to school expulsion programs, as well as the historical mapping of containment with respect to these bodies tracing back to chattel slavery, must be continued.

Near the time of the American Revolution, incarceration began to replace capital and corporal punishment. Prior to this era, imprisonment was a prelude to penalty; transgressors

would be held until such time that the punishment was carried out (Davis, 2003). Imprisonment became the punishment itself with the emergence of the penitentiary, forced labour, and the prison factory due to the development of the mercantile economy (Foucault, 1977). The formal introduction of crimes that only Black people could commit and were likely to commit, provided a way to revive a sanctioned involuntary servitude in the form of punishment.

Furthermore, by exploiting inmates, a new labour force could be forged without undermining the control of Black labour outside of prison (Davis, 2003). Since conceptually, Black people were slaves despite their emancipated status, slavery was the main reference point in determining how to treat and understand imprisoned Black bodies. This concept can be understood in a circular cause and consequence logic; since slavery involved intense surveillance and discipline in the form of harsh punishment, freed Black prisoners required intense surveillance and harsh forms of punishment in order to be productive (Davis, 2003).

Davis (1997) introduced the term prison industrial complex, elucidating the relationship between capitalism and incarceration by exposing government and private business' stake in increasing the population of inmates, including the increase in the purchase and consumption of products and services for prison as well as outside of prison. Gilmore (2000) charged the punishment industry with profiting from the "trafficking of human unfreedom" and spoke to its allure as a leading employer and producer for the United States (p. 195). Davis (1998) maintained that "homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from the public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages" (p. 11). The prison profits from increasing the number of prisoners as well as the length of time to be served; thus, there is incentive to

maximize the terms for even the least serious of crimes, particularly when the offenders' race indicates they ought not be free. As McKittrick remarked,

The prison-plantation connection thus provides us with an almost perfect, and thus disturbing, conceptual pathway, poised for analytic profit: as the blueprint for the prison industrial complex, the plantation anticipates—and empirically maps—the logic that some live, and some die, because this is what nature intended and therefore that the practice of incarceration is the commonsense [*sic*] underside to the teleological evolution towards normalized white emancipation. (p. 956)

The literature affirms that the changing face of the prison inmate population in North America is still owing to the criminalization of circumstances that betide targeted populations (Da Silva, 2001; Davis, 2007; Gordon, 1999). Such circumstances (i.e., unemployment, homelessness, and mental illness) are not happenstance but rather, they are contrived by white supremacy and inextricably linked, each predicament providing predisposition for another, serving as pretexts to further oppress the racialized, lower classed masses (Gordon, 1999). Gilmore (2000) added:

Whiteness, just as it had functioned in the 19th century to pave over class differences in the interest of racial solidarity, also has contributed to structuring urban poverty and to building a fear of criminal populations (non-whites) that has fueled the construction of the prison industrial complex. (p. 202)

This fear of criminalized populations is the rationale for the containment of certain bodies and serves as the basis for extreme disciplinary practices in education.

As a more contemporary iteration of “Black Coding,” talk about race and racism is shrouded in, obscured by, and replaced with “public discourse about crime, criminals, gangs and

drug-infested neighbourhoods” (Brewer & Heitzig, 2003, p. 634). Still, these activities are the exclusive domain of Black bodies in the popular imagination. Gilmore (2000), who argued that “racism has played...a central role in the proliferation of prisons” (p. 203) aptly advanced the prison industrial complex discourse and further articulated the linkage between slavery and the current U.S. prison situation. Gilmore (2000) contended that racism gives rise to an irrational fear of crime—irrational, in part, because racism constructs the crimes—which are propagated to justify the treatment and containment of Black people: the carceral reach of the state and private corporations resonates with the history of slavery” (p. 195). Gilmore (2000) submitted that rather than asking “‘how do people produce crime?’ the pertinent question is ‘how does the state produce criminalization?’” (p. 201). Gilmore’s (2000) basis for these questions is the fact that the number of prisons in every state had increased despite the fact that statistics do not support that crime had increased, particularly, that violent crime had increased (p. 199). Gilmore (2000) said that to make the claim that “many of those imprisoned [are] criminalized for crimes stemming from unemployment, suggesting that if the state had had a handle on unemployment, there may not have been a *need* [emphasis added] for more prisons” (p. 199).

As it was in the aforementioned post-civil war period, “African Americans are disproportionately policed, prosecuted, convicted, disenfranchised, and imprisoned” (Brewer & Heitzig, 2003, p. 634), and the punishment and consequences are incommensurate with the crimes more heavily committed by vulnerable populations (i.e., unreasonably long prison sentences for nonviolent drug offences, scores of children orphaned while caregivers serve long sentences, and aggressive campaigns to criminalize youth) (Gilmore, 2000, p. 195). Furthermore, Gilmore (2000) noted that the state is funneling more money into incarceration than education (p. 201) or preventative measures. True emancipation, Gilmore (2000) deduced, would call for

an elimination of white privilege and subsequently a “divestment of public resources into prisons, juvenile detention centres and expulsion programs” (p. 203).

The racialization of state resource distribution has its basis in the historical political dogma of chattel slavery, which Gordon (1999) and other scholars have claimed ultimately became the philosophical goal of the penitentiary—mainly the fundamental belief that people of African descent, once consigned to slavery, are not to be treated as rights-bearing individuals and are therefore not worthy of re-education. These people are thereby excluded and extracted from the public realm, and contained on the margins so as not to sully civil society. Aligned with Agamben’s theory, Gordon (1999) asserted, “the continued practice of throwing away entire populations depends upon those populations constructed and perceived—fixed, really—within the popular imagination as public enemies” (p. 154). Gordon (1999) also stated that the prisons developed to house public enemies are ever regressing, reaching back to the slave era, and as they do, they “promote retrograde tendencies in educational institutions” (p. 153), which as Davis (2003) noted, “place a greater value on discipline and security than on knowledge and intellectual development” (p. 39), making them prep schools for prison. It is a cycle whereby these “educational institutions mould Black children into raw material for punishment and coerced labour” (Gordon, 1999, p. 154) as were their ancestors before them.

Schooling

Regarding schooling and race, Hudson and McKittrick (2014) stated:

Only someone with racial privilege would assume that the classroom could be a site of safety! This kind of privileged person sees the classroom as a priori, safe, and a space that is tainted by dangerous subject matters (race) and unruly (intolerant) students. But the

classroom is, as I see it, a colonial site that was, and always has been, engendered by and through violent exclusion! (p. 238)

Sharing the above sentiments, Wacquant (2000) viewed the school system in Western society as complicit in the long-standing white supremacist objective to exploit and exclude the Black population. Noguera (2003) is concerned with the fact that disciplinary practices in schools bear a striking resemblance to those used in society with adults, and more so with the similarities in outcomes. There are several factors to which researchers have attributed the racial disparities in school discipline and exclusion (Welch & Payne, 2014), namely racial bias among school staff and officials (Ferguson, 2000; Giroux, 2003; Watts & Erevelles, 2004); fear of crime and victimization (Kupchik & Monahan, 2006; Noguera, 2003); perceptions that Black people have violent tendencies (Ferguson, 2000; Morrow & Torres, 1995; Nichols, 2004; Noguera, 2003); and the “adultification” of Black youth—that is, the view that Black youth’s behavior is nefarious rather than innocent or characteristic of typical youth behavior and that they should be protected against rather than protected (Ferguson, 2000).

Noguera (2003) theorized that there are three main functions of the schools in Western society: (a) to sort children into those who will lead in management positions and those who will be led and managed in future occupations based on assessment of academic aptitude; (b) to socialize children by teaching and enforcing values and norms required to maintain social order through good citizenship (e.g., obedience to authority); and (c) as an institution of social control—providing care, exercising authority involving the control of their movement and the suspension of their basic civil rights while in school. Noguera (2003) also noted that the school “socialization process that accompanies the sorting makes it possible for students to accept the educational trajectory set for them and to see their future adult roles as positions they have

earned” (p. 344). In addition, Noguera (2003) contended that the issue lies in the fact that through experiences, Black students become aware of the harsh reality that it is unlikely that they will secure the positions in society that they have earned through academics, and that the future rewards of education are not guaranteed to them.

Since the current educational system was born out of the intellectual culture of the Enlightenment, the school system as a mechanism of cultural hegemony works to disadvantage minoritized students through curriculum, discourse, and disciplinary practices. It devalues, discredits, and omits non-European cultures, styles of learning, histories, and subjects. It alienates non-white students from their identities as they are judged against a particular colonial model of scholarship and civility (Fanon, 1952; Bartlett & Brayboy, 2005; Troyna, 2011). Further to that, “symbolic systems only accessible by dominant groups create distinctions in hierarchies and legitimation of social ranking by censoring, disabling, and encouraging the dominated to accept the existing hierarchies of social distinction” (Bourdieu as cited by Schwartz, 1997, p. 83). With these dynamics at play, school can be seen as “a cultural battleground where minority and poverty group children are fundamentally disadvantaged” (Farkas, 1996, p. 10).

Expulsion

The previous section showed that “Black citizenship is a foreign appendage grafted onto the national body” (Hartman, 1997, p. 121). The entanglement of nationalist politics/governance, law, and modernist ideology, work to produce racial spaces of contradiction and violation beyond the reach of universality. The foregoing further examines the legal aspects surrounding the spatiality of Blackness. The purpose of this section is to explore how the mistreatment of Black people, after the abolition of slavery, could be legal, sanctioned, and unobjectionable. In

this section, there is an examination of how the Black body operates as a place where law does not apply. These premises are undergirded with Agamben's work to explain the transformations within the modern democratic state that enabled and justified the perpetual subjugation of the Black body. Racism is hereby understood as having been institutionalized as a form of biopolitical administration, marking bodies to indicate whose lives were considered worthy and whose were left to die. The argument set out here is that to respond to the safety needs of the schools, expulsion programs exclude high rates of Black students who are expelled as well as those having not committed any offence that could warrant an expulsion. Hence, evidently little departure has been made from our colonial history when civilizing missions sought security through exclusion.

As a precursor to the modern mind/body binary, the Ancient Greeks and Romans developed a system of categorizing life. The mind, likened to what was called bios, was defined as existence in society, referring specifically to political and legitimized social life (Agamben, 1998). The zoë, on the other hand, referred to basic animal life, which was God-given, and therefore sacred--defined by the basic necessities shared by all animals. White men constituted bios; however, women, children, the demented, and unofficially, Black people, possessed only zoë, being unable to partake in legitimized political activity otherwise known as bios (Agamben, 1998).

According to Agamben (1998), sovereignty—the right to kill—was bestowed upon the sovereign and legitimized by God, regarded as part of the sacred class of things existing outside of society. Under this regime, the king was the subject and all others deemed objects until the declaration of independence, at which point sovereignty was transformed into more diffuse technologies of governance and each individual became an equal subject, sharing the right to kill

as a collective. Foucault (1980) argued that sovereignty served to efface the domination intrinsic to power, while rights instigate subjugation. The right to kill necessarily has an enforcer and an object over which the right is exercised. This right also prevails over the God-given *zoë* and overrides any assumption of a right to basic life. The progressive secularization of knowledge gave way to technologies of governmentality which utilized tactics appealing to the subscription to morals, ethics, and norms to control the population. The “norms invariably centre on the imperatives of docility and productivity, and individuals are ranked on the basis of where they stand in relation to such norms” (Ryan, 1991, p. 109). An operational understanding of norms is important in the context of this study because it explains the logics of school exclusion on the basis of race whereby Black people, admitted into humanity, yet only partially so, bore the responsibility of full humanity, under the pretense of separate but equal conditions and opportunities; however, considered to be in an infantile state from the vestiges of their enslavement, they were not recognized as moral or intellectually developed beings, and norms were thus unattainable. Therefore, racism is legally sanctioned and justified because racialized Others are considered threats to the moral fabric of the nation and white subjects, having the full range of *bios* are constituted as the legitimate citizens of the state and endowed with the rights and responsibility to surveil, regulate, and purge the nation of perceived contaminants.

Biology, characteristic of the emergence of modernity according to Agamben and Foucault, reduces people to objects and introduces the concept of the norm by clinical measurement. To this branch of science, people are the sum of their animal qualities, or bare life, whereas the nation state produces its citizens as political subjects possessing agency. It is at the point where biology surfaces, that *bios* and *zoë*, subject and object are combined. A paradoxical phenomenon thus occurs in the modern nation state: subjects are now biological objects within

the system—they constitute bare life with political rights, or *zoë* with the rights of *bios*. The nation conceives of itself in similar terms; it is comprised of the body of its citizens, and it is the body of its citizens, itself holding political rights. Since the nation is a living, breathing organism comprised of smaller living parts, it is invested in the physical life of its constituents. The nation is dependent on the health of its citizens in order to sustain its own life, and therefore needs to rid its body of abnormalities and threats. That said, the expulsion and execution of bodies that are considered a threat to the nation's bare life can be legal and justified.

Agamben's *homo sacer*, literally translated to mean "sacred man," denotes a figure that is exiled from society as punishment and since he is no longer protected by their rules of governance, is allowed to be killed by anyone (Schinkel & van den Berg, 2011, p. 1913). He is, however, not to be sacrificed in any religious ceremony because sacred means that he belongs to a class of things existing outside of society. Biology creates the opportunity for the *homo sacer* position to be created within the modern democratic state. That said, despite the understanding of the modern democratic nation state holding at its core the administration of equal rights, one does not have the right to have rights, but is only granted rights with the understanding that they can be deprived of those rights.

Emancipation superficially granted the freed the status of *bios* and society concomitantly retracted the designation by relegating them to the status of the *homo sacer*. In speaking of the limits of political emancipation, Marx (1843) critiqued the state's ability to liberate itself without man's actual liberation irrespective of its promises. Only citizenship makes an individual the beneficiary of such promises. A citizen's political life is what protects that individual from being killed, exploited, and denied aid or refuge. Once an individual is without citizenship or is stripped of his citizenship, he can be killed without having transgressed because he has no

political right to life. Black bodies are “subjects naturally destined to occupy a marginal status within the structures and relations of civilian life” (Pugliese, 2009, p. 157) in the Western imagination; therefore, differentiation among them and the bestowment of rights upon them is an exercise in futility.

Individuals who are still included in the system but exempt from the rule of law and thus reduced to bare life are thereby placed in what Agamben calls a state of exception, “a civil war that allows for the physical elimination not only of political adversaries but of entire categories of citizens who for some reason cannot be integrated into the political system” (as cited in Razack, 2008, p. 13). This is, in effect, an “eviction from humanity” and from law (Razack, 2008, p. 31). Razack (2008) stated that “pre-emptive punishment, an abandonment of law, and the creation of categories of people without rights, [are] all justified on the basis that they may pose a threat to the nation” (p. 31). In the creation and operation of the long-term proactive Safe Schools programs, the school administration makes decisions to transcend the rule of law for the public good at the expense of a vulnerable population. Colonial logic endorses these states of exception since, as per colonizers, the colonized are incapable of being governed by the rule of law which was made exclusively for and by the Europeans (Razack, 2008, p. 31). This logic remains in play today as evidenced by the disparities in police practices, the administration of law, and life outcomes between Black and white civilians.

Pertaining to the school system, I propose that the undocumented subjects in the expulsion programs fit the description of the *homo sacer* since they are outlaws—in a realm outside of the law, left unprotected by the laws. Further to this, they can be killed by anyone, figuratively speaking (i.e., social death), as there is no value ascribed to their lives and no stock placed in their futures. If, indeed, Black males are unsalvageable, programs such as these need

not waste valuable resources on them as there is no hope in reversing their downward trajectories and this misallocation of resources would mean “compromising the quality of teaching and services aimed at more deserving or promising students” (Hirschfield, 2008, p. 92). Programs need only hold young Black males, keeping them invisible long enough for them to be forgotten, atrophy, and fade into non-existence as per the goal of detention according to Mirzeoff (as cited in Razack, 2008, p. 31). These ways of intervening are testament to the claim that despite the right to an education, governing bodies find ways to systematically squeeze Black students out of even this minimal level of schooling, to enable placelessness to serve its constitutive purpose, demarcating the school and the streets as belonging to the civilized: “Indeed, it appears that the main purpose of these schools is simply to ‘neutralize’ youth considered unworthy and unruly by holding them under lock for the day so that, at minimum, they do not engage in street crime” (Wacquant, 2001, p. 108). This neutralization of Black males is, in many ways, tantamount to death.

Biopolitics is political control over bare life, also meaning the political control of death—the condition in the modern democratic state (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986). The politics of death is taken up by Foucault (1990) as he described sovereign power as “the right to take life or let live” (p. 136), whereas his concept of bio-power is understood as the power to “foster life or disallow it to the point of death” (p. 138) or in other words, to ‘make’ live and ‘let’ die (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986). When youth get into trouble and are referred to alternative schools such as the expulsion program, they—like prisoners—experience a kind of civic death (Wacquant, 2005) where they are marginalized and restricted from participation in normal school activities (Farmer, 2010). Accordingly, expulsion programs can be understood as sites where the boundary between Foucault’s terms ‘making die’—a function of sovereign power, and ‘letting die’—a

function of bio-power, becomes unstable. The difference is that the prior denotes killing and the latter is concerned with the withholding of state resources required for survival (Foucault, 1979). To abandon someone under deadly conditions and refrain from offering aid might be considered 'letting die,' but it is arguably 'making die' when all life-sustaining measures are deliberately removed from the subject against whom the odds were already stacked. Similarly, the distinction between 'making die' and 'letting die' is ambiguous when a disadvantaged subject is imprisoned in a space created with death (either figurative, literal, or eventual) as its primary purpose, as is the case with expulsion programs. Biopower and biopolitics are invested in the population, with the main interest being the protection of the population, the norm, and status quo. It does not endorse the investment in individuals outside of the bell curve and in fact justifies the killing of individuals who impede upon or threaten the life of the population in order to optimize the life of the population (Foucault, 1979). This way of thinking depends on socializing the population to fear the constant presence and imminence of danger (Dean, 1999).

Positioned as a direct challenge of Foucault's term, "biopolitics," the omniscient and omnipotent political power over human life, Mbembe's (2004) "necropolitics" revealed an alternate subject position, describing a condition, whereby power over death is the focus. In Mbembe's (2004) depiction of apartheid and its function in the racial city, he makes clear that the point of the space was for certain bodies to die, rather than to live. These death spaces, initially borne out of "the racist assumption that wasting Black life was a necessary sacrifice—a sacrifice that could be redeemed because it served as the foundation of civilization" (Mbembe, 2004, p. 381), continues, fueled by the fear that civilization in its current manifestation is threatened by the mobilization of Black bodies and the potential infiltration of protected spaces.

Yet, Mbembe (2004) noted, the Black bodies were to be sustained on some level in these death spaces, as their existence provided an anathema apart from which the colonizer could stand.

Da Silva (2001) cited Fitzpatrick (1990) who argued that “racism is a dimension of ‘material’ life that is compatible with law...it marks the constitutive boundaries of law, persistent limits of its competence and scope” (p. 425). Racism is in fact embedded within modern laws, procedures, and principles, created and determined by white supremacy and administered by white people as well as by those who also benefit from race-based exclusion. The fact that racial injustice can be reframed or interpreted as justice denotes that “blackness always-already signifies outsidedness to the territory of universal principals ruling conceptions of the legal and the just” (Da Silva, 2001, p. 436). Racism, then, need not be understood as remarkable or exceptional, but rather as an underlying framework for law and order as it is currently practiced. That is to say that the law and order are not race neutral; neither in their conceptualization nor in practice but formed and reformed in response to threats to upset the current racial order and undermine white supremacy. This is evidenced by the aforementioned Black Code and Jim Crow era in the United States as well as The Code Noir, immigration policies and segregation laws in Canada.

Chapter Summary

Chapter three discussed the main theories that provide the framework through which the research and its focus are conceptualized and understood. The subsections in this chapter connect several theories cohesively, not only to show how male Black students are constructed and constricted in and through space, but also to build on CRT through proposed tenets for an articulation of ABR theory. Under the sub-heading Male Black Body, mainly tenets pertaining to the saliency of the Black racial category, the Black body’s slavability, corporality, and deviance; and its distance

from ideological whiteness are explored. The remainder of the sub-headings: Carceral Space, Carceral Archipelago, Prison, School, and Expulsion focus on physical and social spatial properties that further explain the tenets referring to the Black body as outsider of certain domains (i.e., humanity, civility, law, mainstream school) and native to others (i.e., expulsion programs, prisons, impoverished neighbourhoods).

Critical race theory (CRT) explains that institutions are not neutral spaces, and it grounds the social construction of race in systems and institutions that protect white privilege and perpetuate the oppression of racialized people. Lefebvre's (1991) spatial theory is used to deepen the concept of carcerality and this dissertation mobilizes carcerality through the work of Foucault (1987) and Goldberg (2007). While Foucault provided a way to work through the Black body's slavability through space and power, McKittrick (2011) contextualized the history of slavery within the carceral realm; the metaphor of Agamben's (1998) *Homo Sacer* provided a way to theorize Black exclusion post-emancipation, and Razack (2002) and Goldberg (2007) foregrounded race in space and theorized the ubiquity of carcerality for racialized bodies as well as how space is deeply gendered. CRT highlights the racism inherent in law; however, this chapter argues that the Black body is operationalized as a place where law does not apply. Ultimately, theorizing how carceral spaces such as the expulsion program contribute to the development of ABR theory as a theoretical and methodological framework concerned specifically with the idiosyncrasy of Black people's experiences and interfaces with racism.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Chapter four presents the research activities for this dissertation. First, there is a case made for the methods employed, which includes some of the results of the scoping study, concluding that what is missing from the field are the narratives of those who have been excluded from the mainstream education system in Ontario. Next, there is a description of how a sample group was developed and evolved into one that broadened the scope of the research and ultimately led to richer findings. A brief profile of each participant is included, as well as the theoretical assumptions guiding my life histories approach with the young men, given that their experiences were the crux of my research problematic⁶. Preliminary findings pertinent to the methods used with this particular population of Black men are explored. Finally, the chapter ends with an explanation of how data were analyzed, as well as some of the tensions in my dynamic, intersectional subject position as a Black woman, a researcher, and a social worker.

Research Design/Epistemology

There have been a range of methods used to explore school discipline and underachievement, particularly in the United States and the United Kingdom, including focus groups, individual interviews, surveys, data reviews, and ethnologies; however, research about school exclusion as it pertains to Black students in Canada is limited. What exists is dominated by quantitative methods wielding data about the numbers of expulsions among different groups (Carrol, 2009; Farmer, 2010; Parsons, 2008; TDSB, 2015; Wallace et al., 2008). Similarly, in the most recent studies conducted with the PDSB about the experiences of Black boys, the voices of

⁶ See Smith, p. 45 - Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People

this particular population of marginalized youth—excluded youth who either participated in the expulsion programs or opted not to were woefully absent, thereby reinforcing their subjugation (Chadha et al., 2020). As Rudduck et al. (1996) stated:

it is the less effective learners who are most likely to be able to explore aspects of the system that constrain commitment and progress; these are the voices least likely to be heard and yet most important to be heard. (p. 177)

Indeed, some of the most valuable insights could come from the least engaged students.

Although there is obvious merit in compiling statistics to explore the gravity of an issue, in-depth interviews are appropriate because they will fill the gap by doing the following: (a) providing more contextualized information, (b) capturing comprehensive stories, and (c) providing more depth of understanding. In light of this, the study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research attempts to understand the “meaning that is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single, agreed-upon, or measurable phenomenon that it is assumed to be in positivist, quantitative research” (Merriam, p. 4). Because this research was centered on the multiple meanings the young men have made of their shared experience of school exclusion and how they understand it to have contributed to their varied outcomes in ways that might not be generalized, a qualitative approach was well suited.

The qualitative approach is also consistent with the critical race methodology employed here. In response to the dearth of substantive discussion about racism in the critical discourse and theory production in education, a critical race methodology is engaged to answer theoretical, methodological, and conceptual questions regarding the experiences of racialized students. Critical race methodology is a “theoretically grounded approach to research that foregrounds

race and racism in all aspects of the research process” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 24). Due to their use of critical race methodology to examine the discipline of education, Solozano and Yosso’s (2002) work informed this study, which was focused on disciplinary processes within the education system and school exclusion.

Moreover, critical race methodology illustrates how race, gender, and class intersect to shape the experiences of racialized students, challenges mainstream research paradigms and theories employed to explain the experiences of racialized students and offers a liberatory alternative and solution to intersectional subordination. Solozano and Yosso (2002) also indicated that critical race methodology centers the margins by prioritizing the experiential knowledge of racialized people, counting it as legitimate, and naming racist injuries and their origins; in so doing, it challenges normative claims to objectivity, meritocracy, race neutrality, and equal opportunity made by educational institutions.

Critical race methodology in education challenges traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of people of color. It exposes deficit-informed research and methods that silence and distort the experiences of people of color [*sic*] and instead focuses on their racialized, gendered, and classed experiences as sources of strength. (Solorzano & Yosso 2002, p. 26)

Considering theorization as a political intervention which in turn is theoretically motivated (Airhihenbuwa, 2007), the exclusion of epistemologies belonging to racialized people is a deliberate political act owing to, and in support of white supremacy. Theorizing spaces are thus transformed, and dominant ideologies destabilized by the ingress of critical race scholarship (Solozano & Yosso, 2002). According to Ford and Airhihenbuwa (2010), this scholarship seeks mainly to “understand how racialization influences (1) observed outcomes, (2) knowledge

production, and (3) the field's impact on the broader society" (p. 1394). Critical race methodology was useful for querying excluded students' outcomes, the ways in which they understand themselves and others in space and times, as well as the broader implications of colonial education and racialized student exclusion.

Critical race methodology relies on storytelling, family histories, biographies, narratives, parables, etc., regarding them as counter-stories, generally excluded from the legitimized academy, that challenge the dominant discourses about race (Solozano & Yosso 2002). This methodology contextualizes these storied experiences in the past, present, and future, often using creative and unconventional methods to reveal knowledge from the margins, thereby challenging "ahistoricism and the unidisciplinary focus of most analyses," insisting on the positioning of race and racism in both historical and contemporary contexts (Solozano & Yosso, 2002, pp. 26-27). Critical race methodology is hailed for its transformative potential to amplify voices by the same research tools typically used to silence and marginalize them.

In keeping with critical race methodology, interviews were chosen to yield responses to reveal the way participants think and use language to express how they view the social world (Hannabuss, 1996). Interviews provide insight into what researchers cannot observe, such as motives behind decisions and the contradictions between attitudes and behaviour. Moreover, open structured interviews are "preferable when complex, personal or sensitive issues are being probed" (Hannabuss, 1996, p. 24), such as, but not limited to perceptions of discrimination in professional or educational settings, for example.

Study Recruitment

Participants were recruited through the following methods: contacts at the PDSB; flyers posted and distributed at related forums, community colleges, and agencies; community list-

serves; and word of mouth and utilizing snowball sampling. Recruiting through corrections facilities and probations offices was challenging because their protocol would not allow distribution for a flyer. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, potential participants were asked to contact me directly.

The sample was comprised of self-identified Black males. Initially the sample was to be limited to men between the ages of 18-28 years old, who have either graduated from the Fresh Start Expulsion program, completed their term, or had been otherwise demitted. The age range was limited to a 10-year span because even participants at the lower end are legal adults who could consent to participation on their own. Additionally, participants were no longer of compulsory school age; therefore, they were no longer in the program; and lastly, they had begun to transition into adult life with a burgeoning understanding of manhood in relation to hegemonic masculinity and the challenges that accompany it. At the other end, 28-year-old men were the oldest possible participants as they would have been 18 years of age in 2007, when the program began, which would have made them the oldest students in the program had they been excluded at that age.

The aim was to interview 15-20 participants in a purposive sample; however, there was an anticipated challenge inherent in recruiting hard-to-reach, stigmatized and hidden populations (Bernard, 1995; Trotter & Schensul, 1998) such as young Black males who have experienced forms of social exclusion. Furthermore, the size of the pool was small, given the study's focus on a racialized subsection of a relatively small program which had only been in operation for approximately 10 years. Consequently, the inclusion criteria were revised to include any Black male over 18 who had been excluded from any schoolboard within the Greater Toronto Area and attended an expulsion/Safe Schools program. I offered participants who met the criteria \$50 in

anticipation of problematic recruitment and to recognize them for the investment of their time and effort. The honorarium was also to serve as a counter-narrative to messages from the education system indicating that their contributions were not valuable or legitimate. This is consistent with ethical practice as it promoted equitable recruitment across the social strata among the marginalized population, and was enough to recognize their time, but generally not enough to be coercive or cause undue influence (Ripley, 2006; Russell et al., 2000). The graphic on the recruitment form was purchased online.

Profiles of Participants

Fifteen participants were interviewed for this study. It has been argued that 15 is the smallest acceptable sample size for qualitative research (Bertaux, 1981) and that six to eight interviews is adequate for a homogeneous sample (Kuzel, 1992). The argument suggests that 10 interviews conducted by an experienced interviewer could wield richer data than 50 interviews by a novice (Mason, 2010). Because I was a forensic and therapeutic interviewer for over 10 years, I was confident in the quality of the data, irrespective of sample size. Consensus theory (Romney et al., 1986) also supports the potential sufficiency of smaller sample sizes. Consensus theory is “based on the principle that experts tend to agree more with each other (with respect to their particular domain of expertise) than do novices and uses a mathematical proof to make its case” (Guest et al., 2006, p. 74). The basic assertion is that as long as participants possess expertise about the domain of inquiry, samples as small as four individuals can render extremely accurate information about their shared experiences which comprise truths or a co-constructed reality. It is important to note that “while consensus theory uses structured questions and deals with knowledge, rather than experiences and perceptions per se, its assumptions and estimates

are still relevant to open-ended questions that deal with perceptions and beliefs” (Guest et al., 2006, p. 75).

Given that the domain of inquiry for this research is a program with endo-cultural and exo-cultural functions, participants who have attended a program for a period of two months or longer, the majority of a semester, can be said to possess a good sense of the structure, space, and culture of the program. Those who did not attend a program would have their exclusion from exclusion status in common and share an exo-cultural experience of which it is assumed they have sufficient understanding. As Black males, these participants are also considered to have expert knowledge about their relationship to hegemonic masculinity and socially accepted performances of masculinity among their peer group. Based on the assumptions of the consensus theory (i.e., the existence of external truths in the domain being studied and that questions asked of participants individually comprise a coherent domain of knowledge), participants must be interviewed independently and in private, and themes that emerge from interviews which are shared among several participants can be identified in the analysis phase and considered as constitutive of a larger domain (Guest et al., 2006). Interviews were managed accordingly.

Table 1*Participant Demographic Data*

Name	Age	Cultural Identity	Religion	Time in Expulsion Program	Formal Expulsion	Police Involved	OSSD	Last Completed level of Ed
Andre	18	Canadian	Christian	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	No	Certificate of Education
Marquis	32	Canadian	Seven Day Adventist	2 Years	No	No	No	12
Lyriq	21	Canadian (Ethiopian)	Christian	3 months	Yes	No	Yes	First year at University
Kwame	27	Jamaican	Christian	Unknown	No	Yes	No	Unknown
Lamar	20	Unknown	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	No	No	Unknown
Nasir	29	Jamaican Canadian	Unknown	2 years	Yes	No	Yes	12
Malik	22	Eritrean	Christian Orthodox	Unknown	Yes	Yes	No	Unknown
Tre	28	Jamaican Canadian	Agnostic	6 Months	Yes	Yes	Yes	High School
Stephen	22	Canadian	N/A	4 months	No	Yes	Yes	High School
Eric	18	African (Haitian)	N/A	Unknown	Unknown	Yes	No	Unknown
Kobe	18	Jamaican	Christian	6 months	Half a year	Yes	No	11
Aren	20	Somali	Islam	2 Years	No	No	No	2 credits left to complete
Derrick	22	Jamaican Canadian	Unknown	Indefinite	Yes	Yes	Yes	Adult Ed, 1 yr college

Of all participant's parents who were invited to be interviewed, three mothers (n=3) responded, but one mother (n =1) was excluded because her son had been incarcerated and could not be interviewed. Both mothers interviewed, Donna and Lorraine, identified as Black, had been single parents since their sons were very young, were post-secondary educated, and gainfully employed at the time of the interview. Since only two parents' data was used, their accounts could not be used to triangulate the data and the differences, parallels, and other variables attributed to the collective experience and relative positionality of parent and son could not be analyzed.

The compatibility of this project's methodology with the aforementioned tenets affirms that the proposed research design aligns with consensus theory. The interviews examined how

Black males in this study, who have struggled through the school system negotiated their sense of masculinity and other identities. The interviews also examined the production of space in expulsion programs or other spaces of exclusion by having interviewees recount the practices, structure, attitudes, and overall social experience of being in programs or alternative settings. The expulsion programs typically operated in single rooms within alternative school buildings, repurposed commercial buildings or those of permanently closed schools – all physically distanced from operational mainstream school buildings. The program room had a communal space with chairs and or desks in a circle and independent workspaces. The programs ran continuous intake of excluded secondary school aged students, at varying grade levels and aptitude with a single teacher and no special education support. Attendance was inconsistent, which meant that the social space was in constant flux and likely impacted relationships and group dynamics. The excluded students placed in the programs were charged with any of the range of school and/or community offences as outlined in the Education Act, including truancy, or were deemed at risk of school offence. In addition to the teacher's desk, the room was furnished with stations for the child and youth workers and social workers assigned to the program. Participants' accounts of these and other spaces were analyzed for emerging categories and discursive themes.

I used a recursive process that allowed me to review the data and modify questions as needed. After interviewing the first few participants, it appeared that some did not know whether or not they had been formally expelled but knew they were prohibited from being in school. Some were excluded but either had not been given the option of attending an expulsion/Safe Schools program or chose not to attend. Consequently, I decided that the spatiality of exclusion was not limited to the locale of the expulsion programs or the schools to which they were related.

The spatiality and the narratives of exclusion ought to also include the neighbourhoods in which the young men passed their days while they were of compulsory school age, as well as the various other forms school exclusion took. This was done in keeping with the concept of McKittrick's (1993) plantation futures and the ubiquity of carcerality. Alternatives that surfaced from the interviews included attending adult education facilities to take courses, alternative attendance programs, a military school, an anger management program, transfer to a different school, being tutored at home for a limited period of time and staying home without supports or formal education. Two participants advised that they were given a choice outside of mainstream schooling; one chose to work while the other chose to attend adult education. Hence, the exclusion criteria were altered, and these stories were honoured. All but two participants proclaimed emphatically that they were "straight!" to the question on the "Demographic Sheet" about their sexuality once the difference was clarified between sexual orientation and the question above it, which asked for their sexual identity/sex. Some participants seemed almost offended by the question—as if it should have been obvious. The emphasis these Black male participants placed on their heterosexuality indicated something to me about this particular population's performance of their masculinity. While the performance of the young men's masculinity, as well intersections of class and ability were explored during this study, they are beyond the scope of this thesis and will serve to inform my future work.

Many participants mentioned their parents in particular ways. Anticipating that I could triangulate some of the data around school processes, communication, and the like. Excited about the prospect of delving deeper into the constituents of the participants' gender identities, I decided to interview all of the parents of the participants. Once I developed parent interview questions, prepared a new informed consent, and had the new method approved through the

Research and Ethics Board, I attempted to reach parents through the participants. While only two mothers were interviewed, their data was used. Parent's perspectives were included, not to add to the trustworthiness of the data but to honour their stories and add dimension and richness to the stories and counter-stories for which parent accounts were available.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues related to asking participants from this subjugated population to reflect on potentially painful experiences were thoroughly considered, informed consent was acquired, and participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study or refuse to answer questions freely. Participants' anonymity is protected through the use of pseudonyms and the redaction of identifying information. The research protocol was approved by the York University Office of Research Ethics (ORE), specifically the Human Participants Review Committee.

Participation was voluntary and I made the previous relationship between myself and the program explicitly clear since some participants may have been known to me as a result of their participation at particular program sites when I worked there. The participants were informed that I no longer work in the program prior to the commencement of the interviews to mitigate the possible influence of what they chose to share. I was not the only social worker in the program, and therefore, to avoid the influence of prior knowledge, I did not recruit men who were previously assigned to me as students. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any point without negatively affecting their relationship with the PDSB or their relationship with me as researcher in the academic or professional capacities. Since the desired participants were adults, the PDSB did not require formal advisement of this study.

The potential for emotional harm resulting from asking participants about their past experiences was considered and addressed through interview structure, which is discussed later

in the chapter; empathic responses to participants; and offering therapeutic resource information. As well, being mindful of the ways in which Black males' behaviour can unfairly reinforce prejudice against them, I chose to omit information about offences leading to their exclusion.

Life Histories and Timelines of Participants

Individual, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted using a life history method. "Life history research is linked to 'oral history' projects aiming to explore the culture and history of certain places through the memories and recollections of its people – in their language, using their vocabulary" (Adriansen, 2010, p. 42). Life history is described as "a holistic, qualitative account of a life that emphasizes the experiences of the individual and how the person copes" (Gramling & Carr, 2004, p. 208) within a specific social structure. The life history approach is holistic in that it emphasizes that lives in their entirety are contextual and that the public and private cannot be separated (Callewart, 2007; Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

Life histories are undertaken with the intention of understanding "how the patterns of different life stories can be related to their wider historical, social, environmental, and political context" (Adriansen, 2012, p. 41). This methodology provides an interpretive framework for the personal accounts of the students who have been excluded from school, which focuses on events in their lives, explanations of their actions and feelings as well as the meanings they ascribe to them (Martin, 2002). Goodson (2010) stated that the ways in which we tell our stories, what we say, and our omissions are of optimal importance when we focus on the stories we tell ourselves about who we are. A life histories method allowed me to not only delve into the young men's accounts of their past, but also to understand how they understood themselves in relation to those events and how they conveyed who they are through language and story-telling. Also integral to

the stories, for the purposes of this research, is how the story relates to what has happened (i.e., the facts) in the lives of these young men.

Although a life history interview is not therapy, the telling of the stories proves therapeutic for participants who also benefit from the consciousness raising that occurs during the process (Gramling & Carr, 2004). In acknowledgment that the sharing of sensitive information may have evoked uncomfortable memories, I ensured that contact information for counselling services was available at the time of the interview and checked in with each participant within 10 days of the interview. It was made explicitly clear before the interview that participants may terminate their involvement at any time, without consequence. Each interview concluded with a focus on their strengths to reframe any negative narratives and leave participants with a more positive view of themselves and their journey. Each interview was conducted up to a maximum of two hours, which is understood to be long enough for stories to emerge without exhausting the participant (Adriansen, 2010). Although the life history methodology is typically conducted to explore a person's history within a framework of time/chronology, this is also a spatial project using focused questioning to extract the connections between time, space, meaning, and identity construction.

Life history methods include portrayals, case studies, profiles, autobiographies, journals, visual timelines, and diaries (Gramling & Carr, 2004). Timelines and interviews were used to obtain subjects' narratives. Triangulation can be said to further the positivist view that one single reality or truth can be uncovered through the combined use of different methods, theories, instruments, etc. in a project (Begley, 1996). While this research made no such positivist claims, I used within-method triangulation (Burns & Grove, 1993; Redfern & Norman, 1994) by way of

interviewing willing parents of the previously excluded students to enhance the quality of the data gathered.

Data Collection

Interviews

Individual, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were used for data collection during the 2017-2018 academic year. Prior to meeting with each participant, 75 open-ended interview questions were developed. The questions were not intended to be a strict script, but rather a guide to prompt participants during semi-structured interviews directed, in-part, by the comfort levels and aptitude of participants. The questions were organized into five main categories:

1. Early Memories/Family
2. School (general)
3. Program (specific)
4. Reflections on Identity, Masculinity and Race
5. Projections (Future)

Since interviews delved into unpleasant and potentially upsetting memories, the interviews strategically placed questions about the future (e.g., What makes you feel the most hopeful? What are your strengths? What have been your greatest accomplishments?) at the end, with the intention of leaving participants with feelings of resilience and hope.

While having significantly fewer questions, parent interviews took on a similar structure. Parents were asked about early memories, accounts of attitudes and incidents relating to their child's school, and their understanding of their child's identity development to support the data acquired from the young men. Each interview was no more than two hours. Interviews were

conducted at participants' homes, in private booked rooms at public libraries, and at York University.

Each interview was audio recorded and notes were taken to capture participants' body language and other observations.

Timelines

The timeline, in a basic sense, is a visual data collection device and method created by placing the participant's life events in chronological order (Berends, 2011; Patterson et al., 2012; Sheridan et al., 2011). Timelines have been intentionally employed with vulnerable populations with experiences of trauma as a way to map and affirm the resilience in their narratives (Berends, 2011; Kolar et al., 2015; Patterson et al., 2012). In this study, the timeline method was intended to help participants externalize their feelings and cognitions while increasing the possibilities of seeing these perceptions and the events in their lives within the context of wider life experiences (Adriansen, 2010). The timelines were used as a way to engage participants in constructing their stories and to provide visual representation of the main events in their lives without signifying an assumption of linearity (Adriansen, 2010). Therefore, timelines were expected to be useful for this study's population most of whom have experienced academic challenges and had been diagnosed with learning disabilities involving verbal and/or written expression. Timelines were plotted on paper during the interview period in an attempt to create visual histories for each participant. Timelines were not published to protect the anonymity of the participants, since the chronology of events could potentially identify them.

Participants found the creation of the timelines challenging and were resistant. One participant advised against continuing the practice, stating that it would be a deterrent to participation. In interrogating why this sample group struggled to such a degree, I wondered how this might relate to their performance and outcomes in school and if requests to complete similar

tasks in school may have elicited similar responses. Assuming obstinacy or resorting to a deficit framework to explain and dismiss this issue, while seemingly logical on the surface for this particular population, would have given rise to tensions that would undermine the premises upon which this research grounds itself. Since this is in part a spatial analysis, querying how the concept of time may factor into this phenomenon proved a useful alternative given the inextricability of the spatial and the temporal.

Wright (2015) suggested that the Western concept of linear time, upon which the timeline graphic is modeled, is simply that—one idea of time, borrowed from classical or Newtonian physics. Time was used in the 19th century as an implement of colonization and one of the markers of civilization: “the notion of the ‘savage’ was constructed partly upon the belief that to be ‘human’ entailed separating man’s rituals and routines from the rhythms and cycles of nature” (Nanni, 2012, p. 9). A European logic of time was moreover deployed as a mechanism of capitalism, enabling civilization to become aware of the passage of time, hence productivity, performance, and progress. Despite recognition that African peoples had their own conceptualizations of time, the linear construct of time was imposed upon them.

Discourses of “African time” justified the need to both civilize the natives and simultaneously legitimize their dispossession (Nanni, 2012). That said, perhaps my flaw was in taking for granted this linear concept of time and accepting it as natural. Perhaps the participants of this project were unable to conceptualize time in a linear fashion or organize their lives in that manner; perhaps they were resisting the dominant culture chronology and were differently oriented. A non-normative orientation such as this, may well have been responsible for or contributed to their difficulties in school or school’s difficulties with them, as it were.

Wright (2015) argued against the concept of “evolutionary time flowing along a single unidirectional line” (pp. 11-12) supporting theories of progress and evolution developed in the Enlightenment era, in favour of an epiphenomenal concept of time or ‘spacetime’ which flows outward in every direction from a point—the “now”—and intersects with other directional lines becoming ever more diffuse and chaotic as it flows (Wright, 2015). Wright (2015) highlighted a term called the Middle Passage epistemology—a collection of discourses on Blackness locating themselves in the history of slavery and operating as an ostensibly sound structure in the analysis and definition of Black identity—relies heavily on this linear model of time to support a Black progress narrative. However, Wright (2015) refuted that we come from the past because “no one moment one experiences depends directly on a previous moment in order to come into being” (p. 16). Rather, we only exist in the now and mediate that now with recollections, records of, and discussions about the past just as all engagements with the past are mediated by the present. Wright (2015) took issue with the omissions of those who do not fit neatly into the Middle Passage discourse (e.g., Black people who are not descendants of slaves, those of mixed heritage or are ambiguously Black, and queer Black folks). Wright (2015) explained:

It is the continuity that is the problem, the linking of events through a logic bound by cause and effect that ties the past to the present and provides direction for the future – in short, it is the very basis of this timeline’s continuity that is preventing all Black peoples from being represented within the “when” of Middle Passage Blackness. (p. 18)

Wright makes the argument that Blackness is in fact a “when” and “where” rather than a “what.” That is, when one seeks to examine Black identity/identities one must employ the epiphenomenal understanding of spacetime, framing the question in the “now,” using space and time as

categories for analysis, and thereby accounting for all of the imaginable combinations of Blacknesses (including class, gender, sexuality) possible. Instead of asking: “What is Blackness?,” Wright urges us to ask: “Where is Blackness?” and “When is Blackness?” Seeing the young male interviewees’ Blackness as a “what” would connote their fixity, essentializing their identity, “so that Blackness, as a vaguely biological “what,” takes on an eerie resemblance to those anti-Black discourses that first claimed Blacks were indeed a “what” (Wright, 2015, p. 25), distinct from the human being.

