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Sensors, Metal Detectors, Cement Barricades, and Extra Security

How “Studying-Up” Reveals the Tensions
in Accessing Whiteness in Educational Research

Teresa Anne Fowler

Abstract

What occurs when one seeks to research male White privilege and the “culture of power” (Nader, 1972, p.5)? As a White female, I have been socialized unconsciously by the ideologies of Whiteness; thus, when researching with White participants (Bourdieu, 2004; Bowman, 2009), multiple points of tension arose surrounding the study. As Nader (1972) described in her essay which made a call to anthropologists to shift their focus from studying the “low hanging fruit” (Fine, 2015) towards “studying up” (Nader, 1972, p. 1), the barriers within educational research also shift, as do the questions posed. This article explores the barriers and roadblocks that emerged during a research study on White athletic boys’ experiences in schools using photovoice to better understand how boys disengage in school. Through the process of studying-up, what emerged were understandings of strategies Whiteness uses to maintain its’ dominant hold of the research process and also recommendations of tactics needed for researchers seeking to study Whiteness (deCerteau, 1985).

Keywords: *Whiteness, power, masculinities, elite studies*

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Introduction

Over three decades ago, Nader (1972) made an appeal to study the “culture of power” (p.5) as a way of better understanding the quality of life, as life is shaped by the elites, the powerful; the heteronormative White male. Social institutions such as schools, are historically shaped by the elite and the powerful (Kenway & Koh, 2013; Nader, 1972) and the make-up of this select group of people Nader (1972) refers to as “the culture of power” (p.5) tend to be Cis/heteronormative White men (Howard & Kenway, 2015). Social institutions inform every person’s quality of life. Thus a critical examination into how Whiteness avoids penetration into the inner sanctum needs to occur to begin to move towards a post-racial society. Through revealing the protectionist strategies and tactics (De Certeau, 1985) Whiteness evokes offers those denied membership a means to infiltrate and begin to force an awareness of the ways in which institutions reproduce, and protect Whiteness.

Navigating the barriers and roadblocks within educational research is not a new process, however when attempting to access Whiteness, not only does the context shift but within this navigation other dominant ideologies are exposed. The invisibility (Gusterson, 1997) of the elite seeks to remain, thus barriers are thickened and extra security is added. What does emerge then through this revealing are layers of patriarchy, misogyny, privilege, and Whiteness that each has a deep history in our social institutions. Through the process of accessing Whiteness attitudes, ethics, and methodology adjust to protect and maintain their elite status (Bowman, 2009; Howard & Kenway, 2015; Kenway & Koh, 2013; Nader, 1972; Ortner, 2010; Undheim, 2003). However, to critically engage with anti-racist work, a radical turn needs to occur as marginalized and othered groups have been researched to the bone while the privileged remain largely unexposed (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998). To move towards a post-racist society, the tensions and sites of conflict that prevent researchers from accessing the elite need to be interrogated to better understand how Whiteness manifests and continues to enforce domination on others. As such, this paper will navigate and expose these tensions that Nader (1972) outlined as barriers to “studying up” (p. 5) including accessing the cultural elite, attitudinal shifts, ethics, and tensions that emerge within methodology.

This article, based on a research study conducted with an elite male youth hockey team, brought forth unintended outcomes: an insight into the culture of power and the tension and resistance through numerous barriers in accessing Whiteness. First I will explore Whiteness as the culture of power and then use Nader’s (1972) framework of access, attitudes, ethics, and methodology to unpack the strategies and tactics (De Certeau, 1985) Whiteness used to shift the research study and protect itself from being accessed. If we hope to move into a post-racial era, then we need to uncover the ways in which Whiteness uses its tools and push those in positions of power to recognize these actions of intention, or through their complacency, as means to maintain racism.

Whiteness (*aka*, The Culture of Power)

According to Frankenberg (1993), “whiteness refers to a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and, moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination” (p. 6). Whiteness acts as an all-encompassing “racial template” (Lund & Carr, 2010, p. 231) and researchers need to examine how Whiteness as a culture of power, continues to produce racial disparities and profit off its’ reproduction (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1998). Accessing Whiteness in educational research not only takes on the expected challenges with respect to *doing* research, but when Whiteness is the focus of the research, access becomes especially problematic (Conti, & O’Neil, 2007; Gusterson, 1997; Howard & Kenway, 2015; Kenway & Lazarus, 2017; Underheim, 2003).

