(Re)Opening Closed/ness: Hauntological Engagements with Historical Markers in the Threshold of Mastery

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Introduction

Our ghosts are the traces of more-than-human histories through which ecologies are made and unmade.

—Gan et al., 2017, p. G1

To think with ghosts/hauntings[1] is to engage in an im/possible[2] paradox. Ghosts are always already everywhere and yet (forever) nowhere at the same time. Conjuring ghosts/hauntings, the justice-oriented "returns" of intrastitial actors and spatialities of history/ies (Derrida, 1994), can be problematic in that they can—and often become—*mastered* (e.g., controlled, manipulated, contained) despite their veridicality and ephemerality. Notwithstanding our position that every locality is replete with layers of history/ies that deserve(s) to be interrogated, articulated, and conjured (Derrida, 1994), we argue that institutional locations contain historical markers that disfigure, (re)shape, and regulate traces of the past in an effort to preserve exclusively problematic and closed historical accounts. However, Zembylas (2013) asserts other possibilities when engaging with hauntings by asking, "But what if history learning is understood not solely in terms of revealing and mastering unknown facts and stories about the past and its victims, but as openness for the not yet formulated possibilities of the future?" In response to this question, the purpose of this work is to introduce the im/possibility and

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openness of ghosts/hauntings as a radically different way of engaging with marked history/ies embedded within various institutional architectures.

Taking a cue from Flint (2019a), we consider these spaces, and thus the ghosts/hauntings within, to be nomadic thresholds beckoning our attention and resistance. As such, this paper outlines the un/controllability of ghosts/hauntings as a path towards both opening radical contextualization and disrupting institutional discourses within the context of mastery. And just as Yoon (2019) reminds us that "ghosts[/hauntings] will have their say" (p. 5), our positioning of ghosts/hauntings suggests that we are not always afforded the luxury of translating and comprehending what it is that ghosts/hauntings are attempting to communicate. We believe that this tension is necessary to cultivate spaces in order to think across how ghosts/hauntings might hazard the notion of institutional mastery and thus puncture the institutionally controlled "totalizing and self-righteous version of the past" (Zembylas, 2013, p. 84).

We first position this paper within an archive of literature that unravels various ways that ghosts/hauntings can be generative in thinking about/across historical and educational contexts before making a distinct connection between ghosts/hauntings and mastery. Such literature underscores Derrida's (1994) call for us "to learn to live with ghosts [...]To live otherwise, and better. No, not better, but more justly[…]But with them" (p. xviii). We suggest that such ephemeral moves can help educators and researchers not only contemplate the traces of presence haunting institutional spaces, but also become more attuned to the absences, "the nagging presences," (Ewing, 2018) that make themselves un/known—precisely when we are not watching for them. Then, we use a coupling of Derrida's (1994) hauntology and Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) post-qualitative methodology, thinking with theory, to inoculate composites of text and respond to photographs taken at two East Coast universities: The University of South Carolina and The University of South Florida. We close the paper by linking the im/possibilities and openness of conjured ghosts/hauntings and historical designations to education(al research).

Traces of Literature

Nagging Presence(s)/Absence(s)

Reflecting on what she describes as a "nagging presence," Ewing (2018) explored elements of love, loss, and institutional mourning related to the closure of schools in and around her childhood neighborhood of Chicago. Along with defining institutional mourning as "the social and emotional experience undergone by individuals and communities facing the loss of a shared institution they are affiliated with" (Ewing, 2018, p. 127), Ewing's spectral undertaking indicates that failing to confront and engage rather than, at best, acknowledging and reconciling past spatial hauntings is problematic, especially for communities' whose histories/perspectives/backgrounds have been historically racialized.

While allowing for the intentional deterioration of physical buildings is one way to control the history of marginalized groups, Ewing (2018) reminds us that failing to conjure traces of white supremacy, oppression, social injustice and (cultural/ecological) inequity is another mechanism of mastery. Injustices of the past cannot be permanently veiled and requires vigilance on behalf of all members of society. Accordingly, engaging with ghosts/hauntings, or what Ewing (2018) calls *ghost stories*, can serve as a powerful modality of disruption/noncompliance/ resistance. And just as these ghost/haunted stories are imbued with vulnerability, Ewing also suggests that "Ghost stories serve as an important counterstory; a ghost story says *something you thought was gone is still happening here;* a ghost story says *those who are dead will not be forgotten"* (P. 154, italics in original). While mastery holds the (ephemeral) power to adjudicate which histories are conjured and in what context(s) they are described, there is no negating the idea that "something, someone, is still here...despite all [continued] attempts to eradicate us" (Ewing, 2018, p. 154) through misdirection, misinformation, and mismanagements of the past.

Similar to Ewing's call to engage ghost stories as counterstories, Villa (1999) describes how marginalized groups—in his case Chicanx communities in Los Angeles—unleash "present absences, or absent presences," (p. 112) and deploy "the imagery of ghosts, specters, palimpsests, and other phantom presences" (Villa, 1999, p. 112) to protest the processes of urban gentrification. As a tool of resistance, community activists, journalists, and artists conjure the displaced residents and brown picket fences of various locales through shrines, graffiti, songs, and curses to haunt modern skyscrapers and urban "renewal" projects. In conjuring these former Aztlans (Villa, 1999), and inviting uncontrollable *fantastmas*, marginalized communities fight mastery and demand disjunction, discomfort, and disunity—all of which Zembylas (2013) argues are essential components of haunting pedagogies which intersect educational and historical (re)imaginings.

Ghostly Pedagogy, Haunted Knowledge

Zembylas' (2013) engagement with the spectral vacillates between the micro spaces of education (e.g., classrooms and centers for learning) and broader historical engagements (e.g., historical accounts loss and absence). Specifically, Zembylas (2013) invites educators to traverse the limitations of invoking the safe/ static specter—flattened temporal rememberings of the past meant to momentarily redeem, remember, and recognize—by pivoting towards the invocation of unbridled ghosts/hauntings that call forth the im/possibilities of a just, radically opening re/membering of the future. To this point, Zembylas' energetically states:

> [L]earners should be given opportunities to critically examine how some forms of recognizing disappeared victims in public or school ceremonies—such as ceremonies that are strongly sensationalized and voyeuristic—are redemptive and

perhaps seek to hide other parts of history about which a community may not be so proud. Opening the door to spectrality in history education implies that the specters will travel with educators and their students into territories that are likely to be emotionally uncomfortable and demanding. (p. 83)

Important to our discussion, this ghostly pedagogical approach precludes a narrow mastery which closes off possibility in (re)tracing the boundaries of acceptable and perhaps, haunted knowledge. From this ghostly/haunted axiom, pedagogy is replete with reverberations of the past and can encourage discussion as to how, why, where, and by whom ghosts/hauntings are conjured. As such, we might ask: *When is the specter repressive, productive, and/or purposively crafted, and by whom?* Such a practice is not intrinsically comforting, but rather asks for us to re-examine our relation(ship)s to that which escapes the bounds of mis/representation, words, and ephemeral contemplations and understandings of space-time.

Bridging Ghosts/Hauntings and Mastery

As we understand the conjuring of ghosts/hauntings as having narrative power and (future) spatial-temporal and affectual im/possibilities for educators and students, we draw inspiration from Singh's (2018) notion that "mastery is a concept that is situated at the threshold of matter and narrative" (p. 17). By confronting the differentia of mastery and putting it into conversation with temporally spatial designations of historical actors/occurrences, we seek a more equitable, responsible, and *just* be(com)ing. As such, mastery does not capitulate to the past or present, and is always already embedded within anticipatory frameworks regarding the construction of future histories/worlds. According to Cixous (1986), "mastery is everywhere [… and] rages between classes, people, [histories,] etc., reproducing itself on an individual scale" (p. 78). Troubling this idea, we suggest that—similar to ghosts/hauntings—mastery is paradoxically *everywhere* and *nowhere* at the same time, implicating past/future conjurings of inescapable history/ies and sutured discourses between spatial considerations of presence *and* absence. In doing so, we do not seek to (re)produce the (settler) framework(s) of recognition designed to "placate disposed people" (Grande, 2016, p. 56), but rather engage with spatial-temporal (dis)junctions in a way that helps us to think through/across underlying power structures that shape when, why, where, and what history/ies become (re)emergent and (materially) marked throughout academic institutions.