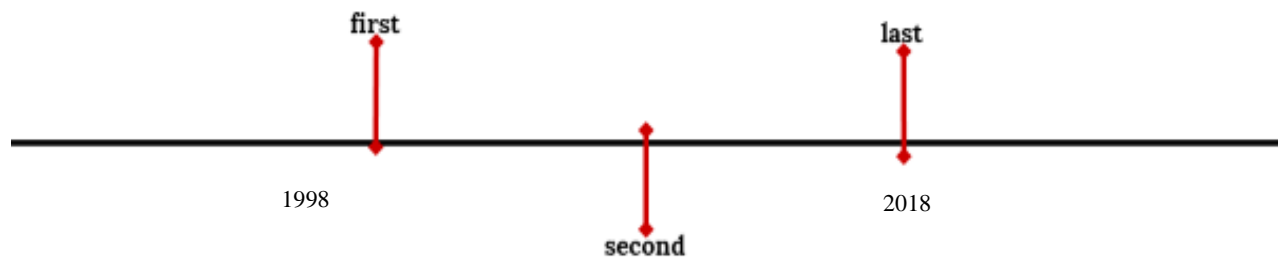
Wright’s (2015) arguments provided me with an invaluable mode of analysis for my data. Wright asserted that the linear progress model locks one into a rigid system of direct cause and effect. Hence, events on the timelines plotted by participants would typically be seen as either a cause of a subsequent event on the timeline, the entire trajectory, or overall outcome, or the effect of a prior event—or both cause and effect. This interpretation of the linear relationship events in people’s lives have to each other generally produces morals, lessons, or cautionary tales. That is to say that if participants were regarded as failures for having not been successful in school, their story could easily be cast as one comprised of negative events leading to such failure, where the subject is either blamed for the wrong choices in their lives, or something/someone else is blamed for the failings (e.g., absent father, poverty, etc.) leaving the subject without agency. Alternatively, those seen as successes are praised for the choices they made, formidably leading to such success. Wright acknowledged the slippery slope reasoning that could result from the claims that cause and effect are concepts rather than proven facts of life, specifically that one could use it to negate racism’s material effects on Black lives; however, Wright is clear that she is only dismantling the myth of direct cause and effect—the rigid interpretation that all actions and events are tied to one another in a linear causal relationship

which omits parallel and intersecting actions and events or inactions and what failed to happen. This was considered while interpreting the narratives of the participants; thus, instead of a conventional timeline, their life histories took the form of something that looked more like matrices set in a landscape of events that occurred as well as events that did not (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

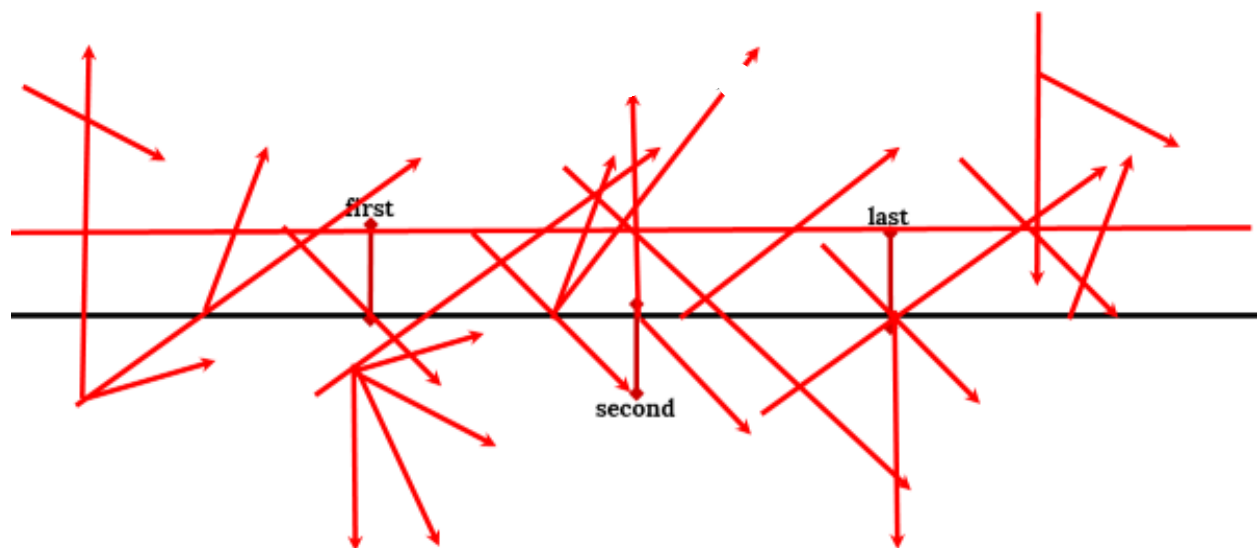
Visualization of Varying Intersections of Time and the Life Course

a)



Linear Timeline Construction

b)



Representation of unconventional non-linear series of events superimposed over Linear Timeline Construct

There was a concern that inviting the participants to sit and collaboratively develop the timeline with markers on chart paper might give way to the participants' assumption of shared ownership and analytical power (Adriansen, 2010). Being an insider could have further complicated this problem. Neither of these issues were a concern for these participants.

Data Analysis

Thematic Analysis

Transcribed interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis (TA) approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun & Clarke, 2019). This approach involved developing familiarity with the data by listening to transcripts several times, generating codes, collating the codes into themes, reviewing, defining, and naming themes, and weaving them together to form a narrative of the data. Thematic analysis is defined as

a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set. Through focusing on meaning across a data set, TA allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences. (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57)

While TA is a process performed across different methods such as discourse analysis and grounded theory, it stands as a method on its own with steps that take the researcher from familiarizing themselves with the data corpus, through coding, theme development, and finally to producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The TA method offered a way to work through participants' stories and experiences of school exclusion. Additionally, TA was compatible with life histories methods.

Accurately employing this method required me to return to certain epistemological considerations about my research. For example, although the purpose of this study was to amplify the voices and experiences of Black males in an effort to challenge the conventions of knowledge production, the initial approach was not purely inductive due to my own experience working in expulsion programs, which brought a series of ideas, concepts, and an experiential framework for organizing and interpreting the data. This framework of ideas was further developed through the adoption of spatial theory and the concept of carceral space, which provided a more critical orientation to the data analysis. The deductive element of thematic analysis necessitated a clear and thorough explication of the theoretical framework, as provided in chapter three, to render detectible matters unarticulated by the participants. I was interested in how the participants made sense of their experiences, all while considering that meaning and experience are socially produced/influenced, the socio-cultural context in each instance and how that manipulates or limits ‘reality’, and the co-creation of space and the bodies within it (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81).

Coding and theme development was an especially thoughtful process as I considered the major role language plays in the social construction of reality since human beings’ linguistic and conceptual activities are responsible for constituting everything there is or how we conceive of reality (Haslanger, 1995, p. 104). As Berger and Luckman (1967) said, “language is capable not only of constructing symbols that are highly abstracted from everyday experience but also of bringing back these symbols and appresenting [*sic*] them as objectively real...” (p. 40). Berger and Luckman (1967) also asserted that symbolic language is an essential constituent of everyday life and of the commonsense conception of reality.

Through language and for the purposes of social order, things are classified: constructionists tend to maintain that classifications are not determined by how the world is, but are convenient ways in which to represent it...the world does not come quietly wrapped up in facts. Facts are consequences of ways in which we represent the world. (Hacking, 1999, p. 33)

When classifications, categories, and labels are used to organize people, such as with the case of racialization, it is usually oppressive and done to serve ends of which members within the group may not be aware. Although knowledge and social realities are not initially produced by the masses they affect most, they are maintained by the masses. People act on the understanding of their common knowledge, thereby reinforcing their shared reality. People must enact or embody the constructions in order to reify them or make them real.

Member checking was performed in the pursuit of accuracy in addition to ensuring participants' comfort with their submissions. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the data collected were input into the MAXQDA software for analysis. Qualitative data from interviews were managed with MAXQDA and comparatively analyzed for common themes between student narratives, parent perspectives, and professional discourses.

While each interview informed the next resulting in questions being added and modified after each interview and various themes being noted, official coding was only conducted after all interviews were completed. The following rudimentary a priori codes were developed based on the five categories of questions, the theoretical literature reviewed, and research questions that guided this study: (a) critical space: including the neighbourhood, school, and suspension program spaces as well as other spaces and pathways of exclusion; (b) identity: including self-concept, outlook, and family; (c) masculinities: consisting of ideas and performance of Black

masculinity; (d) trajectory; and (e) context of removal. A list of possible codes was inductively generated after transcribing and conducting a tertiary review of the data. The following theoretical and contextual themes were developed:

Table 2

Theoretical and Contextual Themes

Theoretical Themes	Contextual Themes
<p>The Fallacy of Choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics of Consent • Social Work and Informed Consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and Identification • Pathways of Exclusion/Interrupted Schooling • Being Policed • Relationships with Fathers, Mothers, and Notions of Masculinity • Notions of Care • Notions of Safety • Trauma and Loss
<p>Applying Hegemony and the Homo Sacer Carcerality and Unfreedom</p>	

While I did not follow a strict grounded theory protocol, I allowed themes and concepts to emerge from the data through systematic and simultaneous data collection, coding and analysis in an iterative process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). After removing “Fallacy of Choice/Deceptive Language” in a decision to focus on the participants and their perceptions/constructions rather than ethnological elements, the following five themes emerged, namely: a) identity/identification; b) trauma/loss; c) hegemony; d) exclusion; and e) carcerality (see Table 3):

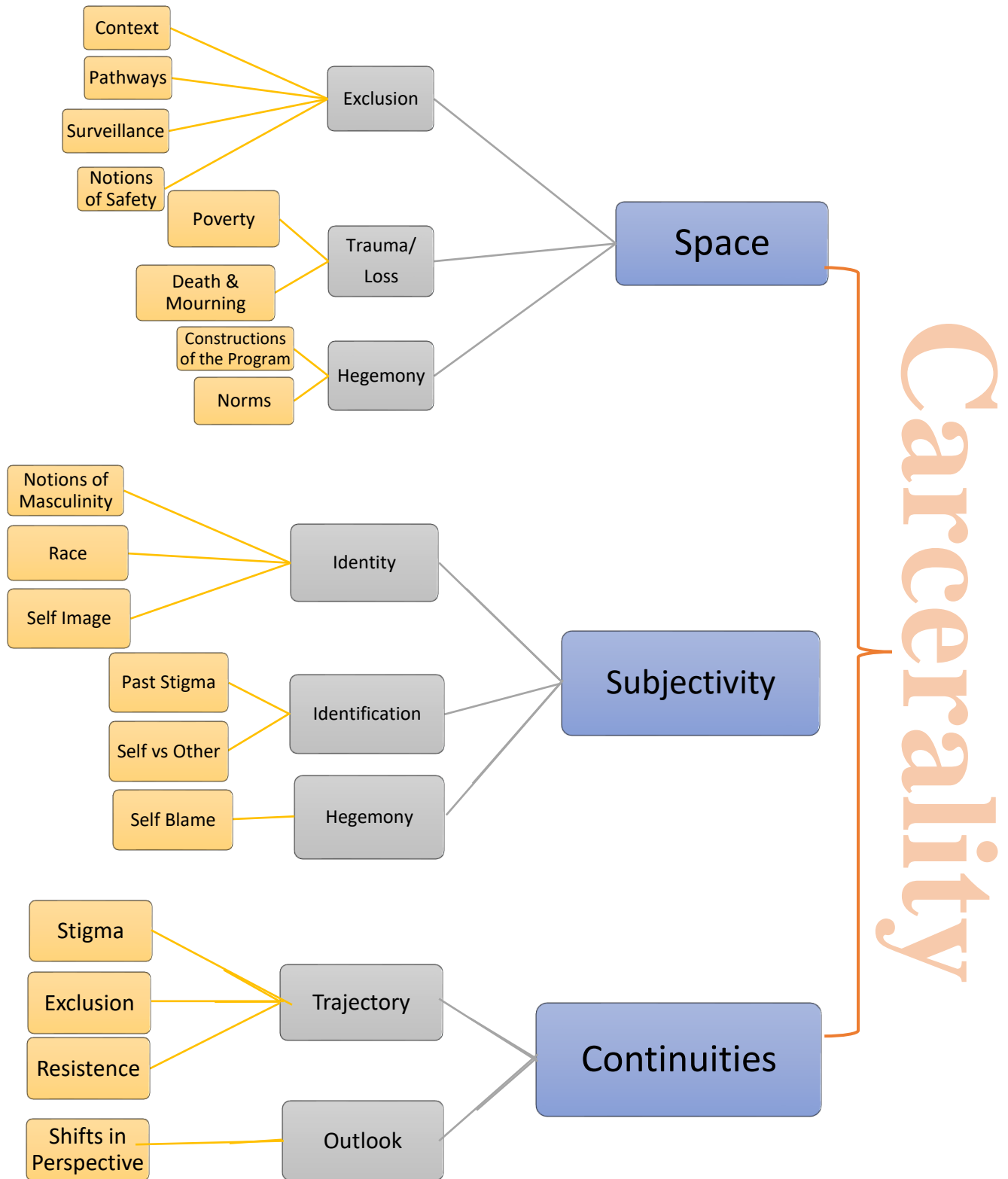
Table 3

Five Associated Categories and Thematic Codes

Identity/Identification	Trauma/Loss	Hegemony	Exclusion	Carcerality
Parent Relationships	Death &	Blaming Self	Context of	Carceral Space
Notions of Masculinity	Mourning	Constructions of	Removal	Notions of Safety
Peers	Poverty	the Program	Pathways of	Police Relations
Family		Norms	Exclusion	Surveillance
School Staff			Trajectory	School Setting
Outlook				Neighbourhood
Self-Image				
Perspective/Character				
Shifts in Perspective				
Race				
Peers				

Figure 2 below illustrates the process whereby codes (in yellow) were organized by categories (in grey) and then collapsed into themes (in blue). During this process some codes were combined with other codes, i.e., codes police presence and surveillance were ultimately both covered under surveillance as the theme of space took shape. As I reviewed the transcripts, stronger themes emerged while some categories diminished in relevance. Areas that were shared by all participants were highlighted and themes among them created.

Figure 2 Codes, Categories, and Themes

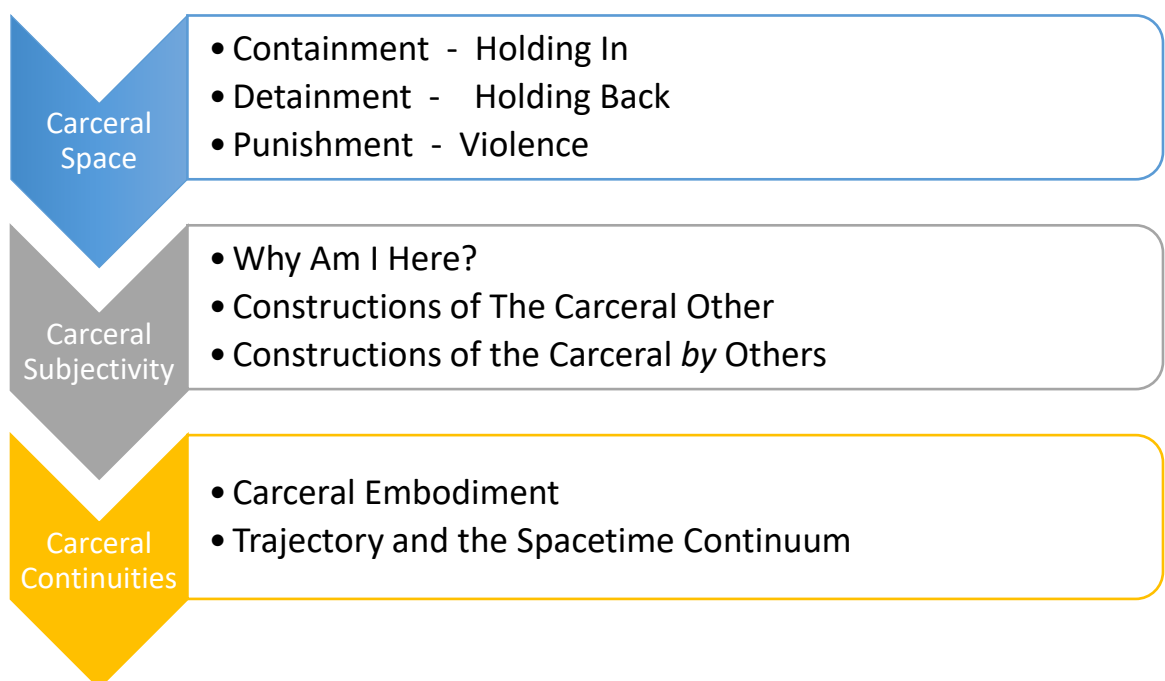


Themes of carcerality and exclusion were pervasive across all categories in different contexts: for example, the inability to escape poverty, forced transience creating loss and the inability to escape the negative meanings affixed to them. This pervasiveness, or what I call the ubiquity of carcerality, and the emergent themes gave way to the study's terms: Carceral Space, Carceral Subjectivity, and Carceral Continuities. The focus was therefore narrowed to offer a deep and nuanced narrative of these participants and their experiences of school exclusion as opposed to a broader exposé of all of the elements (e.g. family relationships, neighbourhood events, etc.) captured in their data.

Once the decision was made to focus on the three themes illustrated, an additional review of the data was conducted, during which I took a closer look at the portions where participants described their time in the expulsion programs. As a result, the three main themes were broken down into smaller constituent sections. See Figure 3.

Figure 3

Themes and Conceptual Components



Researcher Subjectivity

You talk about making it as a writer by yourself, you have to be able then to turn off all the antennae with which you live, because once you turn your back on this society you may die. You may die. And it's very hard to sit at a typewriter and concentrate on that if you are afraid of the world around you ~ James Baldwin

An insider-outsider researcher position is occupied by a researcher who is in some ways a part of the community within which she is conducting research and outside of that community in other ways (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Humphrey, 2007; Hellowell, 2006). Arguably researchers can never be full outsiders, because of their familiarity with the area of study; and they can never truly be insiders owing to their complex intersectional identities and disparate experiences, but specifically because of their status as researchers (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009; Humphrey, 2007). In this section, the intricacies of my “insider-outsider” subject position are explained.

As a Black woman, the trauma sustained from everyday racist injury as well as witnessing the highly publicized virtual genocide of Black people through police brutality and by other means via social media has made this academic journey particularly burdensome. I have watched as Black men who are considered out of place while driving, jogging, or having a leisurely promenade are executed, and I am acutely aware that the population of young men in this study are deemed out of place in academic settings and similarly snuffed out...so too am I. As evidenced by my research interests and by virtue of my racial identity (and that of my children), I have always been sensitive to issues of racism, but being in the research phase of my doctoral studies has heightened my sensitivity to the plight of my people.

This, along with the systemically-anchored hurdles in my life, has made the development of my thesis, which speaks to one of the entry points of the genocide, perhaps the genesis along the trajectory of these issues—the exclusion of Black children/youth in educational institutions—

nearly impossible. This exclusion is especially true when each time I gaze up from my computer screen, I am reminded of the violent lives and deaths of the very same people through mass media. I could not fathom how I would put all of this in a paper fit for submission or how to organize my thoughts on such issues, discerning what is “relevant” as I am being flooded with related information of Black social and literal death, inundated with subliminal messages of my life’s relative worth(lessness), constantly attacked, and riddled with pain and grief. It has been the most challenging and hopeless of tasks to write *this* content in *this* time.

I carried this back-breaking burden into each interview and left heavier after each one, encumbered with the weight of a new story—which happened to be the same old story—on my shoulders. Described by Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) “our ways of talking do not neutrally reflect our world, identities and social relations but, rather, play an active role in creating and changing them” (p. 2). With this in mind, I proceeded carefully because I also hauled my own stories to the interactions with these young men—not only my experiences growing up as a visible minority within the school system and having my body and behaviours read in ways I did not identify with, but also experiences working within the school disciplinary system. There were horror stories such as the one in which one of the 15-year-old students on my caseload in the expulsion program, was murdered by a 14-year-old student he had met there. The victim was Black and the assailant white. Faculty and staff were shocked that it had not played out conversely and expressed extremely empathic and compassionate sentiments toward the white student. Both youths were slated to return to the expulsion program after the summer during which the incident took place.

There were other tragic stories as well. For example, my eighth-grade son, who had no disciplinary record or history of violence, was hastily referred to the very same suspension

program I had worked in because a white girl claimed she was afraid of him after hearing about his alleged response to a question posed as part a popular game he had been playing with friends. One might consider the irony of my having worked in the program (unbeknownst to the principal) and considering my research focus. The principal's dismissal of my expertise and my position as someone who possessed intimate knowledge of the system, despite my explicit assertions that I was familiar with the program and my use of *insider* school board lingo, was testament to my argument that we cannot transcend our Black bodies in educational settings. The principal did not so much as inquire as to why I felt that my son was not a suitable candidate for the program or how I knew that his was dissimilar to the profiles of those sent there.

As a researcher, there are advantages to my occupying an insider position by way of having worked for the program, having interfaced with the system as a parent, and being a Black person. The participants and I shared a history, and I have a deep knowledge of the context of the data; however, this gives way to the possibility that I, or the participant, will presuppose a shared understanding (Adriansen & Madsen, 2009), subsequently limiting the narrative, tainting the data or the data analysis. In these ways, the self and the subject become joined. This relationship between the study's participants and me as the researcher, shaped both the research process and the research product. As mentioned, in employing a critical race methodology I was interested in the counter-story rather than seeking an objective, independent truth or accuracy of events. Taking a constructivist approach (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Merriam & Caffarella, 1999), my interest was in the Black males' constructions of these events, who they are, and their accounts of their social worlds as well as their shifts and changes with an understanding that these will be mediated by my own identity, experiences, and interpretations.

Conversely, being a woman makes me an outsider. This is an integral acknowledgment, considering that my research is concerned with masculinity and male subjects. The patriarchal power dynamic between myself as a female and the male participants was mitigated by the relationship between interviewer/interviewee as well as the age difference between the participants and me. My previous role as a social worker in the expulsion program and my social class are also important factors that dichotomized our positions, denoting greater power on my side of the binary. This relationship could have reinforced gender discourses suggesting that the role of the woman is to be an empathic listener for men's narratives, providing men with more opportunities to exert power over the interviewer (Pini, 2005); however, the advantage is that I believe I was viewed as non-threatening as a woman, now distanced from the expulsion program, which allowed for greater openness. Furthermore, displays of hegemonic masculinity during the interview provided good data. The presence of all the discussed complexities required me to be critically reflexive and account for, recognize, and analyze gender and power dynamics during the process of data-gathering (Pini, 2005).

Chapter Summary

Chapter four reviewed the research methods employed in this study and explained some of the pertinent ethical and analytical dynamics that emerged in the process of conducting this research. This chapter provides the process by which the themes: carceral space, carceral subjectivity, and carceral continuities emerged and serves as a guide to the organization of the findings in chapter five. Participants' narratives and counter-narratives were centred, as per critical race methodology, and through the exercise of making timelines, ontological and epistemological layers surfaced around the temporal, which gave rise to methodological complexities. Chapter four also examined what I brought to the research by way of my

subjectivity—being Black, a woman, a parent of young men, a professional, and an academic. The contextual realities connected to who I am and what I endeavoured to do compelled the discussion about strengths, hindrances, and injuries related to my role as the researcher of this phenomenon. The vicarious grief and trauma encountered as part of the research process is a significant factor deserving of more attention than I am able to give it here.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative life histories study was to explore the racial and spatial experiences of young Black men who had been excluded from school. The study focused on the effect of school exclusion on the Black men, their self-perceptions, and their trajectories from their perspective. The following research question guided this study:

- What are the lived experiences and subsequent perceptions of Black males who have been excluded from school?

The following sub-questions helped to focus the study on spatial and temporal elements:

- How do Black males' participation in the expulsion program and its spatiality affect their identities?
- How do Black males view their participation in expulsion programs as playing out in their educational, vocational, and social trajectories?

The findings reflect that the varied experiences, both positive and negative, had lasting negative effects on the participants, their self-perceptions and their trajectories. My ultimate argument is that schools have been tasked with systematically siphoning Black bodies from education by way of sanctioned exclusion, thereby depriving them of the means for survival. The outlawing of slavery and segregation along with the various shifts in industry, technology, and modes of production have made Black labour redundant and have progressively shifted the focus from exploitation of Black bodies to, I argue, their total extermination. Black labour having been significantly depreciated and the prison industrial complex fading into obsolence with changes in the market and technology, Wacquant (2000) observed that ghettos have become more like

prisons and community institutions have been replaced by institutions of social control.

Wacquant (2000) cited schools, particularly those located in urban communities, or students with low socio-economic status as prime examples of community institutions turned “institutions of confinement” (p. 15). In exploring the participants’ recollections of school exclusion, I uncover the carceral devices which support my argument.

Three main themes are highlighted in this chapter: *carceral space*, *carceral subjectivities*, and *carceral continuities*. As illustrated in chapter 4, these themes were derived from the observation that elements of the carceral could be found in each category: *Identity/Identification*, *Trauma/Loss*, *Hegemony*, *Exclusion* and *Carcerality*, while the data within the categories were about participants’ selves, their school disciplinary experiences, and the lingering connection between the two. This framework represents a successive process to which participants were subjected and through which they were transformed. Participants’ narratives, however, do not necessarily support that they consistently encountered the components in a linear fashion or in the stated order. Furthermore, since the denial of Black male youth’s personhood through their problematic construction is a central issue taken up by this study, participants’ school offences are excluded, except where integral to the participant’s point. This discourages judgments of the participants’ characters and comparisons of their behaviours.

Carceral Space

One of the key questions from the participants’ oral histories was whether the expulsion programs were indeed experienced as carceral spaces. Participants’ descriptions of the program fell into three descriptors: containment, detainment, and punishment. These Foucauldian apparatuses of power ordered the various disciplinary technologies serving to both regulate and construct the subjects within the space (i.e., school systems). It was important to feature the

voices of the participants once subjugated and silenced by the institution and its processes; hence, direct quotes from their interviews of their experiences and views are presented to support the argument that school expulsion programs are carceral spaces and that this carcerality and its three features transcend the walls of the school.

Containment

Although the programs were presented to the students by their sending school administration as parallel school programs through which they would access their education, typically within the same board, the young men experienced these programs quite differently. When asked to describe the program, the words “jail” and “prison” were used several times by the participants. For example, Malik said, “In my head it was like taking a student out the school. It was like a jail for school, a little confinement... You stay in there away from the other students.” Even those who, like Tre, refused to attend the program emphasized similar aspects of it. Tre described it this way:

It was just very...like a prison almost because you needed permission to use the washroom. You know, it's not really free. It's kind of very restrictive and like for what?!? Like one mistake they treat you like that.

Tre highlighted the prison-like reputation of the program to those on the outside. In his understanding, the program's carceral quality is wrapped up in notions of unfreedom, restriction, surveillance, punishment, and injustice. Tre was assigned to the program as a result of his chronic truancy. In sharing his a priori knowledge of the program, Tre also evinces the associated stigma, the weight of reputation, and accordingly why students would choose not to participate in the program despite having their school careers on the line.

The interviewees who attended expulsion programs spoke of being contained within one room during program hours, which felt like the entire day to them. They were not permitted to leave the program room and not allowed to speak to anyone outside of the room. As such, all breaks and lunch periods were held in the classroom. They were escorted to the washrooms by program staff. They were not allowed to be on the property of the school or any mainstream school within the board unless they were in their particular program room. They were made to enter and exit the building through a specific door—the back door for the Fresh Start Expulsion program, while mainstream students could enter through various doors around the building. Violations to these rules could result in trespassing charges. Malik, who stopped attending the program shortly after he began, stated:

They made us stay the whole day in that one room. It's not like we were allowed outside for lunch. I couldn't do that. Maybe if they had that room and a separate table...outside to walk around...it might be different.

Stephen stated:

I can't walk out into the hallway, like any other people in high school.

The above excerpts show participants' struggle with what they regard as customary elements of school—liberties that the citizens of the school community are able to exercise. Participants' descriptions highlight the significance of mobility and the ability to have breaks from the space itself during the day. The space itself was mobile and follows them during the requisite escorting to the washrooms or to other sanctioned spaces within the building. In identifying the spatial unfreedom that accompanies their participation in the program, the young men were identifying the new class to which they belonged for at least as long as they remained in the program.

Similarly, Lamar grappled with making basic descriptions of the program that did not refer to unfreedom. He stated:

It wasn't like a regular school, like the way they made it look like, this is not high school. It's like a community centre what's teaching you. It's like basically, it's jail with freedom, what's teaching you basically. They weren't schools. I'm like it really wasn't cuz even the way everything was set up...

Lamar appeared to have difficulty reconciling the carceral aesthetic of the space with its presumed purpose—that being the education of youth 18 years of age and under. And on the other hand, Lamar was challenged to make sense of this “jail” of sorts where one was “free” to leave at the end of the day or simply decline altogether. He was doubtful that any meaningful learning could take place under those conditions. Such conditions included being subjected to full body searches each day and the police presence in and around the program.

The enclosed space of the program had an endo-cultural and exo-cultural function, defining the insiders as excluded and the outsiders as included. As Foucault (1977) noted, “discipline proceeds from the individuals in space...and sometimes requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself” (p. 141). Power relations, such as those employing enclosure, are essential to the constitution of spaces and ensure that they “remain bound within a permanent context of reference and relation” (Mathes & Low, 2002, p. 129). The interest in microspatial organization and the sustainability of the way the bodies are contained and organized is not merely a matter of administrative convenience but more concerned with political power, cultural domination, and social control (Soja, 2010). Lyriq illustrated this when he said the following:

...they wouldn't let us leave. They wouldn't let us use our phones; they wouldn't let us call anybody. I literally felt like I was trapped. It was the worst feeling ever. The only thing that kept me going was 'you know what, let me get through this, show them that I'm committing to changing, so that I can get back to school with my friends and whatnot.'

Here, Lyriq posits a program in which his entrapment is both literal and perceived. And, like the prisoner, he can only live within that entrapment for as long as it takes to gain his freedom—here proxied as a return to school. Lyriq added:

It was almost like none of us cared you know. We were already in the hole 'what's the point?' I felt hopeless a lot of the times. Like I was only there so that I could get back into [X school], and they never let me back in.

This idea of the regular schools seems to permeate participants' understandings of control in this context. The young men described a state similar to being quarantined. The feeling of being imprisoned was pervasive and the hopelessness that resulted was evidence of the toll the space took on them emotionally, as well as on their productivity. Above, Lyriq referred to the program as 'the hole'—a colloquial term describing the cell where solitary confinement takes place, often located below the first floor of the prison and used as additional punishment for the inmate. Research shows that inmates usually experience emotional distress from being cut off from all social interaction. As Foucault (1977) argued, enclosure enables the making of *docile bodies*, which are the targets of power. Lyriq likened his experience to that of an inmate in "the hole" given that he is unable to use his phone, unable to socialize with friends, and feeling the resulting hopelessness from such social isolation in a barren environment that another participant described as "run down" and reminiscent of a "haunted house."

Detainment

The idea of detainment is conceptually separate from that of containment – there is a component of ‘holding back’ associated with the former. The participants in the expulsion programs refer to being held back not only socially, but academically. At the Fresh Start Expulsion program, where several of the participants attended, the teacher in the classroom is equipped with only two teachables (subjects one is qualified to teach at specific grade levels). One of the teachables was invariably physical education, which I argue is because the Black body is read as bestial, and engagement is only possible on a basic corporeal level. The teacher in the expulsion program does not actively teach the second (academic) subject but rather supervises the completion of individual learning packages (ILPs) during students’ one to two daily academic periods totaling a between one and one-and-a-half hours of their six-hour school day (see Appendix E: Expulsion Program Schedule).

Lamar shared:

The time when I first heard someone talk about it, alternative school, this kid was 16, going to school with kids that were 23. I’m like wait, you’re gonna put a 23-year-old and a 16-year-old in the same class, and they’re supposed to be doing the same bit of work?!!
...at the same pace?!!

Here Lamar expressed his disbelief in a system that would not assess individuals and their respective context, instead marginalizing the entire cohort with little regard for how effective the learning strategy would be. This rendering of differentiated instruction minimizes *actual* instruction yet is deemed to be adequate academic programming to address the needs of students who, in most cases, have experienced substantial difficulty engaging with their academics in the past. Moreover, in many cases, these students have previously undiagnosed learning disabilities and mental health issues.

Malik stated:

They didn't teach us properly. They thought we were dummies. They taught us like we're in special ed...Asking questions about the streets like I'm a bad guy. They would talk to me slow, like I'm slow. Little things...The vibe I was feeling wasn't a good one.

Malik highlighted that the limited attention to academics and the approach of the staff made him feel as though they had prejudged him to be incompetent and linked that supposed intellectual incompetence and moral deficiency to a presumed street affiliation. As Ferguson (2000) argued, "troublemaking acts become transformed into 'troubled' children, with pathological personalities and character flaws" (p. 43), supporting Malik's perspective in the fact that the programs offered only remedial courses, which were inadequate for admission to post-secondary institutions; there were no textbooks, but there were games. Thus, participants' prospects were limited for legitimate future economic participation.

Malik commented, "I think the scenery affects how I think about the spot. Are they really trying to help me?" Malik noted here that it was not only the actions of the staff in the program, but also the physical aspects of the space itself that constructed his views of self and other; they also fueled the sense of futility that many participants expressed throughout our discussions. In my experience as a social worker in expulsion programs, there was an embodiment in, and of, space which occurs for all bodies in the program, albeit differentially based on power. All but one of the onsite staff members were white and all of the excludees were non-white, showing the racial hierarchy as clearly inscribed on the ground. In the space of the expulsion program, Child and Youth Workers and teachers assume and embody the power of the program's structure and of the larger systems of oppression at work.

There was a disproportionately large component of recreation as compared to what one might find in mainstream schools. Participants spoke of playing basketball frequently in the program, suggesting that they were not regarded as intellectual, but physical beings with engagement only occurring on basic corporeal levels. To the one teacher in the room, there were several Child and Youth Workers. There were also social workers and psychologists assigned to the program sites part-time. The Child and Youth Workers ran the daily programming. It was clear to the participants that the focus in the program was on the management of their behavior rather than educating them, which is why surveillance was heightened, as Lyriq's comment below illustrates.

Much like the work of the soup kitchens described by Kawash (1998), which provide soup to warm the body without being filling and that take little effort to consume and digest (texture more than sustenance), the paltry servings of academic "instruction" in this program are insubstantial and ineffective as Lamar and Malik indicated. According to Kawash (1998), "the scanty provision of food to such a body ensures that its possibilities of consumption are dwindled to an absolute minimum" (p. 331). While the reference is dated, it serves as a metaphor for the delivery of academics via a mode that is inaccessible to the students the program *serves*, through teachers who offer little more than the optic of academic learning opportunities, barely meeting Ministry requirements while minimizing student *consumption* and edification (see Appendix E).

As Lyriq shared:

A lot of the people just didn't care. We didn't care, the facilitators didn't care, it's like, it just felt like a big baby-sitting operation. Like watching us, and then at 3:30, we're not a liability so we could go home.

What came through Lyriq's and other participants' words was their awareness of their dehumanization, the low expectations, and that this program was not interested in their education or development. How staff addressed them indicated that they were not valued as students or liked as individuals. An alternate method of participants' detainment came in the form of a type of self-arrest. One participant admitted that he held himself back because he feared that doing well would give him the reputation of teacher's pet, which would in turn make him a target by his peers in the program. The irony of this dilemma is that his risk of being cast out of the group of outcasts, would likely not paradoxically earn him acceptance into the mainstream. This could substantiate claims about the signification of the Blackness eclipsing and undermining academic performance and pro-social behaviour (Castenall & Pinar, 1993; Dumas, 2016; James, 2019).

In thinking about the excluded Black student in terms of Mohanram's (1999) work, the assessment of the Black body as bestial provides a lens through which the structure of the expulsion program can be understood. If the brutish Black body is unable to transcend into consciousness in a Cartesian sense, it must be contained and there is no value in focusing efforts on developing the mind. Mirza (1998) stated that "because biological racism has not been exorcised from our vocabulary, from our mental maps, our ideas of 'them and us,' essentialist notions of race—those notions of innate inherent difference, remain intact" (p. 112).

Making Sense of Punishment

Participants found it difficult to view sanctions against their behaviour as different from sanctions against themselves personally. That said, the Black males in this study experienced exclusion as rejection, which served as a disincentive for their engagement and achievement. Lamar explained the following: "I don't need an alternative school for fights or anything. I'm like, the only thing is attendance. You just want me to attend somewhere else. I'm not gonna

go.” Lamar could not see a logical link between his chronic truancy and the decision to remove him from the school altogether. He also did not feel as though his ‘punishment fit the crime’ so to speak, in that a mere attendance issue in his view, did not warrant his participation in a program for students who acted out behaviourally or were violent. Lamar's feelings of being cast away illustrate that the school did not embody an establishment for social, intellectual, or vocational development, which conceptually disqualifies the program as a mode of school (Noguera, 2003).

The taking up of the program as a punishment, rather than a support or means of rehabilitation is clear in the descriptors: “...like a prison”, “very restrictive”, “one mistake they treat you like that” in Tre’s previously featured excerpt on page 115. Participants felt that exclusions were liberally imposed and unduly harsh—and that permanent banishment from their home school was unreasonable punishment. Derrick stated, “Most of them were like—you could see they had addict[ion] problems...it’s just there to put kids away they don’t want to deal with.” Derrick further highlighted the absence of a rehabilitative component when he juxtaposed the high instance of substance dependence among the attendees of the program against his appraisal of the function of the program, the undesirability of the attendees, and the staff’s disinclination to work with them.

The offences of the students that resulted in the system’s coercion exercised as punishment through their eviction, detainment, and containment in a hostile environment, were themselves acts of coercion insofar as they prioritized the rights of the offenders over the offended. Consequently, violence becomes a form of institutionalized penal practice (Chan, 2000).

The oral histories of the participants highlighted instances of violence, not only limited to physical, but also discursive, epistemological. Some spoke about turf and gang wars within the programs and being unable to cross borders both inside and outside of the school, for fear of harm.

Devon disclosed:

There were fights outside the school, police came a lot... I don't think anybody died though... yeah... I don't think anybody died. I think it went far though... some people got shot, stabbed... I don't think that anybody died though.

While Lyriq spoke about his reaction to the violence in and of the space, he shared:

While I was in the program, I was scared, maybe the majority of the time, I was scared. Like are these kids going to hurt me when I leave the school? I don't know what's going to happen. When I leave the school, will there be opposing gang members waiting? That happened once, this guy got his skull cracked open. At the Safe School, there was constant fear. I don't know if it was rational or irrational, but I was just scared a lot. But after the program, I don't know, I just calmed down.

Devon spoke casually about the violence he witnessed as though desensitized. His comment also denoted the normality of police presence, aggression, and violence related to the space and place of the program. Correspondingly, Lyriq spoke of his fear associated with the program that was constant in nature. In his view, the punishment involved placing him in an allegorical lion's den where harm was not only imminent, but also already occurring by virtue of being there. As articulated in an earlier comment by Lamar, the containment of students not prone to violence with students who resort to violence in a space intrinsically violent, that elicits violence can be nothing short of punitive. Lyriq's comments denote that punishment, being violent, must necessarily be harmful. This shatters the image of Safe Schools being safe spaces.

Safe Schools instead involves the banishment from a legitimate school space to a place outside the bounds of school where the youth are not counted among legitimate students.

Kawash (1999) regarded treatment of the homeless body, asserting that there is a contradiction in the denial of space for a material body that ontologically must occupy space: “attempt at resolution is continually enacted through violent processes of containment, constriction, and compression that seek not simply to exclude or control the homeless but rather to efface their presence altogether” (p. 330). The same can be said with regard to the treatment of the Black body in schools. The violence of the space in the program is almost palpable. One participant described it like getting a ticking time bomb and not knowing when it was going to explode.

Analytical Findings of Carcerality

Participants experienced Safe Schools as a carceral space. As described by the Black males in the program, Safe Schools functions as prison. These programs reinforce delinquency, though ostensibly designed to reform it (Foucault, 1977). Students are not only made vulnerable to incarceration by the failure of the public education system to adequately educate students, but they are also made further susceptible to criminality by means of their exposure to the culture of discipline in schools that are modeled after the prison. Pugliese (2009) problematized the act of turning civil spaces into carceral spaces and speaks of vernacular violence as being that which is masked by its ordinariness (p. 153). Here the classroom is turned into a carceral space—a space once civic, now “transmuted into a site that accommodates the socially dead” (Pugliese, 2009, p. 154) and the racial composition of the student body of such a space alarms no one.

In these programs, not only are the students invisible but also the “vernacular violence is rendered opaque because it is dissociable from the everyday” (Pugliese, 2009, p. 153). Moreover,

the expectation that Black students populate the expulsion program since it mirrors the prison population, logically follows from media portrayals and feeds the dominant racist discourse. What Pugliese (2009) found most intolerable about these spaces is that it destroys hope of the possibility that other civic spaces exist for them that are devoid of violence. The civilian (student) outside of the prison is inside of another prison—the classroom. As he puts it, the outside is always already inside (Pugliese, 2009, p. 156). For these students, there is no exit—no escape in life from imprisonment and violence. Schools are regarded among the most trusted social institutions as they assume custodial responsibility for the greater part of the day to teach societies' young and most vulnerable virtues, healthy values, and prosocial behaviours. If Black students face criminalization and incarceration in schools, one of their first identity-forming, socializing institutions, the lesson to be learned by excluded students from schools-turned-carceral spaces is that violence is endemic to all institutions and likely, all spaces.

Carceral Subjectivity: Analyses of the Dynamics of Identity in Carceral Spaces

This section deconstructs the complex concepts of subjectivity and identity as they pertain to the participants through the aggregation of three main prisms: (a) how they view themselves in the space; (b) how they view others in the space; and (c) how they believe others view them in the space—or what their social experiences signify with regard to these aspects. This section is therefore separated into three subsections. The first subsection *Why am I Here? and Other Wise Whys*, explores how participants make sense, or rather fail to make sense of the system's placement of them in the expulsion program. Participants' common responses of confusion, hurt, and offence after they begin the program allude to and help to unearth their ideas about themselves, their character, and their merit that may run contrary to dominant narratives. The second subsection, *Constructions of the Carceral* presents and discusses the ways in which

the participants form their own subjectivity by setting themselves apart from what they determine is the *carceral Other*—or those who, unlike them, ought to be in the program. This subsection also begins to explore how participants are discursively constructed as carceral through their recapitulation of interactions with the program staff. The last subsection, *Carceral Continuities*, explores the means by which the participants were identified as carceral by others as well as by themselves and shows how carceral identities endure.

Why am I Here and Other Wise ‘Why’s?’

Why am I Here in a Prison Space and Not in a School? When the participants encountered the program, they became disoriented. Their uneasiness appears to have been related to their experience of the purportedly educational space placing strong emphasis on the Noguera’s (2003) third function of school: creating an orderly and controlled environment while neglecting its other functions. Participants struggled to reconcile their identities as students with their placement within an educational institution in a space that did not foreground academics. The parent participants were also perplexed because the program had been promoted as an alternative educational setting, while what their children ended up in felt more like an alternative *to* education. As such, in their bewilderment, several of the participants remembered asking themselves: *Why am I here?*

For instance, Aren recalled:

The school, it wasn’t really a school to be honest. That’s not something you want to go to you know, there are five to seven people in a class, you might have 15 in a class. It’s not something you want to go to. So, every day that you go, you just kind of feel like ‘*Why am I here?*’

Andre commented:

[Program staff] just treat me like: ‘Alright, do your work. I’m gonna do *my* work. When you’re done, offer [you] a little counselling at the end, and you go home.’ Makes you think like they don’t even wanna be there. They wanna do things in *their* lives. It makes you think like if they don’t wanna be here, *why am I here?*

About her son’s time in school, Donna expressed:

At high school—just the regular high school, his marks were going good, at the program, there were no marks. He was just so angry, he was subjected to walking into this room in like an industrial building, he had to buzz in and walk through metal detectors and sit with all these kids and [he was] thinking ‘Well, *why am I here? Like, why... am I here?*’

Lorraine, whose son was in a closed custody detention centre at the time of her interview shared:

He still just didn’t like the process of going there and not learning anything. He would get a grade nine workbook to work out of and spend an hour watching a movie and then he’s like: ‘This is waste of time. *Why am I even here?*’ They weren’t providing him what he needed to be successful to get out of the program.

Participants, like Aren, repeatedly acknowledged that they were in an institution, but not one that emphasized student learning. Each of the above excerpts illustrate that participants also tended to link their disinclination to attend the program to its incongruence with their conceptions of (mainstream) school and their dismissal of it as an unlikely learning opportunity. Andre pointed out that the staff lacked enthusiasm and effort as though they did not consider the program to be worth their time and would rather be elsewhere. Their perceived disinterest and lack of buy-in not only cast doubt in him about virtue of the program but was also uninspiring.

Despite academics being set at a pace and level where one could do the bare minimum, watch movies, and conceivably get through the day relatively effortlessly, participants who had been previously deemed academically disengaged by their schools were bothered by the relative absence of curricula and the apparent low expectation placed on them. The design of the program denoted institutional assumptions that participants were devoid of skill or ambition. Or perhaps, as Lorraine expressed, a far more nefarious scheme—that the institution was effectively sabotaging the youth’s success in the program and beyond. Participant narratives revealed a mutual distrust: participants were skeptical of the ethics and (educational) value of the program, and the program was suspicious of the participants as exhibited by metal detectors, searches, and escorts. These security measures are also elements of prison life that indicate and reinforce unfreedom.

I’m like if all these steps have to be taken just to get one kid to go to school, that’s how serious it is? And the worst thing is it’s not even the greatest program to learn. It’s second-hand. It’s not even a first-rate high school. So, I’m like: *Why would I wanna go someplace where... my high school wasn’t the greatest high school; if I had to rank it on a scale of one to three, it would probably get a two. I’m not gonna go to someplace that’s not a high school [and] that’s less than a three. What???* (Lamar)

Lamar contemplated the absurdity of going to what he considered great lengths to entreat a chronically truant student to an even less attractive, less academic, and thus less socially advantageous space. Subjacent to Lamar’s articulation of the futility of such an endeavour, is the question of purpose: if not to teach or develop, if not to invite or engage, then what is the program for?

Why am I Here Serving an Expulsion? The view of Black youth as ornery justified the harshest punishments for the smallest acts as risk is read on the body. Therefore, not only are the acts exaggerated to the point of catastrophizing, but the youth themselves are also catastrophized, dreaded as both a walking offense and an offence waiting to happen.

Lamar explained:

It's not like I had any violent acts in the school or anything. It's just, I don't know. I guess it was [that] the school gave me too many chances and I just kept blocking the school. At the time it was like, I can't get mad because I knew the wrong I was doing, so in my expectation I was eventually gonna get expelled but it's like *why?* Like, you don't have to do this. Like everybody was in shock...even my friends, were like: 'yo, you got expelled for *what?!!*' (Lamar)

While Lamar was able to acknowledge that his behaviour was problematic and predicted that it might escalate to a violation that might warrant expulsion, he and his friends believed that the punishment that was meted out was excessive in response to what he had done at the time. It appeared as though he was being punished for the extrapolated trajectory of his behaviour based on repeated misconduct and presumptions grounded in the aforementioned factors. This finding expands on present literature regarding at-risk students, for whom projections, perceptions and presumptions go on to “contribute to the very educational and social problems that the “at risk” identification is expected to address” (James, 2012, p. 4). Unlike Lamar, Tre had engaged in a physical altercation. He stated:

I mean like I thought it [the discipline] was excessive... and this is the first serious fight I was in so I felt like steps could have been taken that didn't have to lead to that.

Here, Tre highlighted the absence of more restorative or alternative means of addressing the issue. Tre took exception to the disciplinary approach which focused on punitive measures and seemed to miss an opportunity to implement a progressive disciplinary structure since this was his first fight. It suggests something about the school's investment, or lack thereof, in nurturing a positive relationship between the offending student and the school, adjusting his behaviour and the underlying issue(s) to which the behaviour is a response, and offending student retention overall. Tre also spoke about his father's objection to him being placed in the expulsion program:

One time, my dad came there to complain [about]: *Why am I in the expulsion program?* and they banned him from the building.

Tre's father's futile attempt to advocate for him would serve to reinforce (for Tre) the system's unwillingness to do the following: (a) ally with parents in the best interest of the student; (b) consider alternatives to excluding the student; and (c) relinquish power and control to empower this father in the eyes of his son. Tre, who saw his father as an authority figure, hereby discovered that the system was bigger than the adults in his life, which in turn increased a sense of hopelessness and surrender.

Similar feelings are stirringly articulated in Kwame's account:

Well, at first I used to feel very hurt. You know, I used to feel like...I remember the first night when I was there I cried...Because, looking back at my life, through what I had went through, especially, since I came back to Brampton, since I came to Brampton, and seeing how I got beat up in a fight and how my life is uneasy, and I was being, I mean, experiencing psychological problems, I call it being tormented in my mind. And um, I was just sad about my whole situation. And saying oh, look at me, now I'm in a Boot Camp! You know? *Where am I going? Where is my life heading to?* And it was heading

straight to destruction basically. You know so, that's how I fell into depression and stuff like that, you know? So... it was just pure abuse, way more abuse after that! You know!"

Kwame was sent to a distant military academy for males aged 10-21 years old once he was expelled. He was 14 years of age and been a victim of long-term racially motivated bullying at his mainstream school, which he reported was "filled with police." Kwame was subsequently diagnosed with depression and schizophrenia at approximately 19 or 20 years. His case illustrates a theme that was shared across participants: the system's failure to effectively investigate and account for causal factors in understanding the problematic behaviour. According to the Safe Schools Act, mental illness and special or dire circumstances are within the scope of mitigating factors used to dictate the approach to addressing the behaviour. Kwame appeared to need treatment rather than school exclusion and a militarized program.

Data from each participant's life histories showed a necessity for alternative interventions to expulsion with a bent toward both treatment and educational and socio-economic systems change. For example, Lyriq, who was raised in poverty by a substance using single mother, recalled occasionally going without food or electricity. At the age of nine, he was traumatized when his mother abandoned him unexpectedly, leaving him and his 13-year-old sister to fend for themselves and fear the worst had happened to her. Lyriq's mother returned a week later, upset that they had alerted her friends to her absence and had refrained from attending school while she was away. Like other participants, Lyriq's mental health was already significantly compromised by the time he had been expelled. He explained how being in the program exacerbated his mental illness:

It made me really angry...because I was in that situation with people who actually committed serious breaches of the law. And that when I was there, I was definitely

confused. It definitely had more negative than positive impacts for me. Yeah. I think it put me further into depression for sure. But at the same time, it also showed me like, if I continue to keep bullshitting, that I'm going to end up like these kids. I hated to make that comparison, and I still do, but it's the only way I can gauge the seriousness of the subject matter. But yeah, it just didn't feel right you know. I made a bomb threat while this kid beside me has pistols and machine guns. Like...*why am I here?*

Irrespective of the path that participants took to get there, each person ended up in the same type of space without consideration of the traumas they had endured and how the placement might harm them. In this excerpt, Lyriq not only questioned why he was so placed, bringing us back to the main theme of this subsection, but also provided a pithy and meaningful segue into the next section by elevating himself above the others in the program on a scale of offences to substantiate his view that he did not belong there. Several of the participants shared Lyriq's sentiments. Just as placing them in the expulsion programs without considering their traumas could put them at significant risk, so too could containing them in groups with disparate behaviours and needs. Participants considered themselves to have been placed in spaces with people who were involved in far more dangerous lifestyles and were doomed to continued failure.

Why Isn't 'Why?' Asked or Answered Here? Several of the participants did not know whether or not they were formally expelled, which accounted for some of their confusion as to why they were placed in the expulsion program. Also, as mentioned earlier, students have since been placed in the program without having committed an expellable offence. Since, as Goldberg (2007) asserted "skin references place and places reference" (argument 16: Skin), these programs, viewed as positive interventions are pre-emptive measures dependent upon the

prediction risk (Simmons, 2005). Race is taken to be a fundamental site of knowledge for the unmarked knower, signifying to the racialized body what it is—and by default what is not; where it is from—and the dignified origins it necessarily lacked; and ultimately where it will be placed—in terms of place as well as in hierarchies of power and economics. The location of the Black body as an object to be known, rather than a subject capable of reason, provides a rationale for participants' experiences with 'why' questions. Some participants expressed that they were not probed for context or understanding around their behaviours, while others expressed that their own queries around purpose were ignored. As Eric commented:

Every school I went to, like everywhere in the system they don't focus on the why, they focus on the what. Like take the justice system: Oh, you killed this person, you did this, you robbed this person... It's not WHY did you do that? It's not WHY did that happen. It's not maybe this person robbed their mother. I think it's more like that with Black people. When it comes to white kids, they're like "Oh my God...Why?...Ok, let's send him to rehab." But Black people? No.

Eric articulated an experience echoed by many Black people who engage with various systems—that context seems to be less relevant when assessing their actions.

Andre shared similar sentiments about his treatment in school:

They don't really ask you what's going on in the home and they don't really sit down and ask the question. They literally just say, 'You're wrong, you're wrong, you're wrong, so sit here and do your work. Tomorrow you go back to class.' That's all they really say.

They don't really ask you, 'Okay, why is this happening? Why are you saying the things you're saying? Why are you doing the things you're doing?'

Andre, the youngest participant, who was still in high school, recognized and reflected back a fundamental truth about children and youth: they tend to act out when they are unable to express themselves or healthily address issues occurring in other areas of their lives (see Gruhn & Compas, 2020). But as a Black youth, Andre was not read as a child who was vulnerable and engaging in problematic behaviour because of difficulties in his life. The reasons for his behaviour were not investigated; Andre was instead directed to comply. Andre's trust in his teachers was subsequently lost. He continued:

And if I'm wrong, tell me I'm wrong. Tell me I'm wrong. But if I'm comin' to you about a situation, why am I gonna talk to you if all you're gonna do is say, 'Okay, well...go back to class.' I don't wanna hear that.

Andre's frustration is evident as he is unable to have his emotions addressed. His expectation that upon his approach, he will be spoken *to* rather than spoke *with*, and that he will then be dismissed without any resolution is clearly expressed in this excerpt.

Kobe stated:

And then the teacher that was in the contact room told the principal...and then the principal told me I had to leave, and they never told me why I had to leave or nothing. They literally just said, 'Hey, you have to go.' And I said, 'Why do I have to go?' and, they were like, 'We don't have to explain that to you.' I said, 'Yeah, you do, 'cause you're telling me to leave the school.' And they're, like, 'No, we don't. Just leave. Blah, blah, blah...'

The administrator's refusal to answer Kobe's question showed Kobe that his feelings were unimportant and that he was not respected. Kobe was given direction that appeared to puzzle him

but expected to mindlessly comply. This interaction highlights a power dynamic that renders his feelings irrelevant and strips him of his humanity.

Another juncture where participants felt disempowered occurred in the process whereby their progress in the expulsion program was reviewed. The review committee, which was generally comprised of social workers, principals, and senior staff, including Superintendents of Education determined whether students would stay for an additional term, return to mainstream school, or transfer into an alternative program without their input, and wholly in their absence. Aren expressed frustration as he queried:

How can they tell me I'm not ready to go back to school? And then I got mad 'cause I'm like why is my life, my education, being handled by people I haven't seen in my life? Why is that? Why [are] people making the decisions for me? Why [are] people I don't know making decisions for me? I don't understand that.

Aren questioned how people who had not been acquainted with him could have a vested interest in his educational progress or overall success, particularly because they unilaterally deemed him unsuitable to continue his education outside of the expulsion program. This was yet another instance where 'why' questions were not answered, and the education's disciplinary system failed to prioritize the needs of the excluded Black students in favour of a continued and naturalized carceral state. The added surveillance and assessment, and the tracking and recording of behaviour lends weight to the claim that the hypervisible Black body lacks perspective in its inability to transcend the corporeal, but gives perspective to its observer (Mohanram, 1999, pp. 26-27). Through observation, the civilized, the professional, or the scholar can 'know' the wild captive in a way that the captive cannot know itself since it lacks the consciousness.

A body's Blackness denotes danger and threat insofar as it denotes savagery and irrationality. That said, the excluded bodies in the expulsion programs are marked not only by their skin, but also by inferred risk. As Simmons (2005) put it, "the criminal justice apparatus, as it is made manifest in the public education system, presupposes criminality; it punishes youth with the ideological and technological powers of the criminal justice system even before an act of crime" (p. 89). Simmons' (2005) assessment aptly summarizes the system's reliance on prediction of risk to oppress Black bodies and to justify the restrictions imposed upon them without feeling obliged to explain them.

Constructions of the Carceral

Constructions of the Carceral Other. As Lyriq illustrated in the previous section, participants viewed most of the other youth in the program as fundamentally different than they were. This Othering proceeds from the space, each subject's interpretation and concurrent production of the space, and by proxy, a shaping of their own subjectivity within and through the space. Du Boisian double-consciousness proves a useful concept to explain the phenomena encountered here. Du Bois (1987) explained that "it is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (p. 2). Being in the space activates identities and dominant worldviews that rationalize their own incarceration and produce them as carceral subjects or rationalizes the identities of others who they feel are not like them at all since they are looking at their peers through the dominant gaze, for example, Nasir stated:

I was around some real kids who had real problems. So, it made me kind of humble myself like oh, I was like I messed up my principal's car, I knew I shouldn't but like bro,

one guy brought a BB gun to school and *shot* his principal. One girl stabbed the teacher. You know what I mean? So, when I started sitting there listening to stories, I'm just like damn like, you guys are going through some real shit.

Stephen shared:

The white kid had super anger issues, I noticed that right when I met him; the Asian kid was like a shoplifter, he told the teacher and me too, he would go to a lot stores and steal as much as he can and he leaves; and the girl, I don't even remember I don't think she told me why she was there, probably just like a generic troublemaker like me.

Lyriq disclosed:

It was hard for me to feel safe just because of the people I was surrounded by. There was one kid who would show me pictures of big guns he had and shit. Like he thought that was cool and like 15-year-old me was terrified, like 'why are you showing me that?' And it turns out, I found out a couple years ago, that he died, he was shot and killed. I found out he died. Yeah...So, I wasn't really surprised there...

Malik recalled:

I didn't want to go. I felt like they were trying to treat me like a dummy, you know. I'm not going to that. I see who was going there too, and I felt like those kids, I don't know, now I think differently, but at the time I thought that they weren't at the same level as me you know, like 'why am I here with these guys' you know, so I stopped going. I would go and tell my mom and get lunch money because I would say I'm going to school, and then I would go to Weston Road into the building and chill with my friends, you know?

Lamar commented:

I didn't see myself as one of those kids. I'm like, why would I wanna go to that

environment? I'm a level-headed person. Why would I wanna go in an environment of people who are all upset? We have a bunch of kids now who basically hate school. I don't like it but, we have kids now who hate it.

The above selections illustrate dividing practices distinguishing their own sense of self by dramatizing the distance between them and the Other. Lamar's reference to himself as "level-headed" speaks to the mind-body or rational and controlled vs. wild and savage binary assigned to the white-Black relationship, thereby demonstrating the Black subject's desire to escape the negative connotations attached to his Black body while aspiring to the perfection ascribed to whiteness. This creates a fundamental disjuncture between the Black body and its consciousness. Relatedly, Jackson and Dangerfield (2004) theorized that there is danger in Black males' rejection of parts of themselves, specifically related to indigenous African-centred values. Black male students run the risk of ceasing to embrace these values when they are decontextualized, distorted, and recast as undesirable or deviant. Jackson and Dangerfield (2004) stressed the importance of Black males staying grounded in their cultural worldview while existing within what they refer to as a Euro-American model, despite the difficulty "switching back and forth between two modes of consciousness" (p. 127).

It should also be noted that behaviours such as Tristan's vandalism typically draw significantly different responses in the community than assault, yet in the school system both offenders arrive in the same space with their corresponding youth justice or criminal charges, doing the same indefinite term. This type of punishment could teach students like Tristan, who have committed non-violent offences as benign as truancy, that their acts are as offensive and as punishable as any other, invariably leading to feelings of hopelessness and low self-worth. The indiscriminate response also reifies the space as a dumping ground for a throwaway population

and delineates the bodies within it as constitutive of that population and endemic to the carceral space. It is little wonder, then, that Tristan ultimately manages to find some common ground between him and the other youth in the program, locating himself among the subjected in a re-articulation of Blackness as abject. Tristan stated:

...because when you listen to them a lot of time they were just trying to fit in. And maybe one didn't like to talk, or one didn't like touching people or one of them had a speech problem or maybe one didn't know if they were straight or gay. So, there was so many different things that I learned and heard from so many different people where I was like 'oh god, you guys are just like me. Maybe you guys did a little bit more, but you guys are just like me!'

Tellingly, when Tristan finds his place among the group, it does not serve to apotheosize them all, but rather, in excising Otherness from his formulation of self, it more firmly entrenches his identity as a carceral subject along with his cohort. They are all Othered, all donning a carceral identity.

Constructions of the Carceral by Others. Black students who manage to retain hope, optimism, or confidence in the education system as a true meritocracy, despite indications to the contrary, tend to face seemingly insurmountable barriers. There is an assumption that the dominant culture's value system has an inherent and universal nature that should make it easy, natural, and desirable to adopt. Fordham (1996) posited that Gramsci's concept of hegemony is central here as it denotes cultural and moral leadership of the state through the coercive power of institutions, including educational institutions (Lemelle, 1995) to support extant power structures. It is the maintenance of dominance and power through the celebration and promotion of Eurocentric practices and ethics (Fordham, 1996, p. 22). Fordham (1996) believed that

through apparatuses like the core curriculum, which is a product and reflection of ideological hegemony, “the Black Self is symbolically dissolved and reconstituted as an Other in the ideological celebration” of Western culture (Castenall & Pinar, 1993, p. 344).

As indicated earlier in this work, gender is yet another apparatus of control. Gender interacts with other aspects of social location to create multiple forms of identity and different relationships to schools and schooling (Archer & Yamashita, 2003). When asked what they had been taught about masculinity and the roles of men while growing up, participant responses shared many common themes. Several spoke about fatherhood, offering that “real men” work and are present for their children. These responses generally came from participants whose fathers were absent and the sentiment was shared by both mothers, each of whom had raised their children with little to no support from the fathers. Most of the participants who reported having their fathers present to some degree, considered the picture of masculinity to be the opposite of what their fathers reflected (i.e., contributing adequate, regular financial support and being actively engaged in positive parenting).

Andre asserted:

I wanna be a good man. I wanna be a great guy. I wanna be a guy who follows my dreams, gets a wife and, you know, settle in with my wife and have kids and...I wanna be a good, happy guy. I don't wanna be like my father who don't see his kid. I don't wanna be that guy who goes around and does stupidity.

Kwame, however, shared that while the notion of masculinity is elusive and difficult to attain, he believed that it involved continuous work towards building “an empire” like his father did. Indeed, the frequency with which the idea that work or gainful employment was illustrative of manhood, was remarkable. Also noteworthy were the following regularly surfacing attributes:

agency, understanding, leadership, independence, toughness, assertiveness, aggressiveness, strength, absence of weakness, and the notion of acquisition (i.e., of property, a woman, an education).

Derrick stated:

To me, to be a man, it's to hold your own, to not always to think you have to lay back and wait for someone else and to always know if things go wrong then I don't have to lie back on nobody but myself. To take your own...to handle your own things. Stuff like that. Instead of asking, like let's say I have my own house later on, instead of paying someone to mow my lawn or do something like that, I can do it myself, to cut my trees, I can do it myself. If I have to set tiles on the floor or something in the backyard, I can get a couple buddies, just like stuff that to know, to do by yourself.

Kwame stated that a man was:

Someone that's responsible, someone that's aware, or, not only uh, not only aware of his surroundings but aware of his in depth, um, self, and someone who cares. You know, and someone who tries to understand and someone who wants to get in touch with the divine nature, you know, so that he can...It's back to what I just said, he can have a mind, or a complete, strong, mind of understanding...because his will should be to understand first before he does anything else.

And when Derrick was asked what kind of man he was taught to be, he stated:

[They] tell me to get an education. Don't cry, respect your elders...respect the ladies, the women. You know—um, never hit a lady. Try to keep going to church, keep God in your heart and that...yea you know, the good stuff. Yeah, the good stuff.

In addition to Derrick's distinctive amalgam of masculinity, value, and virtue, he emphasized the imperative of an education as did several of the other participants, shedding light on the complex relationship that young Black males have with educational institutions as socializing-cum-carceral apparatuses. Schools impart various messages through both official and hidden curricula about what it means to be a man. These messages are reinforced by Ideological State Apparatuses (Althusser, 1971). School then punishes young Black males for asserting such traits and banishes them to programs which, as an extension of the mainstream school system, purport to foster responsible citizenship by—ironically—removing their citizenship and stripping them of the rights, agency, understanding, and education that they have been taught makes them men. It also continues to punish and attempts to extinguish adaptive behaviours that demonstrate other 'manly' traits like toughness, leadership, and independence effectively barring them from evolving into manhood as they, as young Black men, understand it. Aptly, Jackson and Dangerfield (2004) warned that Black men risk losing their rights to Black manhood or their recognition as men once they are constructed as ineducable, incompetent and thereby unable to financially support their family.

It is apparent here how identity works as a mode of oppression, not only incarcerating the young men in this study within the confines of their race, gender, class, and school status, but also denying them access to requisite masculine identity markers and detaining them within unfavourable identity categories. Participants theorized why such barriers and hardships exist as they worked through the understandings of their experiences in their bodies. The wide ambit of colonization encompassing identity formation is illustrated in the next interview excerpt. When asked what it means to be a Black man in the world today, Eric responded:

Under attack. There are a lot of things in place that are trying to take away from our selves. We don't really know ourselves because that was taken from us...but in a sense we let it go too, right?

Eric does two significant things here; first, in alluding to the history of enslavement and the concomitant cultural genocide of his displaced sub-Saharan African ancestors, he highlighted the anti-Blackness inherent in identity paradigms. Largely held as an iterative process involving self-definition or self-production, identity poses a troubling paradox when applied to Black people, which extends beyond the treatment of social constructionism as race neutral. Identity becomes problematic because Black people are unable to encounter themselves independent of their inimical depiction within white supremacist discourse. As Marable (2001) stated, “the essential tragedy of being Black and male is our inability as men and as people of African descent, to define ourselves without the stereotypes that larger society imposes upon us, and through various institutional means perpetuates and permeates within our entire culture” (p. 17). The disparate way in which what Althusser (1971) referred to as interpellation, applies to Black and white individuals and the power upon which it is predicated, demonstrates that how Western scholars tend to theorize identity neglects Black ontologies and epistemologies with respect to it. More specifically, it fails to account for the always antecedent notion of Blackness, conceived extrinsic to the ways of knowing and being held by the people to whom it refers and seeks to oppress. Bodies function as signifiers of meaning imposed on them via subjectivities (Foucault & Miskowiec, 1986).

In claiming that “we don't know ourselves,” Eric highlighted that the intrusion of whiteness has removed the sine qua non of identity formation—the subject's agency in creating and encountering the self (Marable, 2001). Secondly, while acknowledging that Black men have

been victimized, Eric does not present them as powerless, but rather somewhat complicit, reflecting their agency in the despoliation. Eric seemed to be reconciling internalized hegemonic masculinity possessing strength and power, with the disenfranchisement of Black men. Engaging in a double-conscious exercise, Eric thereby protects his interpellated image of a ‘real man;’ furthermore, he makes it possible to see himself in that image or believe that it is still attainable for him.

James Baldwin (1985) asserted that “the action of the White Republic, in the lives of Black men has been and remains, emasculation” (p. 21), which would be in response to the fears the White Republic has projected onto the Black male body—viewed as hyper-masculinized. Just as Eric’s previous submission did, several participant responses suggested an alignment with Baldwin’s claim. Kwame, as another example, said this:

I think that a lot of Black people, because of slavery, and because of their continual racism, because of what the white man has structured...so um, for us to be clustered up, I think um...it seems, it seems that lots of white men...or for the most part, white men are more intelligent than most Black men. Or more like they have greater understanding and are more sensible than a good amount of the Black men here because um...they have taken over the system, basically, for a very long time. You know, for a few millenniums basically. And the Black man, we used to be more intelligent, when we were back home in Africa, but somehow we just...it has to do with religion too, you know um...we basically disrespected God, and God punished us and he made us go down in our intelligence. So, we became...he punished us saying that we would become slaves of all the nations and that’s what happened. Our nations got robbed, Africa got robbed of its values. Including our understanding, our knowledge and wisdom, overall sensibility. You

know, so um, in regard to race, I...like how everyone said, the Black man was robbed by the white man.