To access Whiteness, I not only ‘studied-up,’ but in multiple directions (Bowman, 2009). Data for this study was informed through a photovoice project (Wang & Burris, 1997) completed with an elite male youth hockey team over three months which sought to gain insights into their expressions of disengagement with schooling and the curriculum. Participants were attending a specialized sports academy that balanced practice times with educational programming housed within a regular high school. This program offered members of the hockey team consistent access to a central teacher, open communication between the teacher and coaches, as well as the ability to move between spaces with ease. Branded as elite hockey players, the boys occupy a top position that in Canada, represents a position of power and cultural symbol of our national identity (Conti & O’Neil, 2007; Giroux, 1997a, 1997b; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Messner, 2005).

Canada’s national identity is explicitly tied with hockey culture as elite hockey players represent Canadian cultural symbols (Elkins, 1984; Giroux, 1997; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; MacDonald, 2014; Messner, 2007). Sport offers a site for research into the reproduction of power, but by looking at a hypermasculinized sport such as hockey, there are also windows into the normative hegemonic environment, patriarchy, and the complacency of masculinity (Connell, 2005; Drummond, 2002; Hickey, 2008; Messner, 1989). White boys, in White positions of power through their symbolic and cultural status as hockey players (Bourdieu, 1986; Messner, 2000 & 2007) as well as their accrued cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007) provided insights into the protected realm.

What emerged throughout this study, were the multiple ways Whiteness would be difficult to access as ‘studying-up’ revealed processes of protectionism and domination (Gusterson, 1997; Lather, 2013; Underheim, 2003). Protectionism emerged and aligned with Nader’s (1972) framework that shifted expected barriers in research towards becoming more inaccessible to keep the elite hidden (Bowman, 2009; Nader, 1972; Priyadharshini, 2003; Underheim, 2003). The four shifts began and remained throughout the study, but also cut through the culture of powers’ strategy to remain hidden (Hyttén & Warren, 2003; Underheim, 2003).

The culture of power represents Whiteness and those that have accrued power and class through their status historically over time (Elkins, 1984; Frankenberg, 1993; Giroux, 1997a, 1997b; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Nader, 1972; Moret & Ohl, 2018; Undheim, 2003).

Despite the resistance, and resilience of the culture of power, this ought to not excuse researchers from seeking to understand the ways that power influences the daily life of society. Once past the protective layers, the role of the culture of power in “domination, power, and authority” (Undheim, 2003, p. 105) is rendered visible, as well as through a reading and analysis of the subliminal. Through ‘studying-up,’ and an interrogation into Whiteness, the ways that racism and the oppression of Others persist in everyday experiences present a turn in anti-racist work. A turn away from examining the way marginalization and oppression perpetuate towards the ways that the culture of power resist being decentred (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Harding, 1987; Hytten & Warren, 2003). I argue that through an unpacking of this resistance, and the ways in which Whiteness is reproduced (Hytten & Warren, 2003; Moret & Ohl, 2018), anti-racist work can begin. Through the teasing out of the “unconscious forms of racism” (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007, p. 390) by studying the culture of power, not only is Nader’s call being answered, but exclusion through racist complicity may be negated (Giroux, 1997b; Ortner, 2010).

Sensors (Access)

A paradox of Whiteness presents itself through a visible and vast landscape with people in positions of power and yet, locating and accessing Whiteness in educational research remains a challenge (Bowman, 2009; Conti & O’Neil, 2007; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Gusterson, 1997; Hytten & Warren, 2003; Nader, 1972; Ortner, 2010; Pryadharshini, 2003). Sensors were first triggered during the ethics approval process with the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). The question of accessing participants arises through the IRB processes intended on not causing harm to participants, but also to protect the University and the culture of power (Harding, 1987; Wynn, 2011). However, by not studying the culture of power, or granting access to the culture of power, forms of knowledge are being denied (Harding, 1987) and through this denial, IRB’s become complicit with the protectionism of the elite (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007). If generating knowledge uncovers truth, whose truth then matters? Truth that reinforces or disrupts Whiteness and the culture of power (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Nader, 1972)?

The IRB sensor sounded loudly. Not only was accessing Whiteness signalling a thickening of the resistance, but so too was a methodology that did not conform to what aligned with the understandings of members of the IRB (Harding, 1987). Photovoice (Wang, 1992; Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, & Redwood-Jones, 2001) is a qualitative methodology that combines participatory based forms of research with feminist theories and critical pedagogy. Through examining gender in relation

to power a critical consciousness can be raised both within the participants and through dissemination of findings. Photovoice offers a different pathway to reveal male students' expressions of disengagement by "providing a more intimate and nuanced examination" (Biag, 2012, p.66). Through engaging in research using photography, the boys in this study were not only engaged participants, but also active in the data analysis and photography also provided a means to deeply reflect on their schooling experiences. Photovoice reveals what may be hidden from us, those on the outside of student experiences and the culture of power (Sontag, 1977).

While the methodology itself offered barriers including boys taking pictures while active in their daily lives within social intuitions such as school, photography also calls into question who the subjects and objects are. Participants in this study were using photography to elicit a means to share what disengagement looks like, when they became disengaged, and how does disengagement feel. Here, not only were participants the subjects, but they used objects in their daily lives to express their manifestations of disengagement. When the object becomes unbeknownst to IRB's, access may be influenced by the unknown object and what may be revealed in participant images. Photographic artifacts become "social documents" (Sontag, 1977, p. 142), and in this case a means to visually see "characteristics of hegemonic masculinity" (Allen, 2013, p. 361). This venture into the unknown, may risk an objective disruption of Whiteness, however by not giving access to the elite, a lack of critical consciousness remains as Whiteness continues to be disconnected and empty of what is being protected (Freire, 2015).

Accessing the cultural elite (Howard & Kenway, 2013; Kenway & Koh, 2013; Nader, 1972) had hidden systems of protection. When participants do not fit a marginal or othered identity, access stretches nearly out of reach as accessing powerful, White, heteronormative young males with a methodology that digs deep, shifts the access points. Whiteness does not want to be studied (Conti, & O'Neil, 2007; Nader, 1972; Ortner, 2010; Pryadharshini, 2003), Whiteness feels threatened when questioned (Giroux, 1997b), Whiteness is difficult to locate because of protectionism and the busyness of being White (Hyttén & Warren, 2003), and it presents dangers to the researcher (Conti & O'Neil, 2007; Nader, 1972; Pryadharshini, 2003; Undheim, 2003). Protection to remain the "least examined" (Semali, 1998, p. 177) and to preserve the status quo (Bowman, 2009) act in opposition to documenting the "privileged position of whiteness" (Kinchloe & Steinberg, 1998, p. 14) that 'studying-up' provides. Locating Whiteness and accessing Whiteness causes risk to those in that group by losing the preservation of how they hold onto their power (Ortner, 2010).

The sensors rang at the first hint of seeking access and continued. Ethics was but one sensor firing a warning. In total, twenty-six White, heteronormative males and 10 White heteronormative females were interacted with before access was granted with potential participants. In one instance, a White cisgender heteronormative male high school principal shared the essence of my study with potential

participants rather than let me speak. At one school which had a predominately White middle-upper class family population, ten potential participants self-selected to participate in this study, however parents did not consent as this may have meant the school would be aware their children were disengaged with school and their cultural capital was at risk. When recruiting through extra-curricular sports clubs, the White male coaches were remiss to grant me access to their players as they did not want to risk the status and reputation of their club if the players revealed they were disengaged with schooling.

While Whiteness remained protected, another side of the patriarchal identity emerged; one that cares for the female. The hockey coach of the club where I was able to potentially meet participants offered to help as he knew the struggle of educational research, thus out of a desire to care for me, offered access to the team. This caring Messner (2002) states arises from a masculine need to care for mothers and sisters; female family members. However, this shift then places a female researcher at risk in also being complicit in allowing the reduction of personal autonomy to become dependent on the White saviour for access to participants. These “entrenched aspects of gender identity” (Adkins, 2003, p. 28) demonstrates how gender roles are embodied, unconsciously performed and reproduced in social spaces.