Hauntological Orientations

Hauntology offers two primary arrivals/departures relating to the rupture of anchored temporal and ontological orientations. The first references "to that which is (in actuality) no longer, but which is still effective as virality (the traumatic compulsion to repeat a structure that repeats, a fatal pattern)" (Fisher, 2012,

p. 19). This notion challenges the (temporal and ontological) position that reality and materiality are symbiotic, while essentially asking: Can *something* still exist if it cannot be touched? Secondly, hauntology suggests that between the imbrications of temporality and ontology await opportunities to beckon past accounts of injustice. Reflecting on the role of im/possibility within this hauntological context, Derrida (1994) noted that "without this experience of the impossible, one might as well give up on both justice and the event" (p. 65). Put differently, hauntology calls into question the fixed-ness of historical accounts of injustice, thus unlocking *interlocking* and unaccounted for spaces of hopefulness, amelioration, and atonement.

Applying a hauntological perspective is important to untethering the way that historical markers designate a mastered account of the past for at least the following reasons. First, we understand hauntology to signify a redistribution agency. While our work in this paper involves engaging with materialities (e.g., historical markers, portraits, leather binders) that are fixed, for the time being, hauntology offers an openness to the closed-ness of *mastered* historical markers. Across this point, hauntology allows us to move past "density and solidity, which might under exceptional circumstances betray us" (Jameson, 1995, p. 39) as being perpetually copacetic. Put differently, hauntology lays bare a before-ness and after-ness to agentile materialities (Barad, 2010), thus queering the relationship between memory, (historical) designation, and understanding (Zemlylas, 2013). Secondly, hauntology erodes strict temporal demarcations by thinking of time as existing in a perpetual state of entanglement that is (forever) be(com)ing something (re) new(ed), thus promoting the interrogation of nuances embedded within layers of history/ies. To this point, to haunt is to trace, and to trace is to complexify (Derrida, 1994). Being said, it is within these nuances and complexifications that are always already haunting everything around us that we can begin to critically (re) imagine a future that is more equitable, culpable, and just. After all, according to Derrida (1994),

> No justice…seems possible or thinkable without the principle of some responsibility, beyond all living present, within that which disjoins the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead…Without this non-contemporaneity with itself of the living present…without this responsibility and this respect for justice concerning those who are not there, of those who are no longer or who are not yet present and living, what sense would there be to ask the question 'where?' 'where tomorrow?' 'whither?' (p. xix)

Thinking with Ghosts/Hauntings/Theory

In order to engage with the (textual/photographic) conditions responsible for upholding mastery with relation to the appellation of historical markers existing on two East Coast universities, we first identified historical markers replete with layers of history/ies that we felt deserved to be interrogated, articulated, and conjured. After arriving/departing at these specific localities, we then collected pub-

lished "material" (e.g., university website articles, materials on official websites, press-releases) and photographs relating to each ghost/haunting. During this process, our exploration unfolded nomadically (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), allowing us to queer, connect, and reconnect with unexpected textures and nuances regarding the "processes, flows, and forces" (Kuntz, 2019, p. 97) of mastery as well as the "nagging presences" of present/absent history/ies. Next, we deployed thinking with theory—developed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012)—to entangle us with(in) the text/photographs. Borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) concept of "plugging in," thinking with theory engages "*plugging in* to produce something new…a constant, continuous process of making unmaking" (Jackson and Mazzei, 2012, p. 1). Working together via an online conversation and collaborative word processing document, we arranged and (de)attached hauntological thoughts, perspectives, and postures thus allowing us to attend to the hauntological in-between space that "reclaims the unspoken and neglected" (Papastephanou, 2011, p. 97).

Plugging in (The Ghosts of) Our Self/ves

Just as our nomadic entanglements of the institutional markers was not "a stable thing, but a process of making and unmaking" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 1), it is important to engage with the processes of our self/ves in this research. In other words, our self/ves are part of the assemblage, another more-than-text that is plugged into efforts to undermine the closed/ness of mastered institutional markers. Bretton Varga's origins are haunted by Eastern European matter(ing)s, and as such, he frequently contemplates the implications of Eastern European mastery over the layers (and layers) of (physical) history and temporality. Having his mother transition from physical being to something else had a profound impact on how Bretton makes non/sense of past, present, and future emotions/experiences/intra-actions/rememberings.

Timothy Monreal's ghosts are haunted by his Mexican-American father and his white mother. Timothy identifies as Chicano. He stands at the crossroads of colonized and colonizer (Villenas, 1996) and as such is always already *mijito* y *pendejo*. To make sense of such history has been "exhausting and rewarding... filled with self-doubts [but] embracing and building an epistemology of haunted in-betweens" (Yoon, 2019, p. 14). Inspired by Ewing and Villa's aforementioned calls to use ghost stories as counter-story, Timothy sees possibility in engaging the openness of the specter.

Institutional Entanglements

To represent our w(a/o)nderings, we experimented with form during the presentation of our examples. This attempt was meant to reflect nomadency and "a way to produce different configurations and constellations" (Flint, 2019a, para. 2). Our uses of textual absence (e.g., spaces) unfolded organically, without calcula-

tion, and perhaps can be best described as chaotic, uncertain, and messy (Christ et al., 2020). Being un/said, this section consists of our hauntological entanglement(s) with text/photo composites regarding the presence/absence of historical markers at the University of South Carolina (USC) and the University of South Florida (USF). To assist us in identifying our intra-actions with(in) the composites—data—and perhaps further contributing to the intertwined nature of our analytical/philosophical w(a/o)nderings, we adjusted the font in the following section. Hauntological engagements are in this font, *institutionally (published) related text is in italics* and [our ongoing questions, comments, and situating of mastery are bracketed]. Of note, we also played with the layering of images in an effort to distort and destabilize the temporal and ontological certainty trapped within each photograph. We are of shared mind that this approach works in concert with our efforts to conjure openness and hauntological liminality throughout this inquiry.

Example 1: USC

University of South Carolina website
November [June] *30* [19], *2017* [2019]

Figure 1
Historical Marker Acknowledging the Contributions
of Enslaved Peoples at University of South Carolina

Figure 2
Horseshoe Walking Path and (Pink) Residence of the President

According to Derrida (1994), (historically) temporal conditions are inseparable as "it is never possible to avoid this precipitation, since everyone
reads,
acts,
writes,
[and thinks]   with *his* or *her* ghosts, even when one goes after the
ghosts of other" (p. 139, emphasis in original)). In this way, we are a composite of
                         "ghost[s] of ghosts" (Derrida, 1994, p. 138)
that connect us to everything around and inside of us. *The enslaved workers'*
names and acknowledgement of their [ghosts/hauntings and...and...and...] *contri-*
butions at the institution during its antebellum era are now immortalized on two
bronze historic markers [hauntings] *that will be unveiled in a ceremony Dec. 5 at*
Rutledge Chapel on the Horseshoe. [To what end can
the
tensions
encompassing material markers that conjure ghosts/haunting attend to
                                        institutional mourning?

What does it mean to *unveil* a ghost/haunting and how are the layers of ethicality attended to through the processes of historical designation?] While
hauntology [and ghosts/hauntings]
is "about believing in justice, learning to live, discovering the most disturbing of all ghosts—the stranger deep inside oneself" (Harris, 2015, p. 17), attention must
    be
paid
    to the [always already-ness of] ghosts/hauntings and history/ies that have (still) yet-to-arrive.
These markers [mark ghosts/hauntings and] *have been in the works for quite some ~~time~~," says John Dozier, chief diversity officer for the university."* (Figures 1 and 2)
[We are reminded by Barad's (2017) perspective that "time, like space, is subject to diffraction, splitting, dispersal, entanglement. Each moment is a
multiplicity   within a given singularity. Time will never be the same—at least for the time-being (p. G106)." Moreover, settler colonialism attempts, and often succeeds, in mastering space-time (Rifkin, 2017) which is a critical aspect over the domination of any narrative. Did the violent display of white(-ness) supremacy that unfolded at Charlottesville, Virginia on August 12, 2017 influence the institution's deployment of "quite some ~~time~~?" Was the university responding to the history/ies of   racist incidents   on campus which provoked a South Carolina NAACP official to remark "some wish they were still in Dixie" (Cahill, 2015)? To what degree did the Black Lives Matter movement push the university towards the

                                        conjuring
of an oppressive history/haunting thus resulting in the stamping down of a historical marker?]
Considering the
opaqueness
between   the   first   time   and the last time (Derrida, 1994),
"(history professor) Bob Weyeneth's students conducted research several years ago in an attempt to stage an end of history *that has given us the information we have today about the university's use of enslaved people."*
[The reach of mastery extends beyond temporal and anthropocentric designations and includes a manifold of ownership ideations. The anthropocentric nature of institutional markers is not lost on and only contributes to warping and distortion of memory and justice. Considering this, we ask, who...who...who... has the right to "give" or release or conjure information/ghosts, to claim an end to a history?)]