Like Eric, Kwame engaged in victim blaming and divested colonial machinations of absolute power in the despoliation of Black peoples. By contrast though, Kwame believed that the plight of Black people is divine retribution, placing ultimate power in God. As evidenced by the references of enslavement in participants' responses, both participants believed that socio-historical elements were key to understanding contemporary Black male being. Jackson (2006) argued that slavery and racist/racial depictions of the Black body are responsible for the scripting of Black bodies in media and film and have had deleterious effects on the psyche of Black people in the Western world. Jackson (2006) added that pejorative inscriptions interfere with daily life, interrupt the possibilities of social cohesion among racialized groups, and facilitate proscriptions of Black people. Participant responses exhibited both the awareness of the negative attitudes and the resultant effects on the psyche. As Tre commented:

I think of all the races, we have it the hardest. I know other races experience racism, too, but other races aren't being denied jobs. Other races aren't 50% of the prison population. Other races aren't facing [an] AIDS epidemic like we are. I think the worst things are happening to Blacks, especially Black males. We are just being almost targeted.

Stephen stated:

We're all looked at as crooks, every one of us. I don't know how many times people just look at me throughout the city even on my way, people just look at me like I'm about to shoot them or rob them. Like, what? Calm down...

Since an individual's sense of self – their subjectivity – is constructed through that individual's engagement with a multitude of discourses, the acceptance of the relations of

unequal social power and where they sit in the hierarchy is firmly engrained. Noguera (2003) also offered a way to consider how Black youth's internalization of low expectations and prospects can manifest in ways that further alienate them from academic and social success. Given the acquired hopelessness, some disadvantaged students refuse to comply with the school's rules and expectations, resulting in schools operating like prisons as they expend evermore energy on discipline and control at the expense of its other functions. The cessation of striving toward academic success is often decontextualized and misunderstood (Noguera, 2003).

For some of the participants, the experience with grappling with these insecurities and feelings of inadequacy are all too real. Kwame shared:

Sometimes, the reason we hold our feelings in is because we don't know how to describe what we are going through. It's just all complete feelings, you know, it's just pain, even, you know just weird feelings, strong going back from the mind to the heart and just shooting up back from the heart into the mind. You know, so many times we can't describe it. We're just saying, how can we be perfect? How can we be looked up to? How can we, um, be that right [up]standing citizen in this world. It's like we compare ourself...or...it's like I compare myself to a statue of the ancient days, you know, I say 'oh, look at that!' You know? 'Women are admiring this big rock shaped like a man!' it's like 'oh, that's a man! He's skilled, he's fit, you know um, he's a compass!' You know, I don't mean to call anyone's name, but I even checked out a book one time...the statues of Julius Caesar, you know? Ha! That's a man.

Kwame re-invoked the theme of carcerality as he grappled with his overall feelings of hopelessness and his belief that the man he wants to be, a 'real man,' is beyond his grasp.

Several of the participants expressed similar sentiments, feeling pre-determined and contained or limited in their possibilities. For them and other young men like them, their choices are to acquiesce, to resist the shackled identity or be otherwise subversive, but there are consequences to each. Resistance could take the form of an embodied attempt to reclaim the appropriated Black Self, rejecting school authority and claims made for formal education, avoiding school and rejecting socially defined race and gender roles (Fordham, 1996; Jackson, 2006; Lemelle, 1995); however, these can also be seen as bolstering and reifying perceptions. Conversely, rejecting dominant claims through achieving academically and conforming to school norms and expectations is seen as resistance by some, still by others it is seen as a betrayal. This is then condemned as “acting white” or becoming the Other. It is read as an acceptance of dominance, a public and political validation of the views and ideas of the dominant (Fordham, 1996) and denouncement of “deviant” or underachieving Black individuals. This presents a sort of Catch-22 situation for young Black men. In the comment below, Malik instantiated this pervasive conundrum via a recollection of his interactions with staff in the program who revealed their preconceived notions of him.

As Malik illustrated:

People there just treat you like you're a delinquent. They treat you like, 'cause you made a mistake, that that's your character. You know what I'm sayin'? Cause even if they talk to me like, 'oh, I know you're not that guy. I know you're like this. I know deep down you're saying, 'well, I have to watch out for his anger.' I don't like that cause you're basically showing me that you think that at any time I'm just gonna blow up. And, you know, why don't you just show me that you could see better in me? Every other day they would ask me, they'd be like '[Malik], don't get mad. Don't get mad.' And I'm like, 'I'm

not going to get mad. Why are you saying that to me?’ You know? And they’re like, ‘I’m just sayin’, just don’t get mad.’ I’m like, ‘I’m not.’ It was just annoying, and they never really said, ‘I see you getting your work done right.’

Malik recognized there was an expectation that he would be angry and keenly observed how the confirmation bias of the staff members served to keep him locked into their negative impression of him. Malik also described an instance of discursive violence, in that the dominant discourses or ideas about how he was expected to act as a young, Black, male were imposed upon him and served to restrict his possibilities because they overshadowed, obscured, and mediated any positive behaviours or counter-narratives. Malik’s experience speaks to the inability for Black people to transcend their bestial *Blackness* or the other meanings imposed on their Black bodies. As the space is being produced and re-produced by the bodies within it, so too are the students undergoing a recurrent process of being marked and remarked. To successfully graduate from the program, the students must prove to be something different than what the space creates—different from what they are expected to be. And they are challenged to remain impervious to the violence of the space that imprisons them. If participants manage to perform this difference, if they present as quiet, pleasant and “well-behaved,” they are viewed by staff with scepticism and tested for sustainability.

Soja (2010) said that “the resulting real and imagined geographies, the material, symbolic, and hierarchically organized spaces of colonial occupation along with the processes that produce them, contextualize enclosure, exclusion, domination, [and] disciplinary control” (p. 37). For Foucault (1982), this control extends beyond disciplinary power, which is concerned with laws and the normalization of individual bodies, to biopower or “the power of life,” which is concerned with the statistical averages of entire populations, bell curves and monitoring

trends. This power produces its own resistance; therefore, when Black bodies believe they are resisting, they are merely buoying or augmenting what they attempt to resist as described above. Since Black men are seen as so far removed from the norm, any form of resistance they perform makes them more deviant, thereby bolstering and reinforcing the norm. This means that the carceral identity that the young Black men in this study were marked with, is itself carceral, in that it keeps them locked into it and there appears to be no way to shed it.

Findings of Carceral Continuities

The carceral identity works in consonance with Goffman's (1963) concept of stigma. Fanon (1952) recognized the dichotomous, co-constructive relationship between the Black and white subjects. Additionally, Jackson (2006) noted that "we come to know dialectically what it means to be Black by negating what it means to be quintessentially white" (p. 52). Jackson (2006) theorized that the Black subject's desire to escape the negative connotations of his Black body while aspiring to the perfection ascribed to whiteness creates a fundamental disjuncture between the Black body and its consciousness which corrodes the psyche. Having rejected the carceral identity associated with the expulsion program, fearing the stigma, and experiencing the disjuncture, Lamar commented:

[Everybody] got a reputation from going to that school: Oh, you must be a bad kid. Like, you must be one of those kids who sell drugs, you know...or fight kids and do stuff.

Those kids have no control...I didn't see myself as one of those kids.

Lamar was concerned about his reputation because the status of being associated with the program lingers even after release; so that one is indefinitely marked as previously incarcerated; therefore, a certain class of student—or, rather, a non-student, a school reject, and ultimately a criminal.

Participants shared stories about how their bodies, marked with carcerality, navigated spaces outside of the expulsion program once they were no longer involved because they either aged out, were transferred out, or dropped out. Most found that having participated in the program, limited their prospects and shaped their interactions in other educational settings. As Lyriq shared:

Then I got to [X program], and then the same feelings of being angry and depressed came back. Because not only did I register late at [X program] by two weeks, but I had to have a meeting at [X program] with the principal. My dad, both of my parents or whatever, and some other person, and for like an hour, they were just yelling at me, like ‘we need to know you’re serious, we need to know you’re committed and willing to make this work. You have to show me like’—this is what the principal was saying, ‘you have to show me you won’t pull the same antics that you did at [X school]’ And I was like ‘I just did the Safe Schools program, why are you asking me this shit?’ And obviously I was getting really mad and really worked up. I’m ready to start screaming and then finally after an hour of like deliberating, the principal was like ‘alright, this is your only shot, don’t screw up!’ So already there’s this immense pressure, no friends, I haven’t even chosen my courses. I feel like I went into the system, and they just tossed me around.

In addition to feeling immediate pressure and despite having completed a program to gain access to mainstream school, Lyriq was met with skepticism and reluctance. This demonstrates not only the low expectation and the lack of trust on the part of the school administration, but also serves as a presage to increased surveillance often leading to recidivism.

Embodied carcerality situates its bearers in perpetual confinement. Like Kawash’s (1999) homeless body, the Black body is one of placelessness in public. Since it is solely a carceral

body in the colonial imaginary, the Black body in freedom is out of place, a threat, and therefore threatened. This was illustrated in several of the participants recollections.

Stephen shared:

I remember that teachers who run the school that I didn't even have were complaining about me - just the way I was going about in the hallways and stuff like that, I was like *what?* Me just being in hallway was a problem...

Andre recalled:

...I remember my principal told me my teachers vouched for me that I was a good guy. 'Just give him another chance.' Other teachers I didn't know—she didn't say no names, but I could tell who they were—she's like, 'oh yeah they said you looked like you were suspicious in the hallways,' and stuff like that. 'They think you are up to something.' I told her, 'What the frig?!? I'm not doing nothing!'

The responses of teachers to whom Stephen and Andre were unfamiliar demonstrate that the native body's mobility in free or public spaces, such as the hallways of school were constructed as problematic to the system. Also noteworthy is the confusion in Stephen's response, presaging a sort of cognitive dissonance involving his understanding of hallway spaces as having multiple social and practical functions available to all members of the student body equally, vis-à-vis the unearned restrictions and depraved character imputed to him. Stephen understood his Blackness as identifying him as a second-class citizen of the school community and predetermining his illegitimacy in the space. Just as, in Foucauldian reasoning, prison creates a type of subject, an object of knowledge, so too, does the school as a carceral space resembling the prison. School staff accounts of marginalized students claim to facilitate understanding and provide insight about this population, yet based on decontextualized behaviour, they merely serve to further

hinder these students' chances for success and perpetuate the school as a carceral space. Understandably, this can have devastating consequences on the subject's self-concept.

Carceral continuities were also evident in participants' adult lives as they sought pathways to survival. Many of the participants sought to shed their carceral identities once they had moved on from their expulsions. Malik expressed that the fact that he is seen as "bad", makes him want to excel despite it being so difficult to do well. Lamar, who was able to secure a minimum wage job, stated:

I want to become at least a manager, and after that I want to become at least the boss of the place. I wanna say something is mine. I'm not just a worker. That I am just a worker at the end of life, that's the ultimate disappointment for me...I don't just wanna be a field worker.

Lamar referred to disempowered field labour evoking that which his enslaved ancestors endured during their carceral condition. His statement suggests that there is a way of being and/or a way of being *known* that he desired to transcend. Similarly, most participants spoke about wanting to finish school and find jobs but also of the barriers to achieving these goals. About his experiences job searching, Tre stated:

People see me and without even knowing I went through an expulsion program, they just assume I'm lazy, I don't really want to work, I have a bad work ethic. So they don't even give me a chance to prove myself and that is what frustrates me the most.

Understandably, themes of hopelessness and the retention of carceral identity to varying extents surfaced in most the interviews as participants spoke about their present circumstances. In addition to unemployment, they were plagued with homelessness or precarious housing, mental illness and substance dependence and some expressed feeling resigned to this fate from

time to time. A number of the men expressed feeling as though everyone had given up on them, that they should follow suit and give up on themselves and that nobody would miss them if they were gone. For example, Andre speculated:

If I decided tomorrow to rob a bank, no one's gonna care. I will get arrested and when I'm gone, no one's going to care that I'm gone – probably only my mom and my family.

The two mothers interviewed explicitly linked their son's dejection and negative feelings and estimations of their self-worth to their school expulsion and involvement in the programs. Donna shared:

It made him become very isolated... he was embarrassed by being expelled and he became angry. He was contemplating whether or not he should be involved in criminal activity 'cause at that point he's like, 'I don't care. Why bother?'

Lorraine explained that Kobe, who had engaged in criminal activity and was detained, harboured resentment because while he had earned a certificate of completion from secondary school through the program, he did not get a diploma. She stated:

He was very self-conscious that it was different... he didn't want to be different... but yeah, I still hang [the certificate] up... there are times that he has taken it down and I've put it back up.

Several of the young men, like Kobe and Kevin, who was featured in the introduction, had been incarcerated in detention centres, and almost all of them faced challenges finding gainful employment and sorting through many of the socio-economic elements of their lives thus far. These findings are aligned with Wortley and Tanner's (2008) study which found participants were more likely to be involved in criminalized activity if they had previously perceived racism in education, housing, and/or employment (see Figure 4). Prison industrial complex theorists

furthered their arguments by asserting that the disenfranchisement that criminalized people experience extends far beyond their prison sentences. Imprisonment has historically destroyed families by removing the male breadwinners, leaving children abandoned, families crippled and creating desperation which may lead to the criminalized activity of those left behind (Foucault, 1977); furthermore, once they are released, ex-felons and convicts are left to fend for themselves in a system that does not support their reintegration as productive members of society by offering legitimate avenues for self-sustainment (Foucault, 1977). Criminal records preclude them from finding acceptable employment, and they are also ineligible for housing or social assistance. In addition, they lose parental rights and funding for education and training (Brewer & Heitzeg, 2003).

Foucault elucidated the prison processes and practices that inevitably transform persons who offend into pathologized delinquents with inherent penchants for offending. In Foucault's words, "prison enables delinquency and illegality to reinforce one another perpetually—to objectify the delinquency behind the offense and to solidify delinquency in the movement of illegalities" (Rabinov, 1984, p. 230). To that end, Foucault argued, detention causes recidivism. The imposition of violent constraints and the abuse of power produces delinquency among inmates who lose faith in a justice system that is unable to detect or protect against the extrajudicial conditions imposed upon them, thus relinquish their guilt to go on to commit further illegalities (Foucault, 1986). Participants' experiences exemplify Foucault's carceral archipelago, in that "techniques and technologies of confinement seep out of carceral spaces into the everyday, domestic, street, and institutional spaces, including spaces that are typically associated with 'care'... with which former inmates...come into contact (Carceral Geography Working

Group, 2020). This recognizes ‘the carceral’ as spatial, emplaced, mobile, embodied, and affective” (Carceral Geography Working Group, 2020).

Carceral Embodiment

A process of carceral embodiment occurs throughout participants’ time in the expulsion program as part of the development of their carceral subjectivity. Interviews reveal a pattern whereby participants demonstrate the internalization of the pernicious messages about their nature from the ideological state apparatuses and the operation of the carceral space. According to Merleau-Ponty (1994), the body obtains consciousness of self via movement through space and interaction with various environments, allowing for the ability to differentiate self from the world. Applying theories about how space is constructed, participants develop a sense of themselves in the space over time in correspondence with the meaning and function of the space, the other bodies in the space, and throughout various encounters.

Foucault viewed the self as being able to take on different forms simultaneously as it constantly shifts and permutates. This transformation was evident in participants’ earlier responses, where they expressed that they were not aptly placed in the program; that they did not wish to be in the program; and that they regretted not attending or functioning well while they were in the program. When asked how he felt about his performance and behaviour in the program, Malik reflected the following: “A couple days I came in drunk. So that wasn’t good.” I asked him why he had been attending the program drunk and he responded, “Cause I didn’t wanna be in the program! I hated it.” Malik then added:

I didn’t want to go to that school. In my head I was thinking *whatever*. Thinking about it now, I should have stayed in school. At the time, it was just crazy cuz everyone I knew

was not going. Everyone was skipping 24/7. Everyone had their motives. People wanted to get money and do this or that.

Andre shared that he did not contribute much and was “more closed” and “isolated” while in the program. He stated:

I didn't like being there 'cause I liked to go to school and see my friends and...you know what I'm sayin'? When people...who don't care about stuff, like, it's beneficial to them because they're like, “I don't need to see friends. I just come here and get help and then cut.

When asked what changes could have been made to improve the program for him, Andre said that it was him that should have behaved differently; he said, “I didn't really speak in that class in Fresh Start, not even in the counselling part, I just didn't really speak. I think I would be more open...

Marquis commented:

I just didn't care. I was just...nowadays I'm awake, you know? But all of that going through school and stuff, I was like 'I don't care.' And plus, they messed me up for getting on ball teams and stuff like that. I just didn't care no more.

It is noteworthy that the participants located the failure within themselves. They were seemingly oblivious to the negative effect of the program even as they recalled behaviour that was uncharacteristic of them, such as escapism through alcohol use, withdrawal, and apathy, respectively. Furthermore, while social priorities, motivations and other factors could be offered as reasons participants were unsuccessful in the expulsion programs, it did not appear to occur to them that the program was not designed to enable them to function any differently within it.

Hegemonic discourses presenting school as wholesome and operating solely upon meritocracy

and Black people as deficient, effectuate participants' inclination to blame themselves for their failure in the programs. In these Black male participants' estimations, the program was supposed to improve their behaviour and trajectory and if it failed to work for them, it was because they did not engage since they were not ready or were immature rather than because the program was defective, despite that in their observation, it had not worked for anyone else. When asked what he disliked about the program, Eric responded:

I guess my attitude when I was there. I wasn't too receptive. I don't think any of us really were. But now if I had to go there, I would tap into myself on a whole 'nother level...if I was there now, hell yeah I'd engage. But at the time I wasn't ready for it.

Eric added:

I take full responsibility for my decisions. I can't blame nobody else. The people that tried, I saw them try...maybe at the time I wouldn't recognize it...but [if] you give someone all you got...[and] they don't take it, they don't take it. That don't got nothing to do with you.

When asked how the program impacted him, Kobe replied:

In a good way...but then because of what happened...I messed up. Like if I didn't do what I did, it would have impact me even better. I probably would have been more than halfway done my credits. I probably would have only had to do one more year and I could have gotten into college next year or something. So, I felt like I didn't let the program finish me...You know, like I did something stupid so...I felt like it could have impacted me much greater. I just didn't let it happen.

Lyriq articulated his growth and resilience since his time in secondary school. He identified his shortcomings as both internal and external, yet still overlooked the school's responsibility in his experiences of academic success or lack thereof.

Looking back...the difference between now and then, is that when things get tough for me now, I persevere. Back then, when the odds were stacked against me, I would just shut down, right? I wouldn't do anything. I had no coping mechanisms or support structure. So, I would just shut down. I would go to school, but I would sit in the library all day. I would go to school and make the attempt to go to school, but I wouldn't go to class.

The concept of *carceral embodiment* used for this study is exhibited by the participants in various ways and relates to the embodiment that Hacking (1999) introduced, which is the interaction between the classification and the classified or the interaction between the label and the individuals within the labeled group. Hacking stated that, as a result of being classified in a certain manner, the individuals, and their experiences of themselves are changed. As Haslanger (1995) articulated, "our attributions have the power to both establish and reinforce groupings which eventually come to 'fit' the classifications" (p. 99). Hacking (1999) distinguished the classification as the social construct rather than the individual in the group being classified but the idea and the object are often confused. The label is often taken to mean both the objects (or individuals) of a certain sort and the sort itself.

When participants incorporate references of Blackness into the development of their identities, these references have less to do with their actual skin colour or physical attributes than they do the essentialist notions and misconceptions about what it means to be Black. They internalize the misperceptions of shared culture, history, ideologies, behaviours, and mentalities.

The label “Black” and the idea of “Blackness” carry with them all of the prejudice and negative connotations with which they were created. The idea of a Black person, consciously or subconsciously, refers both to the individual person, and to a greater extent, the essence of “Blackness” the individual represents and embodies. This idea creates the context, conjures up images, and sets limitations for the subject around actions and reactions, tendencies and potential. Below is Malik’s articulation of how the program staff’s preconceived notions shaped his experiences in the program:

The teachers were good. They tried. They just think... They [were] getting files and papers on us. They don’t know what to think. I know this now; back then, I didn’t think that. I thought these guys thought we were just dummies.

Malik’s remark that the staff “tried,” but were relatively powerless to help him also reveals his internalized deficiency perspective where he and his peers are concerned. This establishes the internalization of Blackness as abject as another manifestation of the carceral continuities that extend beyond the participants’ time in the programs.

The aforementioned perceived physicality of the Black male body, combined with the absence of mind in the form of self-discipline, temperance, rationale, and their perceived propensity for lawlessness, the freed Black male was constructed as a key threat; a threat to personal safety, public security, and white dominance through privilege, industry, and capital. As Shad et al. (2002) articulated, “as long as slaves were held in bondage, society was hardly interested in their fate; but once slaves were freed, society was extremely concerned about its own security” (p. 200). The narratives in this section reveal how the discourse of inherent aggression attributed to the biology of the Black male serves to justify their punishment,

detainment, and containment—within schools and in society on a larger scale—and links deviance to white privilege in colonial theory.

Chapter Summary

Chapter five provided a thematic analysis of the findings featuring direct excerpts from participant responses. The findings and analysis are combined because in my view, organizing findings into themes is never a neutral or objective process devoid of analysis, interpretation, or the making and imposition of meaning. The findings, guided by the research questions, and substantiated by the theoretical framework confirm the anti-Black racism woven into the education system and reveal that the participants' Black race was a salient factor determining their experiences both within and outside of the school disciplinary processes. Their Blackness, as understood by them through experience, socialization, and dominant or hegemonic discourse, was also a factor colouring the meaning they made of their experiences.

Participants who had not attended secondary school for years, decades for some, were able to recall the spatial characteristics of the Safe Schools program, the dynamics between them and their peers, the dynamics between them and the authority figures in the program, and things said to them with great clarity, indicating the considerable impression the experience left on them. It could be argued that the effects suggest that the school disciplinary experiences and expulsion programs were traumatic for the young men. What came through clearly in these findings was that irrespective of participant age, mode of exclusion, program location, or year that they were excluded, they described similar carceral experiences with regard to their school exclusion and have integrated these experiences into their understanding of who they are and what they can become.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter follows the presentation of findings and analysis as related to the relevant theory and literature on anti-Black racism, spatiality, and identity with a discussion of the meaning and significance of the findings in relation to the research questions and context of key theories. The research questions are addressed sequentially through the linkages of data to pertinent theories and philosophies. Also included is a critical analysis of the research approach. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, areas for future research, and a brief summary.

Carceral Identity and Subjectivity

This research demonstrates that carceral experiences in and through neo-colonial institutions and in everyday life have profound bearing on identity. Its conclusion that expulsion programs as carceral spaces significantly influence young Black men's self concepts and impose upon them what I call *carceral identities* is consistent with the literature indicating that there exists a mutually constitutive relationship between space and the bodies within it (Foucault, 1979; Lefebvre, 1991; Razack, 2008).

This study's findings align with Foucault's (1982) three modes of objectification of the subject: (a) dividing practices through spatial and/or social exclusion—whereby the subject is objectified through a process of division within the self—and from others and thereby given personal and social identity; (b) scientific classification; and (c) subjectification—the processes by which the human being turns themselves into a subject, through self-understanding, which is

mediated by an external superior. Razack (2008) spoke of the “arbitrary character of the law whereby stereotypes hold sway and arguments, in the absence of evidence of wrong-doing, rests primarily on the idea that they are not like us and they will pose a threat to us” (p. 34). More specifically, ‘they’—these Black students, are inferior to the civilized and refined white people making the decisions about their lives. “They”—the savage Black students, will do harm to the civilized masses—the rest of the student body, if not contained and controlled.

Notwithstanding their exclusion from the human species, it was evident through participant responses that they had experienced shifts in their self concepts as a result of being in the alternative [to] school spaces and the carceral nature of the space produced a particular kind transformation. According to Foucault (1986), the subject is constituted not fully of their own accord or invention, but by way of cultural, societal, historical, and social impositions. Employing Foucault’s (1986) theory, the ways in which the participants gained self-knowledge or related to themselves, varied depending on context and over time as they were constantly produced and reproduced by environmental, contextual, and historical conditions. The intrusion of white supremacist ideology affixing notions of Blackness developed outside of, and in spite of, Black cultural contexts, and created a paradox for participants concerning identity and self-determination. This paradox occurred because it was impossible for them to encounter themselves outside of the matrix of whiteness, which is yet another carceral device.

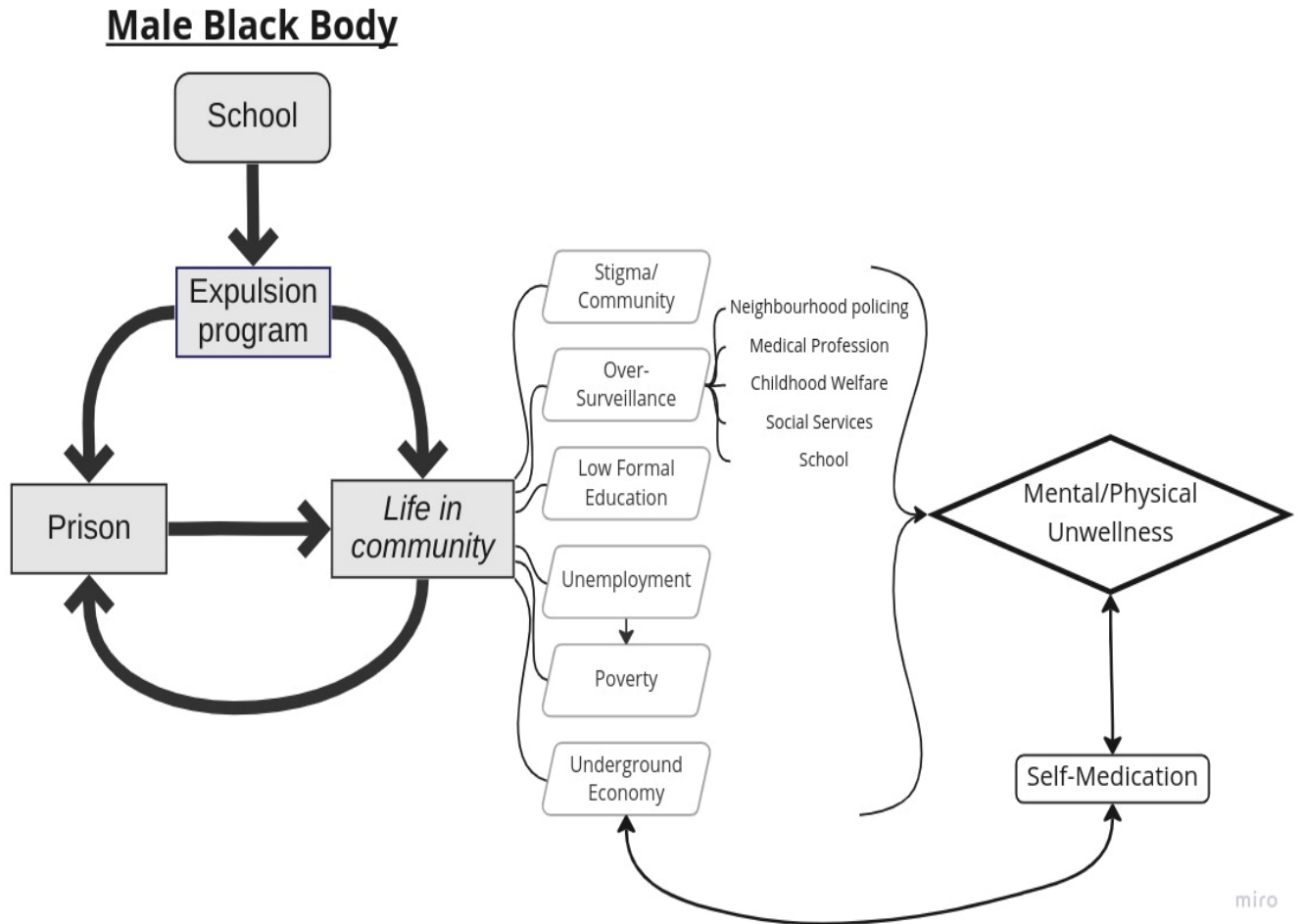
Carnality necessitates carcerality, and according to Freire (1972), “precisely because they are ‘ungrateful’ and ‘envious,’ the oppressed are regarded as potential enemies who must be watched” (p. 59). The participants, therefore, existed as mere symbols in the program, and it was the meaning ascribed to their Black male bodies in addition to the function of the space that established and validated it as a carceral space. Foucault (1977) theorized that “the systems of

punishment are to be situated in a certain “political economy” of the body...it is always the body that is at issue—the body and its forces, their utility and their docility, their distribution, and their submission” (p. 172). The uncanny similarities in the management of bodies between the two institutions—namely, the deprivation of rights, the objectification, the subordination of subjects to the command of superiors, the isolation, enforcement of daily routines and forced labour for substantially less compensation than that which is paid to the free man, the reliance on superiors for the basic human needs (Davis, 2003; Hirsh, 1992)—suggest ideological parallels, congruent objectives and relative positioning on the same continuum for targeted populations.

Goldberg (2007) asserted that “incarceration has many modalities” (argument 13: Carcerality). In addition to disciplinary technologies which were the preconditions to modern capitalism (Foucault, 1977), this study shows that excluded Black bodies are incarcerated within their skin, making their subjectivity invisible while their skin is hyper-visible; they are incarcerated within the bereft spaces of their urban neighbourhoods; they are incarcerated within and confined to their lives, afflicted by occlusion, abjectness, and ineptitude, and limited in their possibilities. Finally, the Black male participants in this study are incarcerated in their schools, which, as Wacquant (2001) described “operate in the manner of institutions of confinement whose primary mission is not to educate but to ensure ‘custody and control’—to borrow the motto of many departments of corrections” (p. 108). They are always subject to carceral surveillance. This is all as the participants are being taught—that freedom is their rightful inheritance, and that school is the path to social mobility.

Figure 4

The Many Modalities of Carcerality



The figure above shows the common trajectory of the school excluded Black male, moving through various modes of carcerality, from: 1) the school into the expulsion program; 2) the expulsion program straight into the prison resulting from the over-surveillance and criminalizing practices of the program (i.e., searches, police presence, proximity to criminalized others and neighbourhoods, etc.), or 4) the expulsion program to life in the community, which ultimately leads to prison because of the various modes of over-surveillance (e.g. child welfare) compounding the socio-ecological and economic realities they face (Owusu-Bempah et al., 2018). The figure illustrates the reach of carceral surveillance and that these elements of Black

life are also determinants of mental and physical unwellness (Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014; Walker et al., 2005), which could lead to self-medication, participation in the underground economy, and imprisonment (Duck & Rawls, 2012; Kolla et al., 2020).

The Ontology of Space and Carceral Dislocation

In reflecting on their interpretations of hegemonic masculinity, participants revealed a fundamental ontological rupture. The magnified cultural incongruence, denial and restriction of Black males' cultural authenticity and long-standing systems of oppression create barriers to Black males' access to the dominant culture's version of masculinity and to the power which is tied into that model masculinity (Hecht et al., 2003). Staples (1995), a Black journalist, shared a personal narrative describing his experience as a student living in a U.S. neighbourhood adjacent to the local university:

I'd been a fool. I'd been walking the streets grinning good evening to people who were frightened to death of me. I did violence to them by just being... I tried to be innocuous but didn't know how. The more I thought about how I moved, the less my body belonged to me. I became a false character riding alongside it. (p. 22)

Staples (1995) experienced his body being *Blackened*, which was so vastly different from how he conceived of himself as a morally upright student, that he felt disembodied or dispossessed of his body. Staples (1995), Fanon (1952), and the Black male participants in this study have similar life experiences. The young men indicated that they were always already deprecated and scorned – even at present. Participants expressed they had no agency over how they were perceived in the interactions they entered into with school staff. This Blackening that occurred means more than the aforementioned invocation of a stigmatized or soiled identity but is also doing the work of demarcating a criminal class from the remainder of the student body. It is a reminder that “Black

males inherit and produce a different cultural voice than white males” (Lemelle, 1995, p. 22). Findings indicate that the men in this study inherited colonized cultural voices and were limited in their capacity to produce anything authentic.

Baldwin (1961) famously declared, “to be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious, is to be in a rage almost all the time” (p. 205). Yet corporeal representations of the Black body depict a being that lacks consciousness, while it personifies rage; a condition that positions it as subordinate. The matter of hegemonic masculinity with its prescriptions of toughness, independence, and agency provides unique insight into the disempowering experience of double consciousness. This is particularly poignant since, as Freire (1972) argued, “never in history has violence been initiated by the oppressed” (p. 7). Through indoctrination in school, Black male participants were made to believe that they were the marked initiators of violence, warranting punishment and containment; however, Freire (1972) maintained that as the oppressed, they could not be the initiators of violence; instead, the oppressed are the result of violence. There would be no oppressed without the prior situation of violence that established their subjugation; subsequently, the struggle for liberation is a logical next step (Freire, 1970), although typically mischaracterized by the system. The question “Why am I here?” that surfaced in most of the interviews is evidence of a cognitive dissonance resulting from the monstrous disjuncture between participants’ natural proclivity to be free and naturalized carceral identities affixed to their male Blackness and produced by systemic technologies of power.

Du Bois (1897) described the state to which cognitive dissonance is a symptom, as being outcasts and strangers in our own house. Dubois (1897) explained the following:

the ‘shades of the prison-house’*[sic]* closed round about us all: walls strait and stubborn to the whitest, but relentlessly narrow, tall, and unscalable to sons of night who must plod darkly against the stone, or steadily, half hopelessly watch the streak of blue above.

(The Atlantic, 1987)

Freedom being the sine qua non in the quest for human completion (Freire, 1972), the participants strove to retain some hope in the educational, economical, and social, promises of the school system purportedly for all. Yet, the ubiquity of the carceral in the lives of Black boys for whom prison techniques and concentrated disciplinary power have permeated exclusive school spaces causes a type of dissonance that I call a *carceral dislocation*. As the word dislocation indicates, this term denotes a [carceral] situation that disturbs a state, process, or way of life, preventing it from continuing as normal (see Cambridge, Collins, Oxford Dictionaries). Schooling has taught the Black male participants that despite the universal propensity toward free agency that they possess, they are in fact out of place in spaces of freedom, and society reinforces this message by invoking carcerality in all of its modalities. Correspondingly, there is a universal aversion to captivity, yet the masses regard prisons and spaces of containment as the natural habitat for Black males. While the participants have experienced this condition in various aspects of their lives, it is acute in the school settings because education is touted as liberatory. Furthermore, these unique defining experiences take place at a pivotal point in the Black male participants’ identity development. The term *carceral dislocation* names this event in the Black males’ lives.

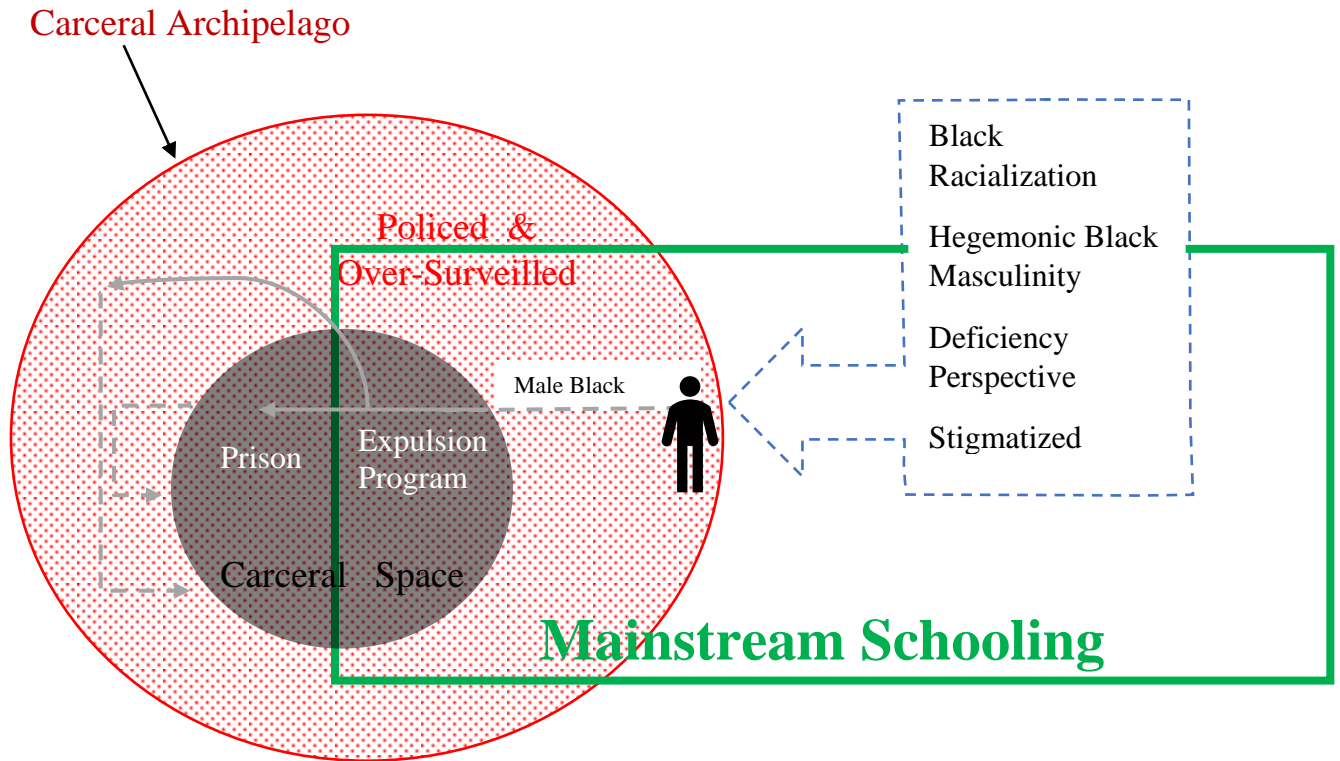
Carceral Continuities: Trajectory and the Spacetime Continuum

At the time of the interviews, one participant was in a post-secondary educational institution, and in light of his difficult past, he was proud of himself for having achieved that.

Most of the other participants did not regard their journeys after the school expulsion programs positively, and in fact highlighted events and conditions of misfortune like criminal justice involvement, time in detention centres, unemployment, and poverty. While almost all of the participants reported having spent time in corrections facilities since being excluded from school, at least two participants, including Lorraine's son, is currently serving time in an adult corrections facility. Lorraine stated that her son had either been incarcerated or on house arrest since the beginning of 2015. Their experiences are consistent with literature arguing that incarceration creates delinquency (Davis, 2003; 2007; Foucault, 1979; Gilmour, 2020) and that the oppressive manner in which the education system engages with Black boys is irreconcilable with their ontological and historical vocation to become fully human (Freire, 1972). Conversely, McMurtry et al. (2008) identified positive school engagement as a significant protective factor against crime. The diagram below illustrates carceral continuities as well as the development of the carceral subject.

Figure 5

The Development of a Carceral Subjectivity



In this diagram, the green box represents mainstream schooling, which contains the general student population. The red circle represents the Foucauldian carceral archipelago or what Reece (2020) refers to as *carceral red-lining*. Carceral red-lining is the conceptual space of marginalization and containment that is both policed and surveilled (Reece, 2020). Within the school, the Black male student population is confined to this space because they are never outside the ambit of panoptic surveillance. Outside of the school, young Black men navigate the carceral in its various modalities including limitations to their economic, social, and geographical possibilities. This is the reason that the carceral archipelago extends beyond the school boundaries. All of the white space outside of the carceral archipelago and inside of the school is

simply that, white space – the expansive terrain where white people are free to move about and live lives outside of the white gaze and other carceral restrictions. The blue perforated arrow symbolizes the anti-Black racist attitudes and ideological state apparatuses permeating the walls of the school, being re-produced by the education system and affixing themselves to or interpellating (Althusser, 1971) Black male bodies. The grey region is the official carceral space. It bears a different name depending on the side of the school wall on which it operates. The diagram shows the Black male body, dwelling exclusively within the sphere of the carceral archipelago, traveling the limited course from mainstream school into the more formal carceral space of the expulsion program within the school system and ultimately into the prison outside of school bounds. Lastly, the perforated grey line is illustrative of the carceral subjects' amorphous and variable path back to prison. In this diagram, the grey line shows the Black male moving from mainstream schooling into the expulsion program and either going straight into prison as a function of the over-policing in the program and community within which it is situated or leaving the expulsion program and schooling simultaneously and navigating a life of socio-spatial realities which ultimately lead him to prison. The course of the grey line charts the cyclical influence of what I have named *carceral continuities*, which are exemplified by the participants' accounts.

The life trajectories of the participants support findings that just as imprisonment has proven ineffective at rehabilitating adults or making communities safer, school disciplinary practices that rely on exclusion have proven ineffective at improving academic performance among excluded students or the remainder of the school population (Noguera, 2003). While in the eyes of all but one participant, Black males in this study had not experienced educational or vocational success after their involvement in the program, and they did not attribute that to

program or education system shortcomings. Instead, participants located the failure within themselves, and the mothers interviewed did the same. Parent participants expressed feeling guilty and wondering where they had failed in their child-rearing.

Results of this study are aligned with the literature regarding hegemony reflecting the status quo and internalized oppression. For instance, Freire (1972) stated:

Self-depreciation is another characteristic of the oppressed, which derives from their internalization of the opinion the oppressors hold of them. So often do they hear that they are good for nothing, know nothing and are incapable of learning anything—that they are sick, lazy, and unproductive—that in the end they become convinced of their own unfitness. (p. 63)

Freire (1972) also advocated for the need for critical awareness to counteract the oppressors' submergence of human consciousness and obfuscation of non-normative versions of reality. Many of the Black men in this study suggested that they chose not to take advantage of the resources available to them and expressed regret for having done so. The findings are indicative of the centrality of their autonomy in their narrative as young men.

In considering the spacetime continuum and participants' resistance to reflecting their lives on a linear timeline model, it is important not to essentialize these Black men into a group of static experiences as the concept of trajectory may seek to do. This study's findings highlight the systemic and colonizing practice of pigeon-holing Black boys into discreet categories, essentializing them, and re-entrenching historical identities. The stigma their Black bodies bear negates the idea of a linear trajectory that leaves the past behind. The anti-Black mechanisms that maintain the status quo ensure that certain versions and elements of history are never eliminated. The past stays with us in the present space and time. That said, in resistance, I declare that where

these young men are today is not where they end up, despite the predetermination of their oppressors. The participants continue to experience growth, change, and movement, and they continue to affect resistance, themselves, through the mere act of survival.

Implications

Policy Implications

The provincial Conservative Government's movement of the Anti-Racism Directorate which was established in February 2016, to the Community Safety and Correctional Services Minister in September 2018, in my opinion, speaks to the association of Blackness with carcerality and who is targeted by discourses and policies about safety. This study elucidates that race and racism, though ostensibly absent from school disciplinary policy and practice, are covertly operational in much the same manner as they have been since their inception. When examining policies like the Safe Schools Act, it is imperative to rethink the many ways in which ostensibly colour-blind policies are written from raced and gendered positions under raced and gendered conditions. We must centre the bodies that are most marginalized in our attempts to develop any form of effective and equitable policy frameworks in education, corrections, and restorative social programming. Finally, this study influences both academic policy and practice to address and dismantle the institutionalized culture of meritocracy (Dei, 2020).

Practice Implications

The implications are seen in an applied way through my work on the other side of this trajectory for young men like Kevin whose case plots the terrain of school exclusion residuum. I wrote a seminal report for use in Kevin's sentencing hearing, called an Impact of Race and Culture Assessment (IRCA) and now more commonly known as Enhanced Presentence Reports

or “Morris Reports” (Sibblis, 2018) named after Kevin himself. The IRCA report provides a social history of the defender, highlighting instances of anti-Black systemic racism along their life course to give the courts insight into how early life circumstances constrict defenders’ choices along the way, ultimately leading to their involvement with the legal system and official incarceration (see Figure 4). Kevin’s report was used in a case that set a precedent in Ontario for its heavy use of the IRCA report in determining and justifying minimized sentencing. School is one of the integral pitstops along the trajectory of Black men like Kevin, and prison is not merely an endpoint, but implicated in the social institutions and everyday spaces along the way (Simmons, 2005). What is also interesting is that even though my work focuses on Black males, there is a resonance that exists for other communities. For instance, Indigenous communities, who use Gladue Reports in court, experience a similar disproportionality around issues of school exclusion and imprisonment; therefore, conversations ought to be had across racialized and historical lines in order to think about how it is that particular groups continue to be marginalized in these ways. Furthermore, this study compels institutions to consider alternatives to exclusion; for example, the recently reinvigorated prison abolitionist movement which accompanies the call to defund police (Pasternak, 2022). While implications for social work practice also exist in the areas of child welfare, mental health, and social welfare, specifically urging workers to reimagine how they understand and support excluded bodies, true acknowledgement and reconciliation would call for more revolutionary measures involving the dismantling of these institutions. Besides possibilities like school abolition, or the expansion of Africentric educational and supporting social institutions, the data in this study suggests that some of the resources (i.e., one on one learning support, psycho-educational testing, counselling, opportunities to process their feelings and experiences, connections to community resources,

financial supports) in expulsion programs would be helpful if they were offered to Black students preventatively while they were in mainstream schools, prior to their exclusion.

Theoretical Implications

One of the prime theoretical limitations of the school-to-prison pipeline construct is that it polarizes the school and prison, presenting them as a dichotomy with schools positioned at one end of the linear progression and prisons at the other (Simmons, 2005). This study illustrates that in addition to establishing a direct path from schools to prisons, expulsion programs situate the prisons inside of the schools. Expulsion programs illuminate the entrenchment of the school system in the culture of criminal violence and the spatiality of prison life (Davis, 2003; Noguera, 2003), thereby making a significant contribution to the school-to-prison-pipeline discourse in Canada. In positing that Black bodies are no longer valuable for their labour and, in their unassailable exclusion and destruction, occupy the philosophical position of homo sacer, the research also augments and advances the prison industrial complex theory.

This work has also engendered a *carceral epistemology* and *carceral ontology* via the words and wisdom of its participants. The processes by which participants came to know themselves, the meaning of their vessels, and others in relation to themselves in and through the carceral spaces and conditions inspired the terms *carceral identity* and *carceral dislocation*. Kennedy (1997) stated “the massive over-incarceration of Blacks has supplied a powerful common-sense warrant for ‘using skin color as a proxy for dangerousness’” (as cited in Wacquant, 2001, p. 117). The locating of the carceral within the school offers a significant critique of the discourse linking education to social mobility and economic security. It extends into racial neoliberalism (Goldberg, 2009), encouraging considerations of how mass incarceration, carceral embodiment and socially stigmatized identities negate the promise of

equitable economic progress for Black people (Hamilton, 2019). The results of this study reveal a need to shift the focus in education research from a deficit model, locating failure within the individual to one that contests the neutrality of school and other spaces. This research also advances social work research with its postulations about the seeping of the carceral into places outside of the prison and into subjectivity, thereby also expanding the domain of carceral geography.

This project stands as the first scholarly work of its kind in Canada to examine the life trajectories and identities of formally excluded Black males as products of these programs. Given this distinction, this research makes a significant contribution to anti-Black racism as a theoretical framework. This research also enhances the fields of criminology, sociology, social work, child and youth work, human rights/equity studies, mental health, and education. It makes important contributions to spatial theory and to theorizing the intersections of race, class, gender, ability, and space in the Canadian context and from the perspective of subjugated knowledges. It is original in incorporating the ontology of spacetime, race, masculinity, physical and ideological carcerality, and self-concept to penetrate how Blackness, as a way of being understood, is mobilized and produced by Canadian school spaces.

Assessment of the Study and Justification

Strengths

One of the key strengths of this study is its attention to spacetime in analyzing the experiences of young Black men. Through similar regulatory spaces relying on increasingly more sophisticated, and surreptitious mechanisms of power and control, the same body can be seen transitioning through time, beginning its carceral journey as the slave and ultimately becoming the contained student and imprisoned adult. This process illustrates exactly how

“practices spatialize race and racialize space” (Lipstiz, 2011, p. 13). Soja (2010) made a case for focusing on space in examining social relations by reminding us that “there exists a mutually influential and formative relation between the social and the spatial dimensions of human life, each shaping the other in similar ways” (p. 4). Soja (2010) urged us to see ourselves as just as much spatial beings as we are temporal beings, despite the fact that time and history are usually privileged over critical spatial thinking (p. 16). Furthermore, Aoki (2000) conjured a sense of civic duty and asseverated:

Space and place should matter...particularly to “outsider” scholars...many of whom are themselves space invaders of legal academia at large. By contesting our received notions about the inertness and apparent neutrality of space, these space invaders create intellectual room to consider [alternate arrangements and explanations. (p. 956)

Aoki (2000) encouraged an epistemological shift toward the decentering of the colonizer’s knowledge. In addition, Soja (2010) argued that “exploring the spatiality of justice and its expressions in struggles...is not just an academic exercise but has more ambitious political and practical objectives” (p. 6). Yet, since “society is structured by the white spatial imaginary” (Lipsitz, 2011, p. 13), the unwarranted exclusion of Black students, though logically untenable, is largely undisputed. A second strength was the pairing of spatial theory with CRT, which challenges white supremacist views upon which the European education system was built. CRT rejects claims that Black youth are inherently academically incapable or have natural behavioural deficits. These theories come together in conversation to help theorize anti-Black racism, as they give an account of the unique positioning of the Black body in the Western world.

Limitations

This study only involved Black men who were excluded from school boards across the Greater Toronto Area in Ontario, Canada. It is therefore not generalizable to all Black men or women who have participated in expulsion programs or were otherwise excluded from school. Given the exclusionary nature of hegemonic Black masculinity, the study is also not generalizable to all Black men who have been excluded from school and future studies should further trouble generalized notions of Black masculinities. While some of the participants noted that there were a few girls in the programs, they could not be addressed within the scope of the study. It is important to note that there is a rising trend surfacing whereby Black women are increasingly victimized by the same violence that law enforcers inflict upon Black men. Women are the fastest growing incarcerated population in the United States, with Black women comprising the majority of that population—30%, although they make up only 13% of the general population (American Civil Liberties Union, 2016). In Canada, Aboriginal women are the “fastest growing offender category under federal jurisdiction with the inmate population rising 109% between 2001 and 2012 (Office of the Correctional Investigator: Government of Canada, 2016); notwithstanding the fact that African Canadians are the fastest growing inmate population overall in Canada’s federal prisons (Sapers, 2016). From 2002-2010, the population of Black Canadian women in the Canadian federal prison system grew by 55%, and their population increased by 28% between 2010 and 2012 (Nangwaya, 2015). This leads to questions about whether Black women, now surpassing Black males in academic performance and standing in the foreground of Anti-Black racist movements, are now viewed as posing a threat equal to, or perhaps superseding that which is posed by their male counterparts. Further exploration into the meaning of this shift, what this means for their evolving identity

constructions and representations, and what implications it might have on school exclusion and the gender constitution of the excluded school population is needed.

Secondly, the incidents or prohibited behaviours leading to the participants' exclusion were generally omitted in an attempt to neutralize them as bodies in the space without subjecting them to further judgement. As a result of this methodological direction, this research was unable to assess the effect of race on the interpretation of their specific actions based on their accounts, whether the identified behaviours were direct reactions to systemic or spatial racism, or if all participants committed acts that warranted expulsion as opposed to being placed 'proactively.' Consequently, how identity and subjectivity play into the actions leading to suspension were not assessed.

Future Studies

There is a need for further theorizing of carcerality as related to expulsion programs and the agency of youth. This study was conducted prior to the indelible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education system. Our changing context, namely operation through social distancing, quarantine, provincial stay-at-home orders, and the resultant empty and sparsely populated physical school spaces in favour of virtual classrooms, has reshaped school discipline, exclusion and the very ethos of expulsion programs. That said, there is a need to understand the influence of social and physical space on virtual expulsion program participants as well as how anti-Black racism trends manifest in disciplinary policy and practice throughout the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Given the changing domains of physical and social spaces of discipline and punishment, more work should be done exploring the use of restorative justice within schools and in lieu of imprisonment. While it appears we may be returning to conditions resembling our pre-pandemic state, this information is vital not only for application in the event

of a future pandemic; information from such studies could also activate a radical revisioning of school discipline, offer new possibilities for prison abolition, and aid in our current formulation of anti-Blackness; its adaptability and resilience by means of evolving and cunning technologies, and its ever-broadening terrain.

Relatedly, in March of 2020, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO) rendered a decision about a first-grade Black student who was placed on her stomach in her PDSB school by police and handcuffed with her wrists behind her for nearly 30 minutes (Human Rights Legal Support Centre, 2020). At six years old, the student had a history of suspensions and Board officials asserted that school staff and administration had acted appropriately in calling the police to de-escalate her behaviour. The HRTO ruled that race was a factor in the police restraining and handcuffing of the little girl. The growing frequency of actions like these suggest that Black girls are being targeted for disposal and call for a closer look at the management and disciplinary practices of Black girls in schools and its consequences. Furthermore, future work should include a focus on gender complexity and trans identities with respect to school discipline.

Another related area for study involves an exploration into the workings of racial fluidity (Saperstein & Penner, 2012) in the expulsion programs. Specifically, the utility of the theory in determining if the space racializes the non-Black bodies within it, meaning that all participants in the program, regardless of race, are *Blackened* by virtue of being in the program. In fact, participants would have been subjected to prior *Blackening*, resulting in their placement in the program. Finally, this study opens the door for research on the permanence of carceral stigma on the excluded student population via longitudinal study.

Conclusion

And in all the theorizing on antiblackness, there is a concern with what it means to have one's very existence as Black constructed as problem—for white people, for the public (good), for the nation-state (Dumas, 2016, p. 12)

Racism can be understood as having been institutionalized as a form of biopolitical administration, marking bodies to indicate whose life is worth investing in and who is left to die on the basis of safety. The logics of safety and security rely heavily on reading risk on the body and proactively extinguishing said risk (Razack, 2008). Safe Schools expulsion programs are allegedly in place to respond to the safety needs of the school community and since “race is crucial to pre-emptive punishment” (Razack, 2008, p. 31) and dominant discourse about the Black body belies how their behaviours are interpreted, it is these bodies that are expelled from the school community. That said, conceptualization of anti-Blackness, its essence and its technologies is a necessary step beyond what is offered by Critical Race Theory to explain what happens to Black males in the education system and beyond school walls. The meanings of Blackness and Black maleness cast onto the bodies of young Black males are used to gauge propensity for harmful behaviours and predict future harm, particularly because Black bodies are believed to be innately savage and violent. Elements of several works discussed herein, e.g., Anderson, Da Silva, Fanon, Foucault, and Wynter, prove to be useful supplements to CRT, in theorizing how carceral subjectivities are developed and maintained among Black men as well as the process whereby they experience carceral dislocation.

This research outlined how the macrocosm of western society and its microcosms, such as schools and prisons functioned as regulating sites of violence for Black people. It argued that school and prison spaces are fundamentally alike in the manner in which they mobilize power through space to contain and objectify Black bodies. This thesis not only exposed how race and

identity are inextricably linked, but also showed the connection between race and space and how that connection is integral to the construction of subjectivity.

The school is conceptualized as a neutral space and a refuge from the dangerous streets where it is imagined that Black masculinity runs rampant. This research exemplifies that while people generally do not see violence as being endemic to school, and expulsion programs were established to keep excluded students safely off the streets, these spaces *do* violence through forms of detainment, containment, and punishment of Black males. It is therefore just as critical to interrogate the dichotomy between the school and the street as it is to disrupt that of the school and the prison. A more just iteration of these processes would engage youth in “imagined” restorative practices like youth justice committees to collaborate on solutions, resolution and supports. School disciplinary practices as they are currently carried out in Ontario begs the question: Safe Schools for whom?

Epilogue

Kevin's sentencing set legal precedent because Superior Court Justice Shaun Nakatsuru made the ground-breaking decision to instrumentalize my assessment of the impact of Kevin's race and anti-Black Racism in its various modalities on his trajectory and actions leading to his arrest. The Crown sought a minimum sentence of four years in prison and after considering the incidents of systemic racism that restricted Kevin's choices, Justice Nakatsuru sentenced Kevin to 15 months, which was then reduced to 12 months to account for police breaches of Kevin's Charter rights. At the time of his sentencing, all but one day of his sentence had already been served in pre-trial detention and so Kevin was to be a free man the very next day!

The Crown appealed Justice Nakatsuru's decision and the Ontario Court of Appeal ultimately agreed with the Crown, doubling Kevin's sentence. Although it was stayed, meaning that he would not have to return to prison to serve his sentence, the message was clear; decisions like these, setting precedents leaning toward Black liberation and state accountability were not to be made. CRT would suggest that the lack of interest convergence in the decision to allow the acknowledgement of systemic racism to significantly mitigate a sentence would result in pushback from those who seek to protect the status quo. A theory of anti-Blackness would examine the reason behind the swift resistance vis-à-vis the court's use of Gladue reports, which outline similar factors to mitigate the sentencing of Indigenous convicts.

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APPENDIX A

Study Poster

STORIES FROM THE MARGINS:

An Exploration of the Effect of School Exclusion on Canadian Black Males' Identity and Trajectory"

We want to know

What happens when Black boys are expelled or excluded from mainstream school?



Compensation: \$50 per participant

Seeking young black men, ages 18 – 28 who have attended a **School Expulsion (alternative) Program** in the GTA, such as *the Caring and Safe Schools, Fresh Start Expulsion and Long Term Proactive Programs, New Directions*, etc. for at least 2 months are requested for individual interviews about their experience in the programs and life after the program. You **do not** need to have been formally expelled. The information will be used in a York University School of Social Work PhD research project and will help us to understand the impact of these programs on Black boys, their families and larger communities.

To find out more and/or schedule an interview, please email blackexclusion@gmail.com, or call: 647-694-9212



APPENDIX B

Demographic Sheet

Demographic Sheet

Date:

Time:

Location:

Full name:

Age:

Place of birth:

Date of birth:

Religion:

Racial Identity:

Gender Identity/Sex:

Cultural Identity:

Sexual Orientation:

Marital/Relationship Status:

Child(ren) and age(s):

Father's place of birth, occupation:

Mother's place of birth, occupation:

Expulsion Program Name, Board:

Length of Time in Expulsion Program:

Formally Expelled? YES NO

Police Involvement? YES NO

Did you obtain an Ontario Secondary School Diploma? YES NO

Last completed level of education:

Other important information: _____

Post- Interview Comments:

APPENDIX C

Interview Guide Questions

Early Memories

What was going on with your family, your community, and the world at the time of your birth?

Were you ever told anything unusual about your birth?

What are some of your earliest memories about life?

How would you describe your parents?

What do you think that you inherited from them?

What is the ethnic and cultural background of your parents?

How would you describe your siblings?

What was growing up in your house and neighborhood like for you?

Was your family different from other families in your neighborhood?

What cultural values were passed to you and by whom...what cultural differences have you passed down?

What did your family teach you about masculinity and the roles of men? How did they teach you?

Was religion important to your family?

What do you remember most about growing up?

How would describe yourself as a child?

Did you have any dreams or ambitions as a child? an adolescent?

Where did they come from?

School (General)

What was your family's attitude about education?

What is your parents' highest level of education?

What was your first memory of attending school?

What did you want to be when you were in high school?

Did you do what you wanted do or did your ambitions change?

What were hopes and dreams as you entered adulthood?

Did you ever enjoy school?

What do you remember most about elementary school?

Who were some of your favorite teachers...in elementary, middle school, junior high, & high? How did they influence you?

What are your best memories of school?

What are your worst memories?

What were the events leading up to your participation in the expulsion program?

How often did you get into trouble at school?

What types of things would you get into trouble for?

How do you think your teachers/administrators saw you?

How did you see yourself?

How did you feel about being punished/discipline procedures?

What accomplishments in school are you the most proud of?

What did you do after you left school?

Did you get into any more trouble after leaving school? If so, what happened?

What do you do now?

What has been the most important lesson of your life outside of school?

How old were you when you left school? Why did you leave? What did you do next?

Program Specific

What do you remember about the program? (open to anything – prompting about space, structure, routines if necessary)

What was your experience in the program?

What did/do you like about the program?

What did/do you dislike about the program?

How did you feel about your participation in the program when you were referred, entered and now looking back?

Looking back, how do you feel about your performance and behaviour in the program?

How do you feel about the way you were treated?

What did you notice about the students? (in terms of behaviour, attitudes, social location)

What did you notice about the staff?

What did you notice about how other students, or peers related to you?

What did you notice about the race, class, gender, etc. of the students – if anything?

What did you feel was the purpose/goal of the program?

How do you feel the program impacted you? (behaviours, how you viewed yourself)

What changes, if any, did you notice in yourself as you entered the program, participated in the program, and after the program?

If you could change something about the program/your experience in the program, what would it be?

Reflections on Identity, Masculinity and Race

How do you see the position of Black men in the world?

What kind of man do you want to be and how do you see that as impacted by race?

Who helped you the most to develop the current understanding that you have for yourself?

What most important thing have you had to learn by yourself?

How would you describe yourself TO YOURSELF at this point in your life?

How do think other people perceive you?

Is the way you see yourself now different than the way you saw yourself in the past?

Are you happy or dissatisfied with the changes?

What has been your greatest challenge?

When you think of the future what makes you feel the most uneasy?

What makes you feel the most hopeful?

What are your strengths?

What have been your greatest accomplishments?

Is there anything that we have left out of your life story that you like to include?

APPENDIX D

Parent Interview Guide Questions

Early Memories

What do you remember about what was going on in your family, your community, and the world at the time of X's birth?

Was there anything unusual or special about X's birth?

How would you describe X as a younger child?

What cultural values were passed down to X?

What types of things did X do well/struggle with?

What types of things did you or your family teach X about masculinity or the roles of men? How did you teach that?

What types of values and ideas do you feel X has internalized?

School

How was X in school? What did X share with you about his feelings about school while he was there?

How do you think the teachers and administrators saw X?

Tell me about your experience of X's school exclusion

How did you feel about the disciplinary procedures used?

What were your thoughts and feelings about the program X participated in?

What effect do you feel X's experience(s) of exclusion had on him?

Identity continued

How do you feel X sees himself?

APPENDIX E

Expulsion Program Schedule

Welcome to Fresh Start North 315 Bartley Bull Parkway, Brampton, ON. L6W 2L4 Classroom Phone # 905.455.1225 ext.117 **Please have a parent/guardian phone if you are going to be absent**						
	Monday		Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	
8:15 – 8:45	Breakfast Program and Safety Searches					
8:45 – 9:15	Independent Reading & Journal Writing (ELS 207)					
9:15 – 9:30	Opening Group	9:15 - 9:45	Opening Group	Opening Group	Opening Group	9:00 - 9:15
9:30 – 10:00	Academics	9:45 - 10:45	Academics	Academics	Outdoor Education and/or Community Connections	9:15 -10:15
10:00 – 10:15	Break	10:45 - 11:00	Break	Break		10:15 – 11:15
10:15 – 11:45	Cooking	11:00 - 12:00	Gym	Gym		11:30
11:45 – 12:30	Lunch & Clean-Up	12:00 - 12:30	Lunch	Lunch		
12:30 – 1:30	Adventures Within	12:30 - 1:30	Media Literacy and/or Other Programming	Social Skills		
1:30 – 2:30	Academics	1:30 - 2:30		Academics		

APPENDIX F

Informed Consent Form

Date:

Study Name: The Effect of School Exclusion on Canadian Black Males' Identity and Trajectory

Researcher: Camisha Sibblis – Doctoral Candidate

Graduate Program in Social Work

camisha@yorku.ca or blackexclusion@gmail.com

Purpose of the Research:

I am interested in the effects of school expulsion and Long-Term Proactive programs on young Black men. I want to know what life was like before, and after the program, as well as how young Black men view any changes in their beliefs, their identities, and in their lives as a result.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

You will be asked to participate in an individual interview. During the interview, you will be asked to provide a timeline of the important events in your life. The interview will include questions about early memories, family, and your time as a student.

This process will take approximately 2 hours and you will be given \$50 for your time and efforts.

Your parent may be asked to participate in a separate individual interview which will include questions about your upbringing and your time as a student.

Risks and Discomforts:

Sometimes when people share their personal stories and sensitive information, it might be uncomfortable and they may experience strong emotions. You have the right to not answer questions for any reason. Contact information for counseling services will be made available to you at the time of the interview, and a follow-up call will be made within 10 days of the interview to see if you need further supports.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

Sharing your story and memories can also be therapeutic for you. In addition to the heightened sense of self-worth you may feel as a result of discussing your experiences with someone who values your contributions, you might be able to see things in a healthier way and raise your own awareness.

This research intends to spark dialogue about the way that Black youth are seen and treated in schools; potentially change disciplinary policies and practices; and encourage alternatives to school exclusion.

Voluntary Participation:

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

Withdrawal from the Study:

You can stop participating in the study at any time, for any reason, if you so decide. If you decide to stop participating, you will still be eligible to receive the promised pay for agreeing to be in the project. Your decision to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions, will not affect your relationship with the researchers, York University, or any other group associated with this project. In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible.

If you decide to stop participating, you will still be eligible to receive the promised pay for agreeing to be in the project.

Confidentiality:

All information you supply during the research (i.e., the recorded interview and timeline) will be held in confidence and your name will be replaced by a code on your data and will not appear in any report or publication of the research, unless you specifically indicate your consent. Data will be collected in the form of hand written time line, audio recording and typed notes on a computer. Your hard copy data will be safely stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office, and your digital data will be safely stored on a personal password protected computer and I will

be the only person with access to this information. A report on my study will be submitted in the form of a dissertation to fulfill the requirements of my doctoral degree.

Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research?

If you have questions about the research in general or your role in the study, please contact the researcher or one of my supervisors: Barbara Heron at bheron@yorku.ca or by telephone at 416-736-2100 ext. 20087 or Carl James at cjames@edu.yorku.ca or by telephone at 416-736-2100 ext. 20279.

Alternatively, you may contact the Graduate Program Office at 416-736-2100 ext 55226.

This research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, York Research Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in
conducted by _____. I have understood the nature of this
project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form.
My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Camisha Sibblis, Principal Investigator

APPENDIX G

Informed Consent Form

Date:

Study Name: The Effect of School Exclusion on Canadian Black Males' Identity and Trajectory

Researcher: Camisha Sibblis – Doctoral Candidate

Graduate Program in Social Work

camisha@yorku.ca or blackexclusion@gmail.com

Purpose of the Research:

I am interested in the effects of school expulsion and Long Term Proactive programs on young Black men. I want to know what life was like before, and after the program, as well as how young Black men view any changes in their beliefs, their identities, and in their lives as a result.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:

You will be asked to participate in an individual interview. The interview will include questions about memories of your child, family, and your child's time as a student.

The interview will be approximately 1 hour in length and you will be given \$20 for your time.

Risks and Discomforts:

Sometimes when people share their personal stories and sensitive information, it might be uncomfortable and they may experience strong emotions. You have the right to not answer questions for any reason. Contact information for counseling services will be made available to you at the time of the interview, and a follow-up call will be made within 10 days of the interview to see if you need further supports.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:

Sharing your memories can also be therapeutic for you. In addition to the heightened sense of self-worth you may feel as a result of discussing your experiences with someone who values your contributions, you might be able to see things in a healthier way and raise your own awareness.

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All information you supply during the research (i.e., the recorded interview and timeline) will be held in confidence and your name will be replaced by a code on your data and will not appear in any report or publication of the research, unless you specifically indicate your consent. Data will be collected in the form of hand written time line, audio recording and typed notes on a computer. Your hard copy data will be safely stored in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office, and your digital data will be safely stored on a personal password protected computer and I will

be the only person with access to this information. A report on my study will be submitted in the form of a dissertation to fulfill the requirements of my doctoral degree.

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Legal Rights and Signatures:

I _____, consent to participate in
conducted by _____. I have understood the nature of this
project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form.
My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature _____

Date _____

Participant

Signature _____

Date _____

Camisha Sibblis, Principal Investigator