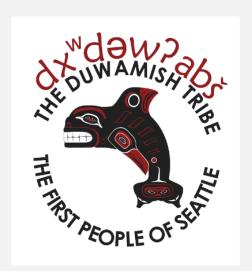
WHY WE CAN'T WAIT: A LIFETIME COMMITMENT TO OUR BLACK MALES

Mike Browne, MBA Amir Gilmore, Ph.D.

- Interrupt the legacy of injustice by acknowledging ways in which you perpetuate it and work to change it
- Begin with acts of healing and honest storytelling about how we have and currently still occupying land
- Commit to being a steward of that land – including the land, the waters, the plants, and the animals
- Create relationships with them. Not transactional one but ones that center trust, action, accountability, and love

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT







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BLACK BOYS



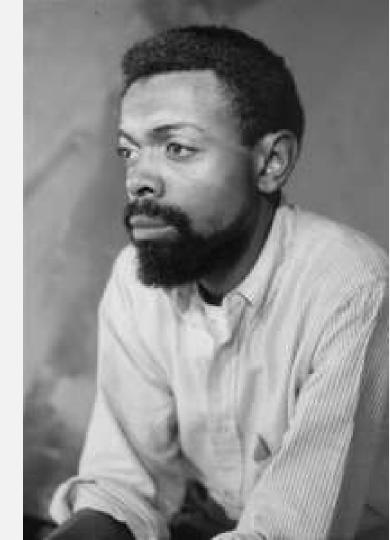
AMIR

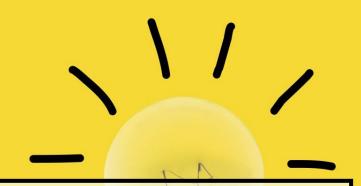


MIKE

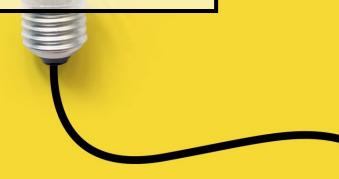
AMIRI BARAKA (1967) SAID:

"The quality of being is what soul is, or what a soul is. What is the quality of your being? Quality here meaning, what does it possess? What a being doesn't possess, by default, also determines the quality of the being"—Apple Cores #5 — The Burton Greene Affair



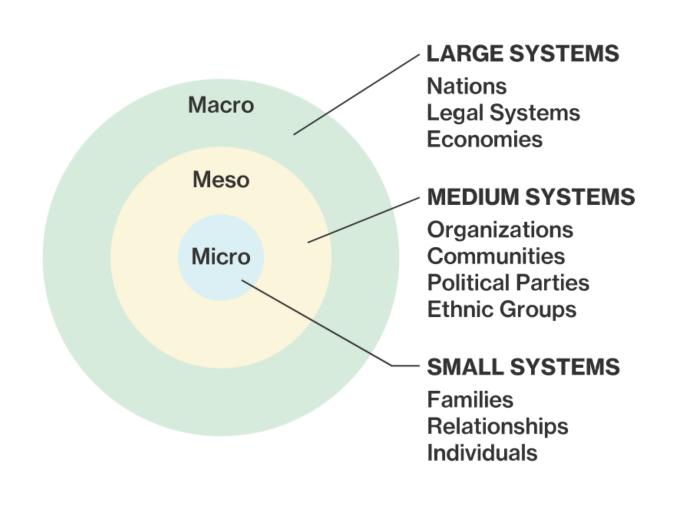


Q: WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF YOUR BEING?