Metal Detector (Ethics)

After submission of the ethics application, my study was deemed high risk due to multiple factors including accessing White participants, the methodology, and exclusionary criteria resulting in a full ethics board review. The board consisted of seven male members and six female members, all White. During the review, questions were raised regarding the language used on the informed consent forms and a need for transparency in communicating with parents and participants, while not calling out Whiteness. As such, final consent forms defined the inclusion parameters as: “specifically male students who have access to additional learning opportunities provided by their parents outside of school that support their boys’ education. Such opportunities come through access to books, tutoring, extracurricular activities (arts/athletics), and/or family trips”. To name and call out Whiteness is to disrupt the clandestine outcome of its domination (Frankenberg, 1993) and yet while not naming Whiteness, it remains invisible and left me in a precarious position of deception (Conti & O’Neil, 2007; Undheim, 2003).

Here, doing harm again shifts. By not calling out Whiteness overtly in the accessing phase, I took on an almost adversarial role rather than a participatory role with the boys as I seek to disrupt what sustains them (Bowman, 2009). Building relationships within a participatory methodology is crucial for participants to reveal their feelings in school, however when the researcher is forced into not being open and honest and practice deception risks trust. As well, within a feminist

framework, there is little room for complacency, thus causing an ethical dilemma with researchers themselves (Conti & O'Neil, 2007; Ortner, 2010). The ethical space protects Whiteness while placing the researcher in harm and under threat (Priyadharshini, 2003). By restricting researchers from accessing the culture of power, this leaves the status quo preserved as IRB's seek to preserve their autonomy, rather than allow the researcher to have autonomy (Wynn, 2011).

I was forced into complacency and submissiveness, proceeding under a veil of deception, which causes the informed consent process to be unclear (Priyadharshini, 2003). However, to remain silent and centred, Whiteness is left to continue its hold and domination in the culture of power simultaneously, placing me in a position to compromise my values (Conti & O'Neil, 2007; Priyadharshini, 2003). Being in a place of vulnerability as a female is reminiscent of my daily life, and within the social structures of schools and sports, this also means to be subjected to the will of patriarchal power. In this place, researchers are not occupying the same horizontal space as participants and not only loose autonomy, but they begin to question their role in the research (Conti & O'Neil, 2007). This critically reflexive stance needs to proceed with caution as there risks emerging bias during data gathering, but also moments where patriarchal power would go challenged in daily life need to remain silent. This also begs a need to question the role of IRB's when researching Whiteness: are there ethics for those in power and ethics for those that are marginalized (Nader, 1972)?

Cement Barricades (Attitudes)

The role of protectionism and domination within the culture of power has been shown to manifest in a denial of access, shifting the ethics towards the preservation of Whiteness but also within educational research itself. Researchers seem to value the story of the underdog (Nader, 1972) and those that are marginalized and oppressed (Fine, 2016; Priyadharshini, 2003) rather than question the foundations of which we, White researchers have benefited from. IRB's thus have a duty to protect themselves and the role of the institution in the reproduction of the culture of power and its' cultural capital. Educational institutions reproduce the culture of power through privileging the status quo and creating opposition towards those that seek to interrogate its' protectionist stance (Bourdieu, 1986; Tarlau, 2014). The active role of IRB's and institutional politics concerning self-preservation provides less resistance to studies that operate from a study-down approach (Nash, 1990; Priyadharshini, 2003) than those that study-up (Nader, 1972; Wynn, 2011) creating a hierarchy within ethical research.

As a White female researching within masculinities studies, I need to acknowledge my privilege and that I have benefited from, and been discriminated against, the systemic and institutional forms of power which the culture of power seeks to protect and reproduce. This then makes me also question, again my role

as a researcher (Priyadharshini, 2003; Undheim, 2003) as studying-up not only involves revealing how the culture of power reproduces and protects itself, but must take a reflexive turn on the part of the researcher (Lather, 2013). Through this interrogation into power, one must also examine the role between the subject and the self (Undheim, 2003). This reflexivity needs to not only arise on reflections of the fieldwork or the position of the researcher but on the “epistemological unconscious” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 41) of educational research and IRB’s as perhaps they are unaware of the role played in the protectionism and dominance of Whiteness.

