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RESET

THE JOURNAL

EDITORS' LETTER

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Goldsmiths Racialised Postgraduate Network's *RESET, The Journal*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most life altering events of our time. Since the first lockdown, we have been looking forward to a post-pandemic world. Lockdown after lockdown, we continue to envision. As we move forward to a future beyond this pandemic, we must take the lessons that we have learned with us toward the creation of a *new normal*. As racialised people, the members of the GRPN are wholly aware of social and structural systems that produce inequalities. This journal is an opportunity to create spaces for racialised people to illustrate their visions.

In this issue we examine the themes in the lessons and ask questions of the past, present, and future. Lydia Ayame Hirade asks, ***What If We Choose Not To Go Back To Normal?*** Using a Black feminist analysis, she says the thing marginalised people know is that *normal*, in its pre-pandemic form is not something that worked for everyone. In ***Finding Community in a Virtual World***, Baindu Kallon writes about the Black creative landscape and speculates what the post-pandemic physical and virtual world will offer them. Shamika Goddard followed up on Du Bois' concept of the 'uncanny valley' by applying it in the technosphere in her piece, ***Rendering All of Us: The Uncanny Valley of Humanity***. Stephanie Guirad and Jennifer Yanco seek at the component of time to dynamize intersectionality in their piece, ***A Critical Gap - The Need for a Dynamic Intersectionality***. There are three approaches, styles, and pieces of artwork to the first issue of the journal: first, ***ART: Encounters with the Dreamscape*** by Dara Kwayera Imani Bayer, followed by *ART:* ***Cali Bama: Portrait of the Ugly Nigger(2016)*** by Danielle Smith, and *ART:* ***Splendor*** by Corinne Spencer.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been and continues to be a generation defining event. There is so much to unpack. bell hooks wrote, "**To be truly visionary we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality while simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality**." And there is so much to envision, here it is.

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CONTENTS

What If We Choose Not To Go Back To Normal? **4**
Lydia Ayame Hirade

Finding Community in a Virtual World **8**
Baindu Kallon

Rendering All of Us: The Uncanny Valley of Humanity **11**
Shamika Goddard

A Critical Gap - The Need for a Dynamic Intersectionality **14**
Stephanie Guirad & Jennifer Yanco

ART: Encounters with the Dreamscape **18**
Dara Kwayera Imani Bayer

ART: Cali Bama: Portrait of the Ugly Nigger(2016) **20**
Daniele Smith

ART: Splendor **22**
Corinne Spencer

WHAT IF WE CHOOSE NOT TO GO BACK TO NORMAL?

BY:
LYDIA AYAME HIRADE

When discussing what the world could and should look like post-COVID, one of the urgent contemplations that seems to arise time and time again is that of when we might return to "normality." This paper examines some of the tensions in the will to return to normality. This examination serves as an invitation to reflect on the generative potential of black feminist theory to critically analyse and denaturalise normality, in particular by using intersectionality as a key lens. Specifically, the paper argues that an intersectional analysis of normality would allow us to critically reflect on the already existing interwoven structures of domination which particular communities were already experiencing as normality before the pandemic. Intersectionality thus emerges as a useful critical instrument for connecting up and interrogating seemingly disparate issues such as colonial trauma, racialisation, poverty, education, and healthcare across time. It allows us to ask alternative questions which rather resist a return to normality.

When discussing what the world could and should look like post-COVID, one of the urgent contemplations that seems to arise time and time again is that of when we might return to "normality." This short paper thinks about what it means to want to return to life as "normal." It provides an invitation to reflect on the generative potential of black feminist theory to critically analyse and denaturalise this normality, in particular by using intersectionality as a key lens. In its institutionalised life, intersectionality is a theory grounded in critical race feminism, notably in the work of Kimberlé Crenshaw. Crenshaw used intersectional analysis to show us "that the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be captured wholly by looking at the women race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately" (Crenshaw 1991, 2). The concept thus deftly "captures how oppressions are experienced simultaneously", underlining "the convergence, co-constitution, imbrication, or interwovenness of systems of oppression" (Carastathis 2014, 307). The concept's emphasis on the intersections of oppression reveals the intertwined architecture of domination which can be articulated in complex interlinked ways. From an intersectional view, structures of oppression are interwoven with each other rather than disparate. Hence, I use the concept here to think about how this approach might help us to see the crucial links between what might initially appear to be separate structures of oppression and what it means to think about them in the context of our "normality."

Pivoting back to the question the title of this article poses, then, I posit that the will to return to normality is underlined by a profound tension. There is no doubt that the times we live in represent something very distant from that which we were previously accustomed to. Wishfully asking about when to return to normal presumes some sort of desirability about this "before" time. Hence, in thinking about what it means to return to normality, we must first ask what this "normal" or "normality" is. We often use the word "normal" to refer to things in their typical state – the condition of things as they usually are. Normality is that to which we are habituated, that which we accept; events as they occur and reoccur without much cause for shock or surprise.

If normality is the world in its usual or typical condition, then our normality was at least 280,000 people sleeping rough on the streets of Britain (Shelter England 2019). It was policies of austerity which have affected the poorest communities of colour and, in particular, women (Runnymede Trust 2017). It was social housing wrapped in flammable cladding because this is a cheaper way to build despite the risk to its residents (Woodcock 2020). Normality was surging hate crime fuelled by exclusionary nationalisms attached to the vapid rhetoric of national sovereignty (BBC News 2019). It was casually referring to women who choose to wear the burka as "letterboxes" (Dearden 2019) and comparing same sex marriage to bestiality (Johnson 2002, 96). It was 1.8 million disabled people whose housing needs are not being met (Papworth Trust 2018). It was British bombs and planes peppering the skies of Yemen where over 118,000 people have been killed in the last half decade alone (Wearing 2020). Normality was a warming planet (Friends of the Earth 2014). It was increased flooding as a direct result of climate change (Friends of the Earth 2020). Normality was, and still is, bleak for many.

And so, whilst COVID may appear to be an exceptional crisis event for some, for others it may simply be a deepening of the bitter conditions which characterised the state of things before. I want to therefore use this space as a critical meditation in which I pose an alternative question to the one which fetishises a return to normality: What if we chose not to go back to normal? This alternative question, spurred on by the critical insights enabled by intersectionality, is one of more urgency and generative potential.

In what might seem like a small detour here, I want to recount a lunch date I had during the first summer of the pandemic with a friend and colleague of mine in Peckham, South London. Walking through the high street, I was astonished to see the streets bustling. Independent market vendors peppered across hectic pavements, small shops framed by borders of saltfish and mountains of fresh produce spilling onto the streets, energised pedestrians stopping to chat and exchange. Unlike some other parts of London which have become deserts of physical distancing, Peckham High Street seemed to have remained vibrant and busy, its dynamism apparently undampened. Upon moving through this populated space at a time where physical distance is the new order of the day, I expressed surprise and concern to my friend about the potential indifference to the pandemic (Office for National Statistics 2020; Public Health England 2020; Reeves 2020) that this surprising public assembly of bodies might suggest. In response, my friend provided me with a sharp and insightful reflection on the potential omniscience of existing trauma within marginalised communities, particularly those of colour, even before the explosion of COVID as a crisis perceptible by the wider population. She spoke to the interwovenness of structures of domination which have colluded to create this very moment, underlining the ways in which communities already affected by these intersecting structures might see continuity, rather than a radical break, with pre-pandemic normality.

This current moment, then, signifies something more of a worsened continuation of life as normal rather than one of a suddenly absurd extremity. This sense of crisis and abrupt rupture to a comfortable normality might be a response more typical to communities of privilege whose experiences may not lead them to understand the pre-COVID world as one of crisis too. My friend's insight exposes the pre-existing trauma of living as part of communities marginalised under racialised capitalism (Robinson 2000) – a structure or structures which precede and indeed provided the pretext for this global pandemic. Her intersectional analysis allowed me to take a step back and reflect on the ways in which structures of domination already interacted with each other in ways that were already producing the erasure and marginalisation of particular groups.

Experiences of vulnerability and marginalisation in the related issues healthcare, poverty, and education were already prescient in ways that the pandemic has only served to make more explicit. So, when conversations about the future centre the experiences of the most marginalised, the oft-repeated question about “returning” to “normality” as a way out implicates itself in violence. For many, daily life was already one of crisis. COVID is, as some have argued, a direct consequence of the unsustainable and unequal organisation of the world which has formed the basis of our normality. As such, it should be understood less as a single event and more as a situation embedded in histories of intersecting structures of domination.

In light of this, I want to return more explicitly to the key theme that this issue proposes: that of the role of scholarship in shaping and reflecting on the future from this collective critical juncture. I contend here that if there is one crucial reflection with heavy implications for scholarship that COVID-19 has exposed, it is the necessity to think intersectionally. Intersectionality is a concept rooted in Black feminism which demands that “race, gender, class, nation, region, and environment must be recognized as interconnected and mutually constituted,” and, “also stress that historical conditions, which includes both domestic and international considerations, influence how these relationships are organized” (Clark, Auerbach, and Xuan Zhang 2018, 63). By taking an intersectional approach to social and cultural analysis, we take steps towards making the crucial connections between various manifestations of domination, thus exposing and denaturalising the manner in which they collude to marginalise some groups at the expense of others.

The dismissal of intersectionality as a crucial framework would permit a narrativization of the pandemic and the social pressures it has exacerbated as a one-off spectacle borne of a purely biological mishap. An entirely scientific explanation risks naturalising the wider current state of affairs as normal and thus unchangeable. If we believe the current state of affairs are amenable to transformation, we should be committing ourselves to intersectional work. This work highlights the various ways that the virus has adversely affected those living in conditions of poverty as jobs are lost and sick pay docked. It simultaneously recognises the direct role that racialisation has to play in the mortality of some of the most precarious yet essential workers in society. It also acknowledges the increased care responsibilities that lockdown forces upon working women. It concurrently questions the implications of deforesting practices which move animals into new habitats where they can catch new diseases like the coronavirus, leading to pandemics which augment all these social issues. Those who were already marginalised have borne the biggest burden of this health crisis. A historicised and intersectional view forces us to see that this is not by accident. From this view, health is not just about controlling the virus. At its heart, intersectionality is a crucial framework which “calls for a focus on social justice, individual and collective well-being, and issues of peace for all of us, human and more-than-human alike” (Maina-Okori, Koushik, and Wilson 2018). This intersectional turn, then, is a move bound up in ethical concerns in its will to actively resist the inequalities and hierarchies which pre-date and precursor COVID. For scholarship, this is particularly key in the production and dissemination of knowledge.

So, what if we chose not to go back to normal? Or, as George the Poet asks, who says we have to go back to normal? What would happen if we chose, instead, to embrace intersectional thinking and understand multiple struggles as deeply interrelated? If we recognised the forms of domination which existed prior to COVID, as a crisis too? If we rooted our vision for a better world in a commitment to the most marginalised in society? These are not new questions. They have been posed before in some form or other by Audre Lorde, Frantz Fanon, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Françoise Vergès, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and many others whose names remain uncited here, but whose struggles and resistance remain nonetheless invaluable. The post-pandemic landscape provides us with the opportunity to take the necessary intersectional hard look at the directions we desire for our societies. If normality is founded upon systemic oppression, then we have serious cause to consider the alternative. And, in this consideration, academics must shatter the logic of the ivory tower and must not miss the chance to play our crucial role.

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FINDING COMMUNITY IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

BY:
BAINDU KALLON

Reports commissioned by various institutions such as the Arts Council England outline the “business case” for diversity while also tracking the impact of diversity initiatives throughout the sector. While representation has increased, inclusion regarding gender and ethnicity, remain low. So what does this mean for a Black creative in the UK? For many, it means navigating an increasingly competitive space with high barriers of entry. For those in the sub-set craft industry, which contains a variety of small businesses and individuals, it means searching for opportunities and resources to scale up in an economy reeling from the impact of Brexit and COVID-19.

As a Black owned business, collaborating with Black owned craft businesses, we’ve seen how the growth of Instagram and platforms like Etsy, have helped entrepreneurs find ways to overcome barriers and build their platform online. Yet reports still show that on the whole, Black businesses often lack access to resources, social capital and often fail to meet their financial needs and goals. It serves as a reminder that the challenges Black entrepreneurs face mirror the broader structural impact of racism, highlighting the lasting legacies of British imperialism.

The onset of COVID-19 exacerbated these inequalities. The disruption of the lockdowns is felt heavily by retail, restaurants, hospitality sectors, many of which are traditionally owned by Black and Asian owners. According to a report commissioned by the All Party Parliamentary Group for BAME business owners, nearly two-thirds of Black and Asian business owners have been unable to access COVID relief funds in the early days of the pandemic. This, coupled with the fact that hospital admission and mortality rates are higher in Black and Asian communities, demonstrates how daunting it can be to be a Black owned business in the era of COVID-19.

Despite this loss, the national lockdowns created a need for solidarity-virtually. Markets moved online, with organisations and collectives moving their outdoor spaces to platforms, such as Instagram and of course the star of 2020 - Zoom. COVID-19 spurred these enclaves of support, corners of the internet dedicated to making space for Black businesses. It fostered a sense of a community driven by a recognition of what had been lost to the pandemic. We also saw the further growth of platforms such as Eboynx, an online Afrocentric market connecting consumers to their favourite Black owned brands. For us at City Inspired, we found our own niche community, Blackowned Subscription Boxes, a discovery hub of Black business subscription boxes in the UK.

We found that this community expanded beyond businesses themselves to the customers that we cater towards. Those who were able to continue supporting Black businesses, were doing so in droves, whether through buying products, writing Yelp reviews or even highlighting their favourite Black owned businesses on their platforms.

It is important to note that the growth of these online communities was also largely driven by the Black Lives Matter movement. In 2020, mainstream images and stories of Black bodies were again told through Black suffering and trauma. Breonna Taylor, was murdered while sleeping in her home by US police officers. George Floyd, arrested in Minneapolis, was subsequently killed after a white police officer pinned his

knee on Floyd's neck for over eight minutes. Belly Mujinga suffered verbal abuse at Victoria Station and was allegedly spat on by a man claiming to have COVID-19. She died two weeks later, raising questions on the vulnerability of frontline workers and abuse that Black workers face on the job.

Their deaths, and the ones of countless other people of African descent, were shared around the world. For Black businesses, Black Lives Matter became a galvanising call to build networks of solidarity through business. In other words, it helped develop spaces to advocate for social change. This ranged from using our profits to donate to mutual aid funds, highlighting anti-racist organisations to the start of #BlackPoundDay, a movement to invest in Black businesses based in the UK. Thus the Black Lives Matter movement became the catalyst for conversations on how to support our local communities.

Black economic empowerment is often praised as part of the solution to racism. Investing further in Black businesses means pouring resources into Black communities, increasing agency and ultimately the improvement of socio-economic status. In the end, dismantling systemic racism involves much more radical change than investing in an incredibly flawed capitalist system. However, what movements like Black Pound Day have done is highlight a growing and vibrant network of Black business owners. It demonstrates a commitment to keeping anti-racism initiatives at the forefront of our businesses and an opportunity to call out a racist system through collective action.

Black Pound Day also became a vehicle to begin addressing the inequalities that Black businesses face in the UK, from lack of visibility to funding. Collectively, various businesses began sharing tips on mentorship, classes and we saw the development of funding opportunities by companies such as Impact X Capital, a venture capital firm. Thus potential solutions to overcoming barriers were formulated in our community, bringing the push for social change in the sector to a grassroots level. This growth of shared knowledge equips Black entrepreneurs to not only push past barriers but also highlight the structural conditions that make it difficult to start a business. It has led to increased calls for diversity initiatives and for some in the broader creative industry, to unionsie and challenge the entrenched power structures that shape the sector.

It's difficult to say what a post COVID world will look like for Black creatives and entrepreneurs. However what we can say is that the corner of our virtual universe has been electrified by 2020. It's been amplified by collective action and strengthened by a need to tap into an ever growing network of Black businesses. It illustrated the power of our shared identity, a strong, collective response to a system that makes it challenging to be a Black, independent business owner. It has been incredibly heartening to be part of building a community that prides itself on collaboration rather than competition. While we will struggle to continue adjusting to the new normal in 2021, we also know we won't be doing so alone.

RENDERING ALL OF US: THE UNCANNY VALLEY OF HUMANITY

BY:
SHAMIKA GODDARD

Consider the computer science concept of the uncanny valley as a way to best exemplify the visceral and all too often violent response against marginalized communities such as women (#GamerGate), Muslims (#MuslimLivesMatter), and members of the black community (#BlackLivesMatter). In robotics and CGI (Computer Generated Imagery), the uncanny valley is the moment at which a manufactured object looks and moves like a human - but not quite - resulting in an unpleasant response (Mori, 1970). The gap between perfection in presenting as human and that moment makes the viewer uncomfortable. Jun'ichiro Seyama and Ruth S. Nagayama write that Mori's concept of the uncanny valley can be "applicable to any type of artificial humanlike object" and occurs, according to their experiments, "...only when the face images involved abnormal features" (Seyama, 2007). I would extrapolate this concept and augment it for those who are dehumanized.

The uncanny valley of humanity is a concept within which a person is dehumanized and their deviation from what is considered the norm causes a negative reaction. The norm for the contemporary westernized context is the white, heterosexual, cisgender, men (WHCM) who historically and to this day have been established as the example of a healthy average human. This demographic of people is not found lacking and able to be considered 100% whole. Other identities, which are seen as deviant to the accepted norm, fall in line behind them at decreasing percentiles. When a non-WHCM acts or speaks in a way that is out of line with their expected stereotypical behavior, it moves that person closer to the traits of a whole human, a space that is currently owned by WHCM. Assimilating moves put the deviant into the uncanny valley of humanity, thus making others uncomfortable and disturbed.

The nascent concept of the uncanny valley of humanity exposes the lack of wholeness of everyone outside of the hegemonic experiences as well as the hollowness of those established as 100% human. As people have done tragically well for centuries, these groups of individuals unrendered and unwhole are deemed less than human as the default because they start off as an amalgamation of stereotypes on the human likeness scale. When women deviate from the norms, for example, there is a move away from what society believes is whole for women and thus these individuals fall into the uncanny valley. Because of the sociological glass bar graph, there is a false wholeness accessible to women. The same goes for anyone outside of the heteronormative white, straight, Christian, "able-bodied/minded" male identity. The discrepancy that occurs for the marginalized in the uncanny valley of societal aesthetics causes such groups to be "otherized" and subsequently feared and in need of eradication to remove the deformed entity (Lorde, 1984). There is a solution, however, as the lives of all people lived in their truth can be recognized as valid and whole by everyone including the individuals themselves, it would fully render each person and thus remove the valley entirely so that everyone has access to their full humanity without judgement or retribution.

With a nod to W.E. B. DuBois' double consciousness, the concept of having a fragmented self is perceived

differently within various groups, settings, and even within oneself. This leads to the need to go beneath situations and explore the ways our sociological realities are impacted and further fragmented by the digital space. DuBois describes this phenomenon of "two-ness" as such:

> ***"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. One ever feels his two-ness, an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife- this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He does not wish to Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He wouldn't bleach his Negro blood in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of opportunity closed roughly in his face." (Hinchey, 2018, p. 9)***

As DuBois points out, there is a consequence for being fragmented. Responses to those that are seen as deviants range from tonally denigrating comments such as telling a person of color "you are so articulate" as though surprised or astonished at the thought to tragic murders of transgender women or state-sanctioned violence against Black people and other people of color. This fragmentation is a result of a society unwilling to fully render all of its inhabitants. Those in power can instead use their privilege to bring marginalized people to the foreground and completely recognize all of their humanity.

Unfortunately, this is not yet reality across the board. One clear example of this can be found in an examination of GamerGate. When the women of GamerGate were perceived to have fragmented their female identity into a gamer, techie, business professional, and voice of authority, the fullness of their humanity could not be resolved by an angered but connected all-boys club. For dissenters in #Gamergate, the inability to fully render these women whole and healthy people as each woman chose to self-identify with socially traditional male roles (like gamer or techie) resulted in a need to attack the personhood of each woman. The hate speech, weaponized pornography, death and rape threats, doxing [defined by Oxford Dictionary as to "search for and publish private or identifying information about (a particular individual) on the internet, typically with malicious intent"], and other digital attacks were meant to silence and degrade the woman attempting to take away their agency and certainly done in response to their position and identities within predominantly male cultures. Such vitriol exposes the uncanny valley of humanity while the resilience of the survivors of GamerGate works to shift the valley.

More examples abound when someone enters a hegemonic group and aspires to a level of accomplishment or authority. Consider the lives of Jackie Robinson, Madame Curie, and more. Each of those individuals was a threat to the status quo, though their life's work paved the way for others previously denied fair and equal access. That is what Anita Sarkeesian represented to thousands of gamers who neither knew nor cared what her project Tropes vs. Women was intending to do. There was no need to understand her point of view, to do so was moot because she was not considered by her critics and bullies a valued member of the gaming society from which any authority should be bestowed. Here, there are connections to women who climb the corporate ladder and feel as though they have to leave behind stereotypical or traditional gender personality traits like kindness, compassion, teamwork, and more in order to advance, but once more male associated characteristics like aggressiveness and competitiveness are present, the woman is labeled as a bitch. It is a catch 22. If a woman wants to play video games, she is either doing so to be closer to a guy and does not have to worry about her performance, or she better be damn good to get the attention and respect of a male gamer. Anita is representing sound and thoroughly researched critical analysis and male gamers are covering their ears to her words and throwing things at her (digitally) while catcalling (sexual abuse "tits or gtfo") or aggressively and actively trying to tear her down (shutting down sites, publishing her personal information and images, etc).

Computer science and the art of film-making have pushed the boundaries of photorealism with techniques such as subsurface scattering and being able to render such robust images can take hours for just one frame. Just as CGI technology is improving and rendering more and more realistic images of humans as the tools advance, society has the potential to innovate its notions of who constitutes a fully realized and recognized human being. While it will take time, as we collectively advance our social techniques for seeing one another as whole, we can speed up the process. The uncanny valley of humanity can change and by seeing everyone and anyone as completely human no matter their station, profession, hobbies, etc in relation to their identity, we as a society can traverse the valley and exist on the mountaintop together.

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A CRITICAL GAP - THE NEED FOR A DYNAMIC INTERSECTIONALITY

BY:
STEPHANIE GUIRAND &
JENNIFER YANCO

In this paper, we introduce the theoretical concept of dynamic intersectionality. We begin by examining Black Feminist theories of intersectionality and social location. We then attempt to elaborate these theoretical perspectives by incorporating a temporal element that allows us to see the ways in which social vulnerabilities compound over time. Drawing on the work of Hartmut Rosa, we propose what we call a theory of dynamic intersectionality. Finally, we suggest the use of dynamic intersectionality as a tool that can be used to explore gentrification as a spatio-temporal phenomenon.

Background

Contemporary discussions of the politics of citation within decolonising discourses have noted that mainstream social scientists have paid little attention to the works of Black feminist scholars (Mbembe, 2016; Awino, 2018). In the decolonising spirit, we would like to think through Hartmut Rosa's theory of social acceleration in light of the seminal theoretical approaches, intersectionality and social location, by Black feminist scholars including Kimberle Crenshaw, bell hooks, Barbara Smith, and Margo Okazawa-Rey.

For over 200 years, African-descended women, both within and outside of the academy, have been discussing the compounding effects of structural oppression on racialized populations (Cooper; 1892; Combahee River Collective, 1974; Crenshaw, 1989 , Leary, 2017 and many more). Black Feminist theories of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; Hill Collins, 2020) and social location (hooks, 2008; Okazawa-Rey & Kirk, 2004) have provided important mechanisms for thinking about social vulnerability, power, alienation and the politics of oppression. At the same time, there is a rich, albeit buried, history of sociologists exploring relationships between space and time (Odih, 1995; Cooper, 2017). Hartmut Rosa's theory of social acceleration continues in this tradition. In this paper, we suggest that the theoretical approaches of intersectionality and social location can be enriched significantly with the addition of a temporal element. We believe this will offer a valuable conceptual framework for understanding the compounding of social vulnerabilities over time.

One could say that Rosa is looking at the social world from the accelerator's perspective, while Hooks and Crenshaw are looking from the perspective of those who have been pushed to the margins by the accelerating forces. Rosa refers to this as deceleration and, while he doesn't pursue this angle of his analysis, this is where we want to focus our attention.

What is intersectionality?

Kimberle Crenshaw introduced the term intersectionality in her 1989 article, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex," where she used the term to distinguish the vulnerabilities of Black women from those of white women on the one hand, and from Black men, on the other, and to underline the fact that being at the intersection of Black and woman comes with a unique set of vulnerabilities. Previously, 'race' had been considered alone; 'gender' had been considered alone. Attempts to take them into consideration together was deemed too complicated and not legally expedient (Kendi, 2017).

Crenshaw calls our attention to the intersection of two axes: gender and race. She notes that the law, which insists on identifying one's social location by using only one marker of vulnerability, rather than a specific combination of vulnerabilities, actually exacerbates existing inequities. Intersectionality can be used in two critical ways: it can identify an individual's social location along a number of axes (Hill Collins, 2019); or it can be the lens with which we explore what is going on at the intersection of particular axes of social identity.

What is social location?

Social location codes, for any one identity category or social signifier (e.g., age, ability, gender, race, religion), where one falls along a scale that has power at one end and vulnerability at the other. In other words, social location codes where you are in relation to power, and where you are in relation to others.

"Social location is a way of expressing the core of a person's existence in the social and political world. It places us in particular relationships to others, to the dominant culture of the US, and to the rest of the world. It determines the kinds of power and privilege we have access to and can exercise, as well as situations in which we have less power and privilege." (Kirk and Okazawa-Rey, 2004).

Social location recognizes a multitude of identity categories, each along its own spectrum. Viewed together through an intersectional lens, these many axes create a map of intersecting systems of power and oppression (Combahee River Collective, 1974). Toward our construction of dynamic intersectionality, we use intersectionality as a tool to locate individual's and communities' proximity to power (or vulnerability) on a map of interlocking systems of oppression.

What is social acceleration?

Importantly, an individual's or community's location on this map is not static, but changes in space and in time. Time is where Hartmut Rosa's theory of social acceleration comes in. His temporal theory describes the speeding up of technology, of social change, and of the pace of life itself. Rosa sees social acceleration as a defining feature of (European) modernity, essential to and an inevitable result of the cultural and structural development of modern society. Rosa refers to three vectors of "progress", each moving forward at an accelerating pace:

- Technology
- Social change
- Pace of life

A critical feature of Rosa's theory hinges on the desynchronization of these three elements--everyone and everything does not speed up at the same rate. Technological acceleration, for example, is a driving force behind overconsumption because goods are being produced and marketed at ever-increasing speeds. The pace at which we consume natural resources to produce these goods is a prime example of desynchronization: we have significantly outpaced nature's ability to reproduce the very resources we consume.

Rosa contends everyone and everything does not speed up at the same rate, but who is accelerating and who isn't? An intersectional perspective can show us which groups are accelerating and which are not. Those who are not accelerating, in other words, those who are 'decelerating', tend to be those whose social locations are further from power.

Dynamic Intersectionality: Adding the Temporal Element

While Crenshaw, hooks, Okazawa-Rey and others pay close attention to space in their theories, they pay less attention to time in their analyses. On the other hand, in his theory of social acceleration, Rosa generally ignores the differential effects of social location. In this paper, we explore a spatio-temporal combination of these theoretical approaches.

The scholars who introduced intersectionality and social location were interested in capturing a snapshot of multiple factors influencing a person's relation to power and vulnerability. This has been enormously helpful in understanding the patterns of oppression created within a system of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy (hooks, 2000). Yet, patterns of oppression are mutable, intensifying, weakening, and changing form over time. It is clear that one's social location--the nexus at which one stands--is not static. Time, circumstance, political and social structures dictate that these elements are in constant flux. In order to understand this fluctuation, we are offering some thoughts towards a theory of dynamic intersectionality. Specifically, we want to capture the role of time in the ongoing operation of systems that create patterns of alienation and marginalization. Moreover, we acknowledge the "modernizing of time" (Rosa, 2014), that is, the need to constantly produce and consume more within a shorter period, that has created an ever-accelerating society. The inability to keep pace corresponds with the less powerful locations on the map of intersecting systems of power and oppression. Over time, this essentially creates a caste of the oppressed as vulnerabilities are compounded. Black feminist tools such as intersectionality, when viewed within the context of social acceleration, assist us in our efforts to deconstruct this systemic marginalization.

Future Directions

We are currently witnessing an unprecedented acceleration of structural inequality; COVID-19 has both highlighted and exacerbated existing inequalities. But is this trend inevitable? We know that social change can lead to a more egalitarian society (as more groups are mid-spectra) or to greater inequality (as groups are concentrated at the ends). Intersectionality and social location gain significant explanatory power when a temporal element is incorporated. Dynamic intersectionality may help us better understand the community actions that serve as 'counter-forces', pushing people back to the center. It is our hope that, like Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality, dynamic intersectionality may transcend the academy and be useful to activists, non-academic researchers and policymakers alike.

Gentrification, is one manifestation of increasing structural inequality that lends itself particularly well to a dynamic intersectional analysis. Gentrification occurs when there is an influx of (usually white) middle class populations into working class neighborhoods occupied primarily by people of color, thereby displacing them and changing the character and culture of the neighborhood. This takeover of space from one group by another, is also firmly grounded in time and is intimately related to ideologies of progress, improvement, and moving forward. Gentrification is the onslaught of the powerful for whom the margins, although vital communities in and of themselves, have become the new frontiers for the implantation of their values, bureaucratic hierarchies and cultural aesthetics. Gentrification increases inequality by marginalizing populations with increasing speed. Spatial demarcations are dynamic by nature, as are the ways in which they reflect changing power relations among bodies, homes, geographic regions, between nations and coalitions of nations (Spivak, 2003; Peterson, 2020).

But who lives in a gentrifying community? What makes a community gentrifiable? Are there ways to stop, slow, or reverse the process? These are questions we will be addressing in future work, as we examine recent gentrification in Oakland, Brixton, and Paris using dynamic intersectionality as a tool.

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ENCOUNTERS WITH THE DREAMSCAPE

BY:
DARA KWAYERA IMANI BAYER

This work spans seven years of searching for Self, Justice, Healing, and Truth. Since young adulthood I have struggled to affirm my identity as an artist and to integrate my love of painting with my other callings. Each of the pieces in this exhibition is a searching for how to truly be Me; I am a Black woman of a lineage that arises both from the shared values and love of two people, and the violence and contradiction of their vastly different histories. Through paint, I am uncovering the complex layers of my embodied experience; I am seeking possibility of survival through resilience and wonder; I am looking forward and back for guidance in creating something ancient and new.

These paintings all exist within Dreamscape, a patterning of our human consciousness that exists outside of space and time, *and* is profoundly informed by our historical and social conditions. In an effort to better understand how to construct our legacy, my dear sister-friend and I found Dreamscape when we began to channel our descendants through letter-writing. I later realized that I was accessing Dreamscape through paint as I tried to weave history and possibility, both brutal and brilliant, into a tapestry on the canvas. The imagery that has come forth reflects the visual markers that have become signposts for understanding what exists in the familiar and unfamiliar territory of Dreamscape.

The many different Black women that surface in these paintings are friends and family; they are the visionaries, caregivers, healers and makers that illuminate existence within and outside of the space-time continuum. The cataclysmic forces of slavery, white supremacist violence, climate change, and digital colonization of consciousness emerge as the context for survival. Yet the natural forces and elements hold weight and power; they are channeled through indigenous spiritual technologies, like the Ifa opon and the adinkra symbol of Sankofa, to guide toward different possibilities.

I invite you to reflect and dialogue with yourself and others as you engage with these pieces. May they inspire insightful exploration.

CALI BAMA: PORTRAIT OF THE UGLY NIGGER(2016)

BY:
DANIELE SMITH

As a self-portrait, this painting characterizes some of the ideological contradictions and misconceptions associated with ethnic bodies. As blackness and beauty have never been equivalent in dominant culture. The disparity between the title and the image helps point to these social contradictions. The linked story describes the moment in which this story was birthed.

SPLENDOR

BY: CORRINE SPENCER

Corinne Spencer is a video artist and director based in Brooklyn, NY. She received her BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design in 2010 and attended the Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture in 2014. She was the resident visiting artist for the inaugural session of the 2016 Pearl Diving Movement Residency (Pittsburgh, PA), was a 2017 Franklin Furnace Fund Fellow (New York, NY), and a 2019 MacDowell Colony Fellow (Peterborough, NH). She is currently an artist-in-residence with the Meerkat Media Collective (Brooklyn, NY) and an MFA candidate at the Bard Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts.

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