Figure 3
The Brick Building Is a Remaining (Physical) Structure That Housed Enslaved Peoples

The building is directly behind the marker and immediately adjacent to the President's residence. Despite the notion that "the past, like the ghost, does not properly belong to the present, but neither does it remain entirely in the past; it begins by coming back" (Kleinberg, 2017, p. 12), [t]*he installation of the* [re]*new*[ed] *markers shouldn't be seen as an end, says Dozier: "It's a* [significant] *step toward complete ownership* [or mastery] *of who we are as a university* [and the ghosts of the
       pastpresentfuture].

                            We have been inspired by our [select set of chosen]
students
       to be more thoughtful about how we [conjure ghosts or] *tell* [and problematically mark] *the history*[/ies] *of the university and of the state in more complete ways.* [We understand this claim as paradoxical in that mastery is being upheld through the complete absence of complexity.]
                     This is an attempt to do that; the plaques represent the
[always already]
              beginning of how we [master and] *contextualize our past."* [Mastery over the contextualization of past ghosts/hauntings and who controls future conjurings. We find it interesting/revealing that the press release is situated as an achievement of a university-based (history) class project, but fails to recognize a 2015 walkout

organized by minoritized students that demanded such history be publicly featured (Shain, 2015). We are also interested in the close proximity of the (current) President's residence to the slave quarters (Figure 3). In essence, the press release seeks to foster non-opened/ness and erase the conjuring of slave-related ghosts/hauntings and history/ies by those activist students.]

Example 2: USF

University of South Florida website, January [March] *2020*

Figure 4
*VP Conference Room at the University of South Florida Research and Innovation Cente*r

We are immediately drawn to the display of white mastery represented in the portraits adorning the conference room (Figure 4). Derrida (1994) reminds us that if we are going to "speak at length about

    ghosts, inheritance,

       and generations,

           generations of ghosts,

which is to say about certain others who are not present, nor presently living, either to us, in us, or outside us, it is in the name of   justice" (p. xix). Considering that *[o]ver the past 20 years, USF has transitioned into a major research institution* [perhaps creating yet another historical marker] *and was designated a "Preeminent State Research University" by the Florida Board of Governors in June of 2018, one of only three in the state,* [mastery of institutional leadership extends much further into the past, despite the living ghosts/hauntings articulated in several of the portraits

                (i.e., current, past, past-past research presidents).

To what extent does USF attempt to diversify its leadership within the department of research and innovation? Further, how might conceptualizing diversity, leadership, and pastpresentfuture materialities as being entangled impact/inform how communal injustices are conjured?

Put differently,

can

              ghosts/hauntings

    unsettle our   relationship to

                  institutional

                          mastery over

                 time/space?]

Despite Derrida's (1994) theorization that ghosts/hauntings (always) occur in the context of justice, ghosts/hauntings—such as the ones being conjured in the conference room—can/are/will be situated in a way that reminds us of the threshold of whiteness and its (continued) ownership of ghosts/hauntings. According to Davis (2005), hauntological mastery—in which justice is absent and not prioritized/operationalized—is common place as ghosts/hauntings do not "in some versions of the ghost story, return from the dead in order to reveal something hidden of forgotten, to right a wrong, or to deliver a message that might otherwise have gone unheeded" (p. 374). [However, these ghosts of mastery

beckon us

to consider

    the continued perpetuation of injustice and   who's/what's underpinning exercises of power that dictate the unveiling of past history/ies. How might we feel, sitting in this room, surrounded by those responsible for making decisions

and furthering the "~~mission~~" of the research and innovation department? To what (neo-liberal) ends will such research be put to use? How are these portraits (not) communicating with us? From our perspective that
ghosts/hauntings are more-than-human entities, what are the materials in the room   (not) commun   i   cating to us? To what extent would the physical manifestation of these ghosts demand
      silence?
            Compliance?

                                          Assimilation?
                                    Mimesis?

How would our experience shift and slip, if the ghosts/hauntings being conjured were a mix of people/materials who have involved into accessible and equitable research responsible for USF being] *classified as both a Doctoral University with "Highest Research Activity" and as a "Community Engaged" institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching?*
      While the *USF Research Park, located on the Tampa campus, provides an important, centrally located community environment for a growing number of startups, early-stage companies, researchers and community partners,*
                              "only by facing the ghosts, in their materiality,
and
acknowledging injustice without the empty promise of complete repair
                              (of making amends finally) can we come close\
                  to taking them at their word" (Barad, 2010, p. 26).
[What would the faces in the portraits have to say about our conceptualization of ghosts/hauntings? Just as our attention was first drawn to the humanist ghosts, we also acknowledge that this room and the matter(ing)s placed within it (e.g., table, leather, wires, paint, building) also contain significant traces of history/ies deserving of our attention and interpretation (Derrida, 1994). It is not lost on us that these materials reflect affluence while many schools are juxtaposed with worn/torn materials. Perhaps every item is tethered to its own ghosts story waiting to be unleashed (Ewing, 2018). How might the grip(s) of mastery be loosened if the portraits were relocated, separated, or resituated in another space on campus?] From this temporal perspective, the past is always
hesitating,
retreating,
and advancing   its influence(s) on future matter(ing)s and allows us to trouble the notion that "there is no taking it back, setting time aright, putting the world back on its axis" (Barad, 2010, p. 26). [While we cannot change the past, nor do we wish to try, we argue for haunting as a form of resistance and believe that it can be a productive way of troubling the present with the intention of (re)shaping the future.]

With regards to the future of research, at USF, *graduate students have the opportunity to work alongside internationally renowned faculty and researchers in a variety of*

                              settings.

  Together they work to create solutions to society's most pressing problems. [Does the unveiling of systemic conditions that promote/sustain injustice through the mastery over which histories are conjured count as a 'pressing problem'? Who/what is served by leaving such "pressing problems" ambiguous, what
                    "nagging presence(s)," (Ewing, 2018)

  and
  "present absences/absent presences," (Villa, 1999)

                    are (re)introduced by such vague narrative?]

With this being said, we argue that embracing a hauntological perspective that brings into focus the ways in which history/ies of past are entangled with the present and future will cultivate the complexification (and openness of renewed, more just, potentialities) of *expectations and privileges associated with undergraduate research.* In doing so, we believe this meets
Derrida's (1994) call to engage with   ghosts/hauntings, "despite the reluctance inherited from our intellectual traditions
                  and because of the challenge it may pose them" (p. 32).
While there will forever be *creative and ongoing collaboration*[s] *between faculty and student researchers, administrative staff, business and academic partners, and the community,* we believe that thinking with/alongside ghosts/hauntings "pushes at the boundaries of language and thought" (Davis, 2005, p. 379) providing us with a necessary perspective that continues to harken to the layers of history surrounding the
world(s)
we

live
in.

Loosening the Grip of Mastery

The purpose of this project was to loosen the grip of narrative governing the designation of historical markers located throughout learning institutions. In unleashing ghosts/hauntings, we offer a theoretically informed opening towards troubling the vulnerability of history/ies, narratives, and spaces institutions seek to—and frequently successfully—master. To open one's self and institutions to ghosts/hauntings is to invite justice, pain/healing, separation, dis/connection, intrastitiality, mis/direction, and inter/intra-action as an ever-present companion; it is to (re)convoke im/possibility. It is in this spirit that ghosts/hauntings can be simultaneously friendly and compassionate *and* unsettling and risky. Reflecting on her positionality as a Korean American woman scholar and school ethnographer, Yoon (2019) noted, "I want my ghosts—our ghosts—to be free. Because ghosts cry out for justice, hauntings can be a powerful force for freedom movements and dreams. The trick will be how to cope, grow, with being haunted" (p. 14). Thus, in other words, to provoke openness is to engage with the demons that institutions—and white supremacy—have sought to close off, to master.

In this regard, we are reminded of McKittrick's (2006) engagement with Black geographies and how local materialities—the slave bloc, the slave ship, the plantation—created sites of subjugation and resistance that extend beyond immediate place to an unknown elsewhere. And while ghosts/hauntings are contested, the phantasmic demon is always already concealed and undetermined. However, with ghost/hauntings, we might imagine (institutional markers) anew. The competition of ghostly, mastered narrative gives way to not just Black material repossession (for instance a rupture in who resides in the university president's house or conference room) but also a "grammar of liberation" (McKittrick, 2006, p. xxiii) and subaltern spatial practices. Thus, the (demonic) ghost/haunting invites precarity (e.g., relating to existential/social/cultural vulnerability) and non-linearity, eschewing regular nodes and modes of temporal and onto-epistemic "certainty" in favor of recently (re)new(ed) connections. To this point, Flint (2019b), in a critical material study of race, place, and the productive history of buildings and monuments on a college campus, highlights how materialities create opportunities to encounter history/ies as well as possible moments of disruption, "for what they make possible, and how they make possible other configurations and encounters" (p. 153). Ghost/hauntings are essential to opening up un/acknowledged disruptions and fields of meaning that advance different ways of knowing/imagining, and be(come)ing (with/in) our future world(s).

Hence, while the idea that ghosts/hauntings—especially in relation to historical and institutional markers—can provoke openness and differing versions of justice is not new, we do feel there are additional vistas and implications specifically for education(al research). Pedagogically and epistemologically, the openness of the specter precludes a narrow mastery which closes off possibility in tracing the

boundaries of acceptable (haunted) knowledge. Ghostly pedagogy and curriculum invites discussion as to how, why, where, and by whom ghosts are conjured— while asking: *When is the specter repressive, productive, and/or purposively crafted?* Such a practice is not intrinsically comforting, but rather beckons us to re/examine our radical relation(ship)s to that which escapes the bounds of mis/ representation(s), words, images, and ephemeral contemplations/understandings of space-time.

Moreover, as researchers and practitioners, the nomadic engagement with the ghosts/hauntings of both universities helped shape a more complex perspective about how narratives of injustice are entangled in the past, present, and future. Whereas the ghosts/hauntings of physical spaces on the campus of USC prompted our thinking about the systemic functionalities of mastery and how history/ies become accessible/recognized, the photo and text from USF made us (re)consider how we communicate with, alongside, and through mastered history/ies. Such w(a/o)nderings continue to inter/intra-weave with our own ghosts/hauntings, our own positionalities, and the ideas and narratives we bring to historical places and monuments. In sum, we believe that these hauntological perspectives—when nuanced—can gesture towards an educational future that seeks to trouble institutional influence, control, and mastery over when/where/who/what stories can be told. Put another way, perhaps it is im/possible to leverage present matter(ing)s into future matter(ing)s *without* the acknowledgement and consideration of (a multiplicity of) past ghosts/hauntings. In this way, and as Derrida (1994) reminds us, "it is necessary to speak of the ghost, indeed to the ghost and with it" (p. xix). When we think about the past, we argue for a broader conceptualization that extends beyond the who/what and connects acts of injustice to all surrounding elements and relations.

Concluding Un/thoughts

Recently, novelist Zadie Smith (2020) posed the question, "What do we want history to do to us?" Perhaps extending this line of inquiry, might we ask: *What do we want historical markers to do to/for us?* As we continue to grapple with this question, we (re)turn to the words of Davis (2005) who said that "hauntology is part of an endeavor to keep raising the stakes of literary study, to make it a place where we can interrogate our relation to the dead, examine the elusive identities of the living, and explore the boundaries between the thought and the unthought" (p. 379). Further, from a (history) education perspective, we believe that history/ ies should (forever) un/settle us and that every historical engagement has circumstances and conditions that have fostered in/justice. When we think about the past, we argue for a broader conceptualization that extends beyond the who and connects acts of injustice to *all* surrounding elements, ecologies, and act(or/ion)s.

While hauntology offers boundless possibilities for rethinking all aspects of space-time, we believe that every historical marker is an opportunity to enter a

threshold of mastery and challenge the closed/ness of temporal and ontological certainties. Moreover, we consider this inquiry to be an intervention that disrupts the specter (of institutional mastery over narratives) and offers a (re)imagining of the im/possibilities always already existing between history/ies and futurities. Being said, we are concerned about how (certain) vulnerable ghosts/hauntings allow for certain masteries to be normalized, legitimized, and (re)produced by our institutions (in the name of the common good). Often, and evidenced by our initial findings, the conjuring of select ghosts/hauntings serves to repeat (and repeat and repeat) and repress safe notions of commonality that work to (re)privilege portions of the "public" instead of interrogating productive difference. Such reductive work disappears the spaces of im/possibilities in which (history) teachers/researchers might conjure new ghosts/hauntings of justice and limits—as well as simplifies—teachers' and student's entry points into history/ies. We argue that too often this fails to address future conjurings, and in turn, safe-guards an iteration of history that is problematic, irresponsible, and dangerous.

Notes

[1] Our use of ghosts/hauntings is not limited to an anthropocentric context and includes the presence/absence of histories relating to flora, fauna, matter(ing)s, theoretical perceptions, emotions, and experiences.

[2] In this article, we deploy the "/" in a way that is meant to signify textual instability (Derrida, 1966, 1976) and foreground the complex relationship between two concepts (Barad, 2013).

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