Entering into this study, Whiteness and the culture of power was not even conceptualized at the start, which then forced me to reflexively consider their influences on my own life and practice as well as to question the role of research and knowledge production (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; May & Perry, 2017). As knowledge is produced, and IRB’s detect which knowledge ought to be produced, whose truth then matters (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Hytten & Warren, 2003; Sontag, 1977)? The culture of power un/consciously prefers to reproduce the imbalances rather than disrupt what lies behind the iron curtain (Hytten & Warren, 2003) and risk revealing how dominance can be dismantled.

Extra-Security (Methodology)

When studying-up, not only will this influence which methodology is chosen, but the methodology itself (Bowman, 2009; Gusterson, 1997; Priyadharshini, 2003). The intentions with my study were always to centre the voices of the boys and their experiences and seek ways to disseminate their stories to elicit an emotional response. The boys used photographs to document their lived disengaged reality and relationships with the curriculum, however, the tenets of photovoice including participant active engagement, engaging in dialogue about strengths and concerns, and bringing about change shifted to meet the needs of the boys.

The site of the study took place where the boys lived and included the school, their homes, school buses and cars, as well as the hockey rink. The boys themselves came from privileged families with an accumulation of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) and each boy is White. Thus, studying with White male youth, I entered into a space that privileged and privileges Whiteness and the culture of power (Connell, 1995; Drummond, 2002; Messner, 2000). This shift from using a methodology that, while can be adapted for different research contexts (Wang & Burris, 1997), is primarily used in health education with marginalized people (Sutton-Brown, 2014), already questions this alignment of working with the culture of power, but also causes me to ask, does social justice not also apply to boys? There needs to be a revealing of a pluralistic view of masculinity (Kehler, 2010) as the current reproduction of power is also impacting our boys and men.

The protectionism response is disrupted with the use of photography which

historically belonged to the upper class (Sontag, 1977). Photography was used as a means to preserve and share the status of the elites with a “Whitmanesque affirmation” (p. 48), where participants used the master’s tools (Lorde, 2007) to reveal how the social structures build their security. As participants took and shared their images each week, they revealed how their identities were shaped through the reproduction of the culture of power (Priyadharshini, 2003). However, their continual challenging of the parameters of the study established by the IRB provided insights into the busyness of Whiteness.

The methods remained consistent with photovoice in that there was pre and post semi-structured interviews with each participant, focus groups where participants provided photo-feedback on each other’s images, and they engaged actively in the photo analysis of the images. However, the methods shifted to accommodate the busyness of the participants such that I reduced the number of focus groups from each week to every three weeks and the participants were not interested in creating a finale as outlined by the tenets of photovoice (Wang, 1999; 2006). The participants each stated that they did not care what I did with their images, but they were happy to help. Participants also pushed the boundaries of where/when they could take their images such as when classrooms were being used for instruction and images of their teammates who were not in the study. They would justify these boundary pushes by stating this was how they were feeling and don’t their feelings matter?

After entering into the space of the culture of power as an outsider, what began to emerge were examinations of the reproduction of power through the lens of elite hypermasculinized athletes. Sports are a place for boys to enter into masculinity and in this case the hypermasculinized sport of hockey (Drummond, 2002; MacDonald, 2014; Messner, 1989, 1990, & 2007; Young, White, McTeer, 1994). Whiteness and the culture of power are reproduced, and protected through institutions, and is also acquired through accumulating cultural capital through status and class (Bourdieu, 1986; Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007; Howard & Kenway, 2015; Messner, 2000). The boys not only revealed how they benefited from the reproduction of power but how they were complicit in using this power to benefit them. Their shifting of the methodology demonstrated their innate desire to protect their status and means to disengage from school (Priyadharshini, 2003).

Moving Beyond Nader

Nader’s (1972) four shifts when accessing Whiteness and the culture of power have been extended by elite studies researchers to also address two more areas including the research site and social justice (Howard & Kenway, 2015). Calling on a need for more research into elite schools, Howard & Kenway (2015) also appeal to educational researchers to explore the various contexts of young people in school including “sites within the social, economic, and cultural landscapes

of privileged young people's lives" (p. 1012). These broad social contexts extend into Whiteness, hypermasculinity, and forms of heteronormative power to better understand the ways in which these hierarchies are established (Kenway & Lazarus, 2017). My research study thus is situated within not only an educational institution as the site of the study but within these broad strokes of power that are entwined with the participants' lives as privileged White hockey players.

Elite schools promote, as a part of their culture, acts of social justice, however, this seems to serve as a distraction from the way these schools reproduce and perpetuate power (Howard & Kenway, 2015). This idea of social justice and giving back emerged here through the players being required to volunteer in some capacity within the hockey community. Players would volunteer coach with teams of a younger skill and age group every week with the intention to promote positive role modelling. This then gave participants another way to disengage from their schooling as they would tell their teachers they were up late doing homework and needed to sleep in class as their volunteer hours were that previous evening. Teachers would then permit or turn away from when the boys would sleep in class, both then becoming complicit in allowing the power to reproduce and leave unquestioned as participants were engaging in acts of social justice (Greendorfer & Bruce, 1994; Howard & Kenway, 2015). Using photovoice then offers a means to critically interrogate performative acts of social justice within elite schools and instead, directly challenge the power dynamics being reproduced by the milieu. This, however, places the researcher again at risk and potentially in an unethical space, as to interrogate into the culture of power and Whiteness does not build honest relationships with participants.

Another potential turn on social justice could call into question who is social justice for? Drawing on Freire (2013), social justice seeks to balance power inequities and interrogate the role of hegemony. While the suggestion is to not turn away from marginalized and othered individuals and groups, I do suggest that White privileged boys also need social justice as they are being harmed, and causing harm, by the reproduction of Whiteness and the hegemonic culture of power. This strategy of reproduction is causing harm to our boys and men as men are more likely to commit suicide than females (Navaneelan, 2012) and men also have higher rates of addiction than females and at least one in 10 men will experience depression (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2012). In Canada, two-thirds of students with identified special needs in elementary school are boys (Bohatyretz & Lipps, 2000) and boys are more likely to express forms of aggression and be diagnosed with conduct disorders than girls (Hou, Milan, & Wong, 2006). High school drop-out rates are higher for boys than girls (McMullen, 2006) and, young males are three times more likely to commit suicide than females, one of the leading causes of death for young people (Navaneelan, 2012). Boys and men are also more likely to be perpetrators of violence and victims of violence, and they are overrepresented in prison (APA, 2018). Boys and men's mental health

and well-being will remain stigmatized as a hypermasculine heteronormative male identity remains a norm among men and women, protected by the culture of power.

Inscriptions of Power

What Nader's (1972) framework for *studying-up* provides is an insight into how the culture of power and Whiteness seek to protect itself and isolate Others that do not belong. Here, the discussion will turn to De Certeau's (1988) strategies and tactics to analyze the ways Whiteness revealed itself through Nader's framework as well as the ways researchers need to read the inscriptions of protectionism and dominance. De Certeau (1988) calls strategies an intentional manipulation of "power relationships" (p. 35). Strategies refer to all hegemonic means to reproduce and propagate the status quo and their existence depends on this reproduction of power (De Certeau, 1984; Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013; Kenway & Koh, 2013). In this research through studying-up, the strategies evoked support Nader's (1972) framework of shifting access, ethics, attitudes, and methodology as well as the extensions brought forth by Howard & Kenway (2015).

Seeking access to White privileged males was problematic from the beginning and the reinforcement of protectionism were thickening of the regulations normally enforced by IRB's (Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013). The ethics of researching the culture of power also places the researcher in a precarious position as one trying to infiltrate the protected space and through the thickening of the regulations, casts a discrediting shadow onto the study and the researcher thus, keeping control of what knowledge is produced (De Certeau, 1984). Attitudes within educational research coincide with the social construction of what counts as knowledge and a White saviour complex seems to be more profitable with research favouring reducing disparity gaps from the lens of the Other. As a White researcher, to counter this view results in isolation from the status quo (Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013) and forces one to take a reflexive turn onto the self (Lather, 2013). Methodologically, strategies were also enacted to benefit and preserve the White male youth. Participants consistently negated the regulations established for the study by the IRB as their agency of being complacent in their disengagement needed to remain hidden from view.

Strategies offer those within the realm of the culture of power a safe space where the autonomy of members remains protected through combating the threats of outsiders wanting to reveal the ways in which the status quo remains (De Certeau, 1984). When knowledge is inscribed on Others, it is done so to preserve and maintain the power of the elite. When the elite are idolized as cultural symbols (Messner, 2007) such as White male hockey players, certain ideologies are transfixed in our cultural mosaic. The hypermasculinized young White male not only benefits from inscriptions of power, but also is complacent in using this identity to deflect from revealing what lies underneath. This strategy participants used was through a recognition of their power as they enacted

the identity of the hypermasculine hockey player gave them space to disengage from school (De Certeau, 1984).

Leaking In

Without membership in the realm of the culture of power, tactics need to be used to leak into the protected space (De Certeau, 1984; Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013). Studying-up reveals not only how the culture of power protects itself, but others can find their way in to dismantle and decentre the culture of power. Tactics employed need to be spontaneous, and researchers thus proceed blindly inside without preconceived intentions of infiltration (De Certeau, 1984). Resistance to the culture of power and its “imposed knowledge” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 32) thus must arise from the very place of deception it forces the researcher into. The life of a researcher, pushing against power then becomes an act of resistance seeking to distort the “strategies of power” (Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013, p. 67) as opposed to the researcher that feels they have to question their role at every turn. As De Certeau (1984) writes, one must “make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers” (p. 37) thus, be open to seizing the opportunity to break into the surveillance systems of the culture of power and Whiteness when opportunities arise.

In pursuing to understand boys’ relationship with the curriculum in schools, I could not have foreseen the ways that power and Whiteness were going to infiltrate and inscribe boundaries onto my study. Would entering into this study with an awareness of the role of Whiteness have prepared me to find the cracks and holes as a means to decentre Whiteness? I would argue that entering into a research study seeking to dismantle the culture of power would be much more difficult than being forced into deception by those in power seeking to preserve their power. The arms of those in the sanctified realm would have remained secretly folded (Freire, 2013) rather than revealed *as being* folded. The difference lies with the ability to dismantle through seizing an opportunity to pull apart the fissure rather than continually looking at the other side of disparity gaps from the lens of the marginalized Other. Leaking in, not only sheds light onto how Whiteness and the culture of power sustains themselves (De Certeau, 1984), but also that this self-protectionism is causing harm to those within the circle itself. The fractures and fissures not only provide an opportunity for those on the outside to form a resistance but for those that are on the inside. A shift from the centre must be occurring.

Conclusion

By exposing the cracks in the culture of power, one can then invite those members into a dialogical conversation about the ways in which members both shape racist culture and become complicit in harming themselves (Green, Sonn, & Matsebula, 2007). Whiteness shapes knowledge and national identities (Giroux,

1997a), however largely goes unexamined because of difficulties with access, ethics, attitudes, and methodology (Bowman, 2009; Conti & O’Neil, 2017; Gusteron, 1997; Kenway & Koh, 2013; Nader, 1972; Priyadharshini, 2003; Undheim, 2003). Researchers interested in uncovering the protectionism of Whiteness, therefore, need to be prepared to seize unexpected opportunities to crack the structure of Whiteness and power (De Certeau, 1984; Gokalp Yilmaz, 2013; Rust, 2015). To move into a post-racist society, all involved need to engage in dialogue with each other and also engage in self-reflexivity on the ways that White researchers both benefit from their position and have a duty to interrogate the cracks. To continue to be anti-dialogical with each other, and privilege protectionism does a disservice to the researchers and to the institution itself. A hierarchy of ethics (Nader, 1972) and forcing deception causes harm but also presents the opportunity to confront Whiteness unexpectedly and “move towards a new way of thinking” (Freire, 2013, p. 109).

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