A DISTORTED LENS





Black Agency
Black Bodies

BLACK AGENCY

Play is an equity issue













BLACK AGENCY

Black Culture

BLACK IDENTITY

Personal experiences

Family

Community

Workplaces

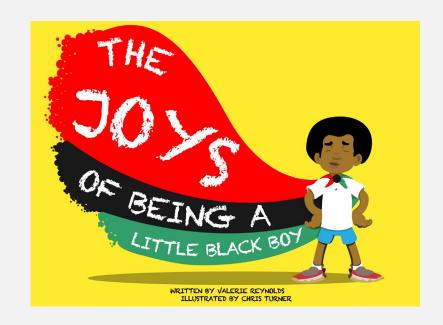
The Aging Process

Political and Social events

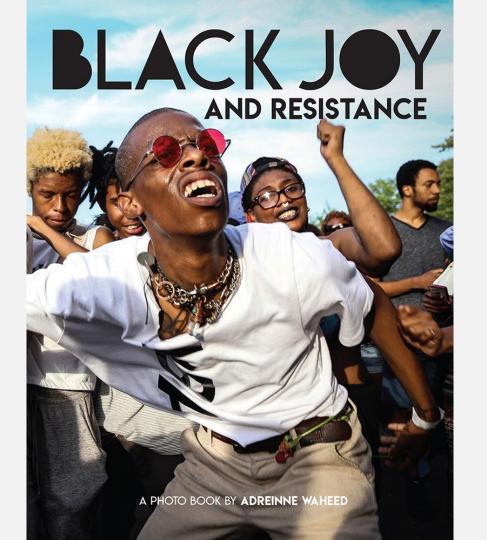
What is Black Joy?

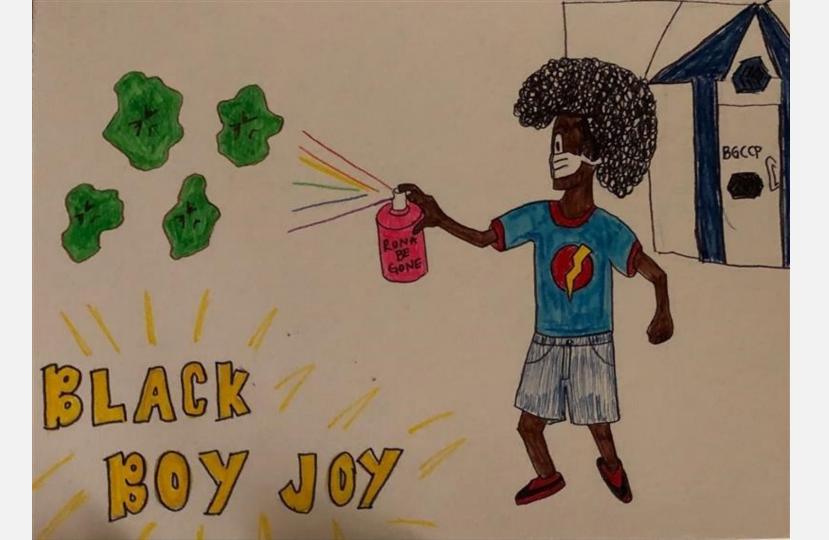
Where can we preserve this?

Where can we center the joys of what childhood entails?









SO WHAT IS BLACK BOY JOY?

"A common project, a study of unbounded Blackness, the blurring of Blackness, the joys of Blackness, the joy of Black boys." (Gilmore, 2019, p. 16)



- Black Boy Joy is a literacy a desire-based refusal* framework that:
- Centers Black joy and pleasure
- 2. The refusal of anti-Black pathologies*
- The reclamation of Black stories, voices, and identities through the arts and humanities.
- 4. Is the daily refusal to stay in ones designated "place" and provides a space that gives Black boys futures that they want now.
- A social and spiritual practice of being of (re)writing yourself into the present and the future

TURN AND TALK

WHICH TOPICS AND IDEAS ARE "TABOO" OR "SCARY" FOR ME BUT ARE ESSENTIAL CONVERSATIONS TO BEING A BLACK BOY IN SOCIETY?

SO WHY STUDY IT? WHAT'S ITS IMPORTANCE?

Black boys can never BE.

BEcause of white supremacy.



HAIR LOVE: DEANDRE ARNOLD (17)

DeAndre was been suspended for refusing to cut their dreadlocks, which is a violation of the 90-year-old dress code

DeAndre would not be able to walk in graduation

The family is from Trinidad where dreadlocks are common – source of heritage and pride

"Every day I would go to school, I would always be in dress code," he said during his appearance. "But the thing with them is, if it was let down, I would be out of dress code. If girls can have long hair, why can't I have long hair?"

REFUSAL!

Refusal is more than a no, but it makes room for *your* yes

Refusal is shaped based on our joyful desires

Centering refusal makes us think about why we participate in the activities that we do Refusing what has been refused to us!



JOY IS POLITICAL!

- ➤ In our terribleness there is joy
- ➤ Joy is inner knowledge; it is the *erotic* (Audre Lorde)
- >Joy is resistance and refusal of the status quo
- Joy is to be shared; what does it mean to coalition build around
- is distinct, coalitional, and intersectional justice work

It is crucial for teachers to invest in listening and learning about what Black youth want and seek to sustain.



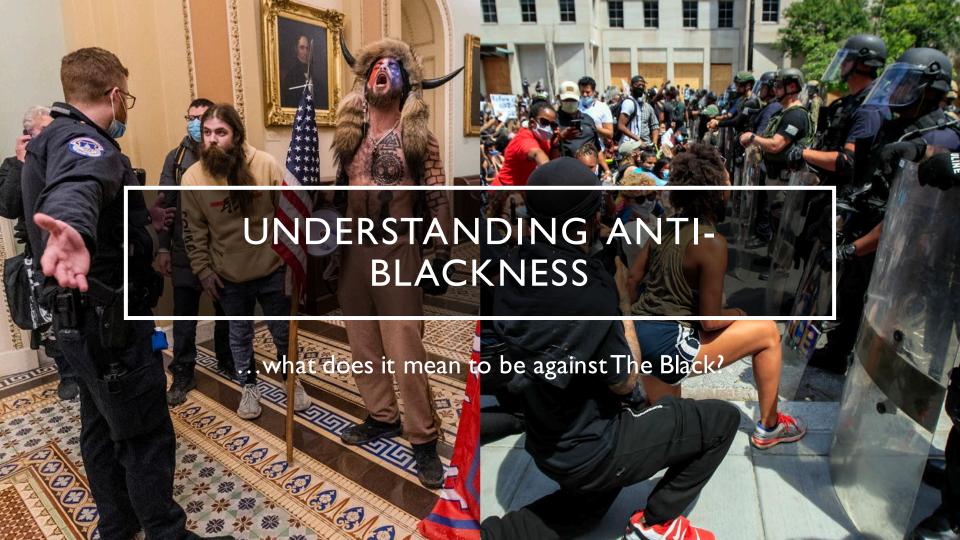


QUICK, RENT TO ONE.

Anti-Black racism happens here. Let's confront it. torontoforall.ca









Q: "WHAT IS TO BE DONE IN A WORLD OF NEAR UNIVERSAL SENSE OF SUPERIORITY TO, IF NOT UNIVERSAL HATRED OF, BLACK FOLK?"

-LEWIS GORDON (1997)

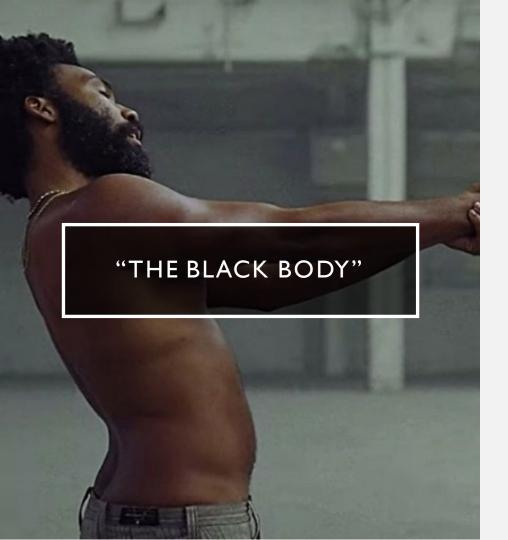


- Social positioning of Black people as visible and invisible
- Visibility: "weed out the pollution of Blackness from the purity of whiteness" (Gordon, 1997, p.70)
- Blackness is a contamination: blood becomes Black blood, thoughts become Black thoughts, flesh is Black flesh, Black presence is a form of white absence (Gordon, 1997, p.71).

CONTINUED – "THE BODY"

- The is body is our perspective in the world. It has at least three dimensions: the dimension of being seeing, the dimension of being seen, and the dimension of being conscious of being seen by others (Gordon, 1997, p. 71)
- Meaning
- Meaning-as-seen
- Meaning-as-meant
- Valuing
- Valuing-as-seen
- Valuing-as-meant





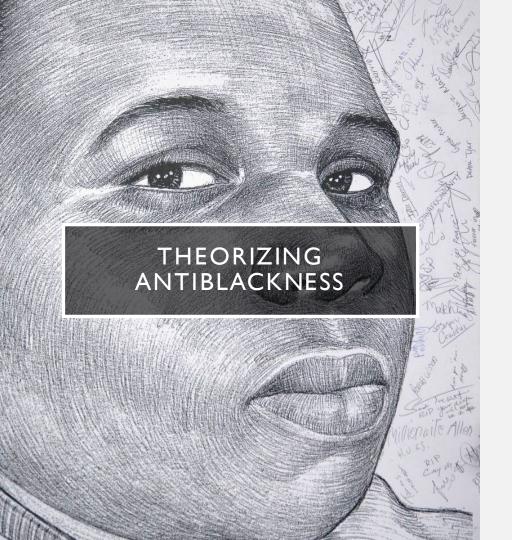
- The Black body lives in an antiblack world as a form of absence of human presence
 - The Black body: humanoid, colored, engendered, institutionalized (p.74)
- "As the other said it, when I was there, it was not; when it was there, I was no longer"

 Frantz Fanon
- "That Black presence is absence and white presence is presence leads to a skewed logic. Rules that apply to white bodies, by virtue of a bad faith, substantiated identity of beingwhat-it-is, change when applied to Black bodies in an antiblack world" (p. 73)
- Thus, Black people are anonymous. They lack human subjectivity. To see one Black person means to see every Black person
- The expression of "All Black people look alike"

The root of racism = Anti-Blackness

- It's deeper than just racism against Black people.
- It's a theoretical framework that illuminates society's inability to recognize our humanity
 — the disdain, disregard, and disgust for our existence (Ross, 2020).
- Anti-Blackness is, "the socially constructed rendering of black bodies as inhuman, disposable, and inherently problematic, endures in the organizational arrangement and cultural ethos of American social institutions, including her K-I2 schools, colleges, and universities" (Warren & Coles, 2020, p. 2)
- Anti-Blackness is the fulcrum of white supremacy (Nakagawa, 2012)

What is Anti-Blackness?



- The aim of theorizing antiblackness is not to offer solutions to racial inequality, but to come to a deeper understanding of the Black condition within a context of utter contempt for, and acceptance of violence against the Black" (Dumas 2016, p. 13).
- It is about understanding how violence against
 Black people is masked as normal

HUMANITY IS A SOCIAL CONSTRUCT

 "the Human is not an organic entity but a construct;a construct that requires its Other in order to be legible; and why the Human Other is Black." –Wilderson (2020)



CONTINUED: DEPUTIZATION

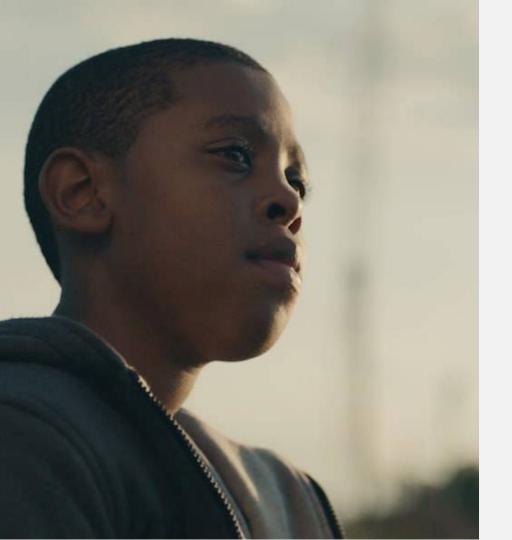
- Constructed as a problem and perceived as a threat to society (Sexton, 2008) within the white imaginary (Yancy, 2005), whiteness deputizes itself to engage Black life primarily through methods of surveillance, control, capture, even murder, to ensure that this progress is not stopped.
- Imbued by anti-Black polity, the Black body becomes the corporeal site—a racialized territory where civil society maintains social order and authority.



CONTINUED: PUTTING YOU IN YOUR PLACE

- As U.S. society's ethos, antiblackness is spatially committed to punishing all Black people across social institutions through its interdependent relationships, interactions, and policies.
- Antiblackness traffics violence to Black people regardless of their profession, accolades, or adherence to respectability politics.
- It only cares about putting you in your place





A QUOTE.

• Mumia Abu-Jamal (2015) posits, "When is a child not a child? When he is a Black child, apparently...Black children are projected as a dark symbol of social pathology, with little or no hope of [their] renewal" (p. 78-79).

ANTI-BLACK RACISM IN SCHOOLS

- Exclusionary discipline in which we say, "You are no longer welcome here" through suspension and expulsions of our Black boys, girls, and youth.
- Hyper surveillance (metal detectors, cyber surveillance, looking for ways in which Black boys are violent, disruptive, and otherwise unsettling).
- Classifying Black boys as "bad" through disciplinary actions.
- Isolating seats.
- Isolating Black youth from participating in the life of the learning environment.
- Overrepresentation in Special Education.
- Referred to and arrested by police or sent to principle office, or sent to counselor.
- Writing up "bad" behavior to create documentation in a cumulative file.
- Ignoring white children when they act out, while punishing Black children for the same behavior.
- Ignoring Black boys when they raise their hands in class.

WHAT DO THIS LOOK LIKE?

- On the first day of Black History Month 2021, a group of Wisconsin teachers gave sixth grade students an assignment asking them how they would "punish" a slave.
- As Feb 2021 ended, a Florida high school teacher was suspended with pay after allegedly telling students slaves were not whipped by white people and that the N-word, a racist slur, "just means ignorant."
- In February 2020, a student-teacher in Tennessee gave her fourth grade students an assignment called "Let's Make a Slave" about a speech from the 1700s about keeping Black slaves under control.
- In 2019, a fifth-grade teacher was accused of holding a mock slave auction in which white students bid on Black students in New York.
- In March 2021, eighth-graders at Purvis Middle School were asked to "pretend like you are a slave working on a Mississippi plantation" and "write a letter to your family back in Africa... describing your life."

- During a 2018 call, a Smith College custodial employee reported a Black student who was eating lunch and relaxing in the Tyler House residence hall living room. The student "seems to be out of place."
- At Yale University in 2018, a Black student was working on a paper in the Hall of Graduate Studies when she fell asleep in a common room. Another female student came in, turned on the lights and told her, "You're not supposed to be sleeping here. I'm going to call the police."
- In 2019 at Barnard College, a Black Columbia University student
 was entering the library when he was racially profiled by police. He
 was asked for his identification and was restrained by officers.
 After they verified his ID, police checked his status and asked him
 to leave the building.
- In 2020 a Ball State University professor called the police on a student after he refused to move seats.
- Creighton men's basketball coach Greg McDermott told his players, "We need both feet in. I need everybody to stay on the plantation. I can't have anybody leave the plantation."



- Class
- Religion
- Blended families
- Trauma
- Pandemic
- And more!

HOW IS ANY OF THIS HELPFUL?

- Frank Wilderson (2010) suggested, it is important for educators to acknowledge that antiblackness infects educators' work in schools and serves as a form of (everyday) violence against Black children and their families.
- Teachers, administrators, and district leaders should create opportunities to engage in honest and very specific conversations about Black bodies, Blackness, and Black historical memories in and of the school and local community. (Dumas, 2016, p. 17)





WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT: BLACK MATTERING

- "Mattering is a social-psychological concept concerned with the ways an individual develops thoughts and feelings that direct behaviors given the influences of the presence (actual or imagined) of others in society" (Carey, 2019, p. 370)
- Black students *infer* their mattering from the social institutions (i.e., schooling) that they partake in
- Black people are denied the possibility of having an honest body (Jordan, 1992) = an honest relationship with their minds, bodies, and spirits



"WE TEACH WHAT WE VALUE"

Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings

A STRENGTH BASED APPROACH

Power with **not** power over
Optimal level
Language

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How will you use your creativity, imagination, urgency, boldness, ingenuity, and rebellious spirit to fight for justice for Black and Brown children?
- Am I holding the Black boys in my class to different standards of behavior than other children and, if so, how?

• Which topics and ideas are "taboo" or "scary" for me but are essential conversations to being a Black boy in society?

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How can I use a strength based approach when describing Black boys behavior?
- What does this individual Black boy engagement looks like?

• How can I nurture Black engagement in subjects that doesn't excite him?

• What obstacles does this Black boy have (in his home life and at school) which is preventing him from thriving in my environment? (Is he coming from a teacher he doesn't like? Is it his access to resources? Is he a leader and I'm asking him to be a follower?)

NON-EXHAUSTIVE READING LIST



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