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But Some of Us Are Wise: Academic Illegitimacy and the Affective Value of Ethnic Studies

by Lisa Marie Cacho

WRITING for *Forbes.com*, journalist Melik Kaylan defends Arizona's anti-Ethnic Studies act (introduced as House Bill 2281) by asserting that Ethnic Studies underestimates students of color. He writes, "It is insulting to assume that minorities must be coddled with ethnic cheerleading as a substitute for knowledge."¹ Contrasting the supposedly separatist agenda of Ethnic Studies with a more acceptable non-partisan multiculturalism, he characterizes the bill's author, the former Arizona Superintendent of Education Tom Horne (recently elected as the state's Attorney General) as "at pains to point out that he is all for a variety of cultures being taught, but just not in a spirit of resentment or grievance."² Kaylan's concerns echo familiar complaints of the privileged mainstream over recalcitrant people of color, who seem to be only "united, if at all, in the endless struggle to empower their own kind."³ Whereas Kaylan belittles Ethnic Studies for providing "feel good" classes to people of color, Horne describes those same classes as part of a curriculum that teaches "resentment," "grievance," and "hatred"—in other words, he sees Ethnic Studies as courses that make people "feel bad."

Ethnic Studies is often delegitimized as a discipline that to some seems more concerned with evoking "feelings" than explaining the "facts"—especially when non-white *empowerment* is the "feeling" thought to displace and replace historical and contemporary "facts." Underlying Arizona's anti-Ethnic Studies act and the multicultural philosophy of its staunch supporters is the problematic

premise that knowledge is incompatible with emotions; as if feelings discredit the act of learning, undermine analysis, and cloud critical thinking. Although Ethnic Studies is also (but not only) logical, factual, empirical, and scientific, I am suspicious of politicians, journalists, and legislation that dare Ethnic Studies supporters to demonstrate the discipline's legitimacy as "real" knowledge not just worth learning but also worthy of taxpayers' money. I fear this enlists each of us to become the institutional gatekeepers to unconventional evidence, interdisciplinary methodologies, and alternative epistemologies. When HB 2281 proponents try to delegitimize Ethnic Studies scholarship and pedagogy, they simultaneously determine and normalize the requirements we would have to meet in order to re-establish our legitimacy. Inevitably, this means that the legitimacy of Ethnic Studies as an academic discipline is contingent upon how well it conforms to mainstream notions of objectivity, neutrality, and credibility. Striving for academic legitimacy, rather than critique, redirects the focus of our political projects from changing institutions to accommodating them, so that we are conforming to, rather than challenging dominant ways of knowing and hierarchies of value. My focus in this essay maps the centrality of "feelings" to Ethnic Studies debates and policies that similarly exhibit what I will refer to as "neoliberal antiracism" by drawing upon Arizona's anti-Ethnic Studies act, Horne's 2007 open letter to Tucson citizens, and Kaylan's defense of HB 2281. I consider these texts representative of the way

conservative politics has monopolized “legitimacy”—from determining the criteria for credible scholarship to ascertaining the authenticity of racist experience. Within these confines, establishing legitimacy is a battle we lose even when we succeed.

Circulating Affect by Fixing Feelings

THE LOGIC for passing and implementing HB 2281 relies upon a false assumption about “feelings.” The act presumes that objects and signs contain the feelings they seem to evoke, which suggests that if the object or sign were to be removed, the feelings would also cease to exist. In other words, proponents of the act imply that the “bad feelings” of racial resentment and hatred will disappear from Arizona when Ethnic Studies classes cannot be taught. Sara Ahmed, cultural theorist of race and sexuality, studies how emotions are forms of governance. She explains that “emotions work as a form of capital: affect does not reside positively in the sign or commodity, but is produced only as an effect of its circulation.”⁴ An emotion like hate, she contends, “is economic; it circulates between signifiers in relationships of difference and displacement.”⁵ When other signs and objects of resentment and hate are loosely attached to Ethnic Studies in HB 2281, they construct “relations of resemblance” that circulate and transfer meaning from one to the other.⁶ The legislation links four different kinds of outlawed classes to Ethnic Studies: classes that “promote the overthrow of the United States government,” classes that “promote resentment toward a race or class of people,” courses that “are designed primarily for pupils of a particular ethnic group,” and those courses which “advocate ethnic solidarity instead of the treatment of pupils as individuals.”⁷ As “affective economies,” “resentment” and “hate” acquire their currency and accumulate value through dissociations as well as associations. The formulation of the anti-Ethnic Studies act displaces resentment and hate onto the “other,” disassociating students who take Ethnic Studies classes and want to “overthrow the government” from those who do not take Ethnic Studies classes and “treat

and value each other as individuals.”⁸ Emotions, thus, “produce a differentiation between ‘us’ and ‘them,’ whereby ‘they’ are constituted as the cause or the justification of ‘our’ feeling of hate.”⁹

FOR ITS OPPONENTS, Ethnic Studies works as a figure for hate, fear, and resentment, and the more it circulates within public discourse in relation to other feared and hated figures, the more it “accumulate[s] affective value.”¹⁰ Hence, it is not incidental that Governor Jan Brewer signed HB 2281 into law only a month after she signed SB 1070; HB 2281 became another “nodal point in the econom[ies]” of fear and anxiety.¹¹ Many of the figures and signs within Horne’s 2007 open letter that referred to Ethnic Studies topics, such as Ché Guevara, or “Chicanos and Chicanas of Aztlán,” could easily relate to undocumented immigration as well. Although all Ethnic Studies classes would be affected by HB 2281, Horne’s letter only references Raza Studies, capitalizing upon anti-Latina/o nativism and anti-undocumented immigrant sentiments by connecting Ethnic Studies to a disenfranchised and legally vulnerable ethnic group which has received little sympathy in Arizona. The anti-Ethnic Studies campaign was already affectively linked to undocumented immigration, Mexican-American families and settlement, border vulnerability, job insecurity, and shrinking state resources.

BOTH SB 1070 and HB 2281 illustrate Ahmed’s contention that “emotions *do things*”—such as write, support, pass, and implement laws. As Ahmed insists, emotions are not merely psychological responses to difference, they engender difference socially and materially:

[F]ear does not involve the defense of borders that already exist; rather, fear makes those borders, by establishing objects from which the subject, in fearing, can stand apart, objects that become “the not” from which the subject appears to flee.¹²

Kaylan’s article provides us examples of how the anti-Ethnic Studies discourse sparked by HB 2281 drew upon other figures of grievance, hate, and fear that have recently haunted the

US imaginary. In addition to citing examples about Chicanas/os, immigration, and Mexico, Kaylan also referenced anti-American terrorism, even suggesting that (what is perceived to be) Ethnic Studies pedagogy directs students to take unpatriotic paths that could lead them to commit terrorist-like acts:

We are doing no favors to minorities when we teach them the doctrine of their own cultural infallibility. All too often, we set them on a dangerous course. Consider the would-be Times Square car bomber. He was apparently motivated by ethnic sympathy for fellow Pashtuns—in effect Taliban sympathizers—killed by US forces in the Afghan war. Did anyone, at any point, educate him in the sanguinary history of the Pashtun tribes of the Pak-Afghan region—how many of their own kind did they kill over the centuries in intra-Pashtun wars, not to mention during the largely Pashtun Taliban rule over Afghanistan in the 1990s? And their treatment of women down the ages to the present?¹³

The fears and resentments associated with Ethnic Studies gain affective currency and value the more they circulate throughout multiple discourses. In fact, according to Ahmed, the affectivity of fear or hate works more powerfully without a fixed referent—because it seems that anyone who takes an Ethnic Studies class could become a guerilla leader, that any immigrant from Mexico is potentially criminal, and that any of these “other” figures’ actions can take on multiple, unpredictable forms—from rude children to would-be car bombers.¹⁴

Kaylan also dismissed the ways in which Ethnic Studies courses would approach teaching Native American and African American history, which he believed would emphasize politics rather than facts.

Doesn't that [teaching US history in compliance with HB 2281] automatically censor the history of injustice toward, say, Native Americans or African-Americans? Ah, there's the rub, for it rather depends on what gets tagged onto the historical facts. That is, it all depends on whether you're teaching history or politics, or put another way, using history to buttress a political agenda. If so, the state should absolutely demand that opposing viewpoints be included. Namely, for example, that the history of this country undeniably included problems of race, but also of triumphs in overcoming them.¹⁵

We can infer from Kaylan's statements that the injustices and violences of genocide and slavery do not circulate within conservative economies of affect, functioning instead

as signs for oppositional “political agendas.” Along these lines, emotion becomes Kaylan's marker for illegitimacy while indifference (as an emotional response unrecognized as such) becomes the sole criterion for “fact.”

IN CONTRAST, W.E.B. Du Bois demonstrates that nothing needs to be “tagged onto the historical facts” for US history to function as American propaganda. According to Du Bois, historical facts must be either omitted entirely or willfully distorted if US history is to provide us with “a false but pleasurable sense of accomplishment.”¹⁶ For Kaylan, US history is simply a record of past events that can be told from opposing viewpoints, but for Du Bois, history should be instructive. We should learn from US history, not just learn about it. As he posits:

If history is going to be scientific, if the record of human action is going to be set down with that accuracy and faithfulness of detail which will allow its use as a measuring rod and guidepost for the future of nations, there must be set some standards of ethics in research and interpretation.¹⁷

In other words, US history cannot be neutral because a truthful record of human agency necessarily records human fallibility and culpability. To render human beings blameless for slavery and genocide, historical atrocities must be remembered as (or dismembered into) accidents of belief and circumstance, which is how Du Bois described the dominant historical narrative of slavery:

Our histories tend to discuss American slavery so impartially, that in the end nobody seems to have done wrong and everybody was right. Slavery appears to have been thrust upon unwilling helpless America, while the South was blameless in becoming its center. The difference of development, North and South, is explained as a sort of working out of cosmic social and economic law.¹⁸

Without such ethics and standards, we record human history without human agency.

Neoliberal Anti-Racism and Disciplined Individualism

IMPORTANTLY, the “feelings” that delegitimize knowledge as knowledge are not just any feelings attached to any kind of knowledge or felt by just anyone. Kaylan and Horne, for example, have very strong feelings

about what they believe Ethnic Studies teaches, but their feelings—outrage, disgust, righteousness, piety—bolster rather than undermine their arguments against Ethnic Studies. Hence, whether or not feelings function as evidence for the illegitimacy of knowledge depends upon which feelings are evoked and who feels them. Having feelings evoked when learning only seems to render that knowledge illegitimate if people of color feel empowered by it and others feel resentment, guilt, or shame whereas the opposite response—knowledge that simultaneously elicits white empowerment and non-white resentment is normalized. In other words, it does not matter that knowledge can hurt feelings; what matters is whose feelings are being hurt and whose feelings are being validated. What is dangerous about Kaylan's and Horne's arguments is that they are too easily dismissible as merely the political (and overly emotional) "opinions" of a conservative elite, but their opinions are not aberrations, just as HB 2281 is not an exception to the current political climate at the national level. Rather, each of these is simply a more emphatic and more explicit expression of the US state's official stance on antiracist policy.

Because neoliberal ideologies have appropriated antiracist terms and their histories of struggle,¹⁹ it has become increasingly difficult to convince others of the need to be mindful of the different degrees, kinds, purposes, and extents of racial preferences in law, which has made it difficult to explain the difference between, for instance, "reverse racism" and affirmative action—between policies that aim to protect individuals from discrimination and policies that attempt to remedy racial inequality. Official definitions of antiracism have disaggregated racial identity from racial formation, so that race is understood to be merely and only an arbitrary attribute of the body, rather than *also* a malleable effect of the dynamic and ongoing sociohistorical, material and cultural processes of racial formation. When race is only a physical attribute, it then fixed to bodies and individuals and, thus, becomes considered a property that all bodies and all individuals share. As something that can happen to any-body, racism is detached from history, institutions,

legislation, the economy, and all the racialized structures that govern our lives. In this vein, neoliberal antiracist legislation simply ensures that individuals are not automatically disqualified from opportunities by making sure that the previously excluded are not automatically eligible to have access to them. HB 2281 is an example of what institutionalized antiracism has become: policies that shield the privileged mainstream not just from "feeling bad," but also from the highly unlikely potential that today's meager attempts to redress racial inequality will be so effective that racialized economic hierarchies will be inverted tomorrow.

NEOLIBERAL antiracism promises to protect individuals by disregarding group histories of resistance, establishing "equal opportunity" by eradicating institutional remedies implemented to address racial inequality. For instance, HB 2281's "antiracist" philosophy does *not* establish equal opportunity by guaranteeing racial equality in the classroom, but by *naturalizing* it. In fact, the act notes that racial inequality based on performance, preparation, or skill level is legal and should be expected because the law does not pertain to "The grouping of pupils according to academic performance...that may result in a disparate impact by ethnicity."²⁰ Although Horne proposes that banning Ethnic Studies will work against fostering resentment toward racial groups, HB 2281 does not pretend that interracial community is a desired outcome of outlawing Ethnic Studies. Rather, what is supposed to ensure that racial and ethnic groups do not resent one another is the implementation of a unilateral policy of differentiating students individually—fostering less community and more isolated competition.

In some ways, treating students as individuals may sound ideal, but in this case it is actually an ideal form of "governmentality"²¹ that renders students' differences manageable and useful for global capital and neoliberal restructuring. To reiterate, HB 2281 does not just ban Ethnic Studies, it also reestablishes racialized discipline in the Tucson public school system, attempting to make students of all colors, classes, and legal

status into what Michel Foucault calls “docile bodies,” hierarchically.²² HB 2281 is disciplinary and punitive. Discipline is not just about teaching and learning; it is about teaching correctly and teaching students how to follow authority correctly and compulsorily. Indeed, HB 2281 is less about the knowledge that Ethnic Studies curricula impart than it is about how that knowledge is taught and might be applied. The law does not make teaching about race illegal; it prohibits teaching about race through an Ethnic Studies perspective. It suppresses how knowledge about race can be learned; it disciplines teachers to teach race as part of the past we have triumphantly overcome, so that students are willingly disciplined into automated docility as individually and racially ranked workers for the future. Disciplined individualism works in the service of capital; it produces and naturalizes the desire to be the best worker, to individuate oneself by being the most productive, the most generative, the smartest and most innovative—to differentiate oneself by striving to be the kind of worker that enables capital to extract a maximum amount of work for a minimal investment.

ETHNIC STUDIES teaches students that the current level of racial tolerance is not the inevitable result of the nation’s march toward racial progress, but the hard earned product of struggle and resistance. As such, Ethnic Studies potentially validates students’ intentionally disobedient collective actions. Teaching students about injustice works against disciplining them as only and merely docile bodies. According to Horne, in his 2007 “Open Letter to the Citizens of Tucson,” teaching students of color this kind of knowledge teaches them to be disrespectful, unsuccessful, and even threatening:

My Deputy, Margaret Garcia Dugan, who is Latina and Republican, came to refute the allegation made earlier to the student body, that “Republicans hate Latinos.” Her speech was non-partisan and professional, urging students to think for themselves, and avoid stereotypes. Yet, a small group of La Raza Studies students treated her rudely, and when the principal asked them to sit down and listen, they defiantly walked out. By contrast, teenage Republicans listened politely when Delores Huerta told the entire student body that “Republicans hate Latinos.”

In hundreds of visits to schools, I have never seen students act rudely and in defiance of authority, except in this one unhappy case. I believe the students did not learn this rudeness at home, but from their Raza teachers. Success as adults requires the ability to deal with disagreements in a civil manner. Also, they are creating a hostile atmosphere in the school for the other students, who were not born into their “race.”²³

As he recounts this instance, Horne sutures what he sees as undesirable (that is, undisciplined) behavior to Ethnic Studies pedagogy by claiming that he had “never seen” students act in such a rude, defiant way “except in this one unhappy case.”²⁴ In his opinion, students that defy authority are “ill served” because “[s]uccess as adults” demands civil disagreement, not civil disobedience. Presuming that students who challenge authority will become unsuccessful adults naturalizes unquestioned obedience and normalizes the desire for it. And by demonizing collective action, Horne universalizes and commends disciplined individualism—as exemplified by the “teenage Republicans” who “listened politely” to their political adversary.

TO BOLSTER further his credibility as an expert antiracist who cares more about students of color than their Ethnic Studies teachers, Horne recounts his personal experience as a participant in the March on Washington:

In the summer of 1963, having recently graduated from high school, I participated in the civil rights march on Washington, in which Martin Luther King stated that he wanted his children to be judged by the content of their character rather than the color of their skin. That has been a fundamental principal for me my entire life, and Ethnic Studies teaches the opposite.²⁵

In this quote, Horne represents himself as a dedicated antiracist activist, who is committed to continuing Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s legacy. He uses this one past experience to personally supplant the history of Ethnic Studies as a politically engendered academic discipline that emerged out of the Civil Rights, Power, Student, and Anti-War Movements of the 1950s-1970s; instead, he of all people must realize King’s visions of racial equality by expunging Ethnic Studies from Arizona.

Along these lines, Horne positions himself as an advocate for (individual) Latina/o students and their families, asserting that Ethnic Studies classes do not teach what he believes Latina/o students should learn—faith in the American Dream as entirely attainable with hard work alone:

Most of these students' parents and grandparents came to this country legally, because this is the land of opportunity. They trust the public schools with their children. Those students should be taught that this is the land of opportunity, and that if they work hard they can achieve their goals. They should not be taught that they are oppressed.²⁶

People for whom oppression is not abstract but daily and painful already know and so do not need to be taught that they are oppressed; but they might feel more connected and less crazy if their feelings and their lives were validated in the classroom, in their textbooks, by their teachers. They might appreciate learning how and why they and others have been oppressed, and what they can all do to work against it. They do not need to be taught that their lives are hard and sometimes hurt, but that is not the objective of Ethnic Studies classes. Like most disciplines, Ethnic Studies teaches intellectual skills, but it also teaches students how to use those skills to decipher (neoliberal) antiracist policies, interrogate historical narratives, analyze their own lives, and imagine possibilities for something different.

The Alternative Epistemologies of Emotional Wisdom

EVEN THOUGH Kaylan's resentment-laced tirade and Horne's "neoliberal antiracist" open letter express or imply the feelings of both author and intended audience, neither one claims ownership over these feelings nor acknowledges his involvement in disseminating, circulating, and escalating emotions. Rather, each attributes and fixes "feelings"—including their own—to Ethnic Studies as if the discipline were the origin, cause, and location of affect. But I remain worried and wary on many levels that the emotions of both historically dominant and aggrieved groups are much easier to dismiss than to take seriously. It seems too

straightforward to consider feelings as automatically less valid than facts, because the "fact" is such sentiments are central to the discourses that legalize and naturalize neoliberal antiracism. It is also a fact that empowerment is not cultivated by data but by how data is felt. Because indifference is not what Ethnic Studies teaches, conflicts over legitimacy position us all defensively in a battle that we cannot quite win.

The politics of neoliberal antiracism tries to control the means by which "legitimacy" is conferred or denied. For instance, to counter Kaylan's claims and establish legitimacy on his terms, we are apt to argue that Ethnic Studies is much more than ethnic cheerleading, that we do not encourage anti-American terrorism, that discrediting stereotypes is not the same as refusing to acknowledge our shortcomings, and that scholars of color have been critiquing their own cultures for decades. We are challenged and compelled to prove that what we do is both legitimate and valuable, but to make ourselves recognizably credible to a mainstream audience, we must do so according to values that we might not share and with methods that we usually find questionable, and using evidence we see as lacking to make arguments we often find a little problematic. All the above counterarguments I made to Kaylan's claims, for instance, demand that I bracket my concerns about describing Ethnic Studies as monolithic or essentialist. Yet even by simplifying the complexity of our controversial conversations, we can only counter his claims incompletely because Ethnic Studies has worked very hard to develop different methods of evaluating alternative knowledges as well as a more complicated definition of legitimacy. We have created a different set of criteria for how knowledge is valued, and neither our value ascriptions nor our evaluation methods are stubbornly static, as the ever evolving body of Ethnic Studies scholarship can attest.

WHEN Ethnic Studies is presented as embodying devalued "substitutes" for knowledge, these attacks are attacks on alternative ways of knowing popularly associated not only with communities of color but also with the feminine, queer, marginal, and non-

Western. In fact, to construct Ethnic Studies as illegitimate, Kaylan does not engage current scholarship, but exploits and naturalizes gendered dichotomies of knowledge, drawing upon differently devalued social statuses. By juxtaposing Ethnic Studies with feminine images of teenage frivolity (cheerleading) and a mother's indulgence (coddling), he construes Ethnic Studies as an extra-curricular non-academic activity designed solely to satisfy the unreasonable demands of spoiled children. By representing illegitimacy as feminine and emotional, he also attempts to elicit a problematic response, recruiting his adversaries to participate in devaluing all that is feminine, effeminate, and emotional because this is how he sets the terms for assessing whether knowledge is legitimate or frivolous, whether teachers educate or indulge. In this way, he reinforces gendered dichotomies of knowledge: masculine-feminine, dominant-subaltern, objective-biased, rational-emotional, empirical-experiential, knowledge-feeling, and respectable-disreputable. While carefully selected historical facts emptied of meaning may be sufficient for Kaylan and Horne, for the rest of us it is just not enough. As Patricia Hill Collins contends, "knowledge without wisdom is adequate for the powerful, but wisdom is essential to the survival of the subordinate."²⁷

UNLIKE other high school subjects, the more Ethnic Studies develops intellectually and institutionally, the more its opponents see evidence for its own undoing. Only marginalized disciplines face this kind of pressure. Critiquing the gender bias in English grammar does not provide evidence for eradicating English classes from the curriculum; an overzealous director of Physical Education does not become evidence that the program must be dangerous. Ethnic Studies' intellectual inquiries invite multiple critiques, but the more rigorous our inquiries and critiques become, the more they clash with the field's institutionalization and/or with the gatekeepers of academic legitimacy. For instance, educational institutions openly encourage interdisciplinarity and collaborative research, and yet Ethnic Studies is rendered illegitimate under the guise of these

very reasons—its unruly archives, unfaithful methodologies, and all the inadequately docile and undisciplined students it leaves behind empowered and discontent. Hence, it is important to pause before we take up the neoliberal antiracist charges against Ethnic Studies because oftentimes the accusations do not just rely upon problematic binaries and hierarchies of knowledge. More often than not, the challenges are attempts to confine the ensuing public debates to these very binaries and hierarchies. For Ethnic Studies, this means that legitimating our scholarship can look a lot like invalidation. Academic legitimacy is designed to manage and minimize threats to the status quo, which makes it a less useful instrument for other purposes, like demolishing the racist, patriarchal, and heterosexist foundation of US society or erecting something more honest, compassionate, and accountable in its place. As Audre Lorde asks and answers:

What does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable.... *For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.* They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.²⁸

Neither can we use the master's value hierarchies to prove that what we do is valuable nor use his standards for legitimacy to verify the veracity of our teaching and research, the gravity and urgency of our political stakes. Above all, if we limit our tools to those the master considers legitimate, how would we ever empirically or morally "prove" that realizing our creative visions for a better world would make the real world a better place to live in? Robin D.G. Kelley reminds us that there is a point where struggles for social justice have to go beyond "keepin' it real," they need to "make it surreal."²⁹

Progressive social movements do not simply produce statistics and narratives of oppression; rather the best ones do what great poetry always does: transport us to another place, compel us to relive horrors and, more importantly, enable us to imagine a new society. We must remember that the conditions and the very existence of social movements enable participants to imagine something different, to realize that things need not always be this way.

[...]

In the poetics of struggle and lived experience, in the utterances of ordinary folk, in the cultural products of social movements, in the reflections of activists, we discover the many different cognitive maps of the future, of the world not yet born.³⁰

Ethnic Studies poses a threat not because it teaches students they are oppressed, but because it encourages them to keep it surreal and to hope for a world not yet born.

I, FOR ONE, believe that learning about social injustice should evoke strong feelings. I would be more than concerned if teaching racialized and gendered violence was met only with boredom, indifference, or detached curiosity, as if being disproportionately targeted for death, deportation, incarceration, and medical experimentation due to one's racial and/or gendered background was simply an intriguing research question. Like political apathy, racialized and gendered violence is already too much a part of the ordinariness of our everyday lives—so much so that an unemotional response to such violence has become normative and normalized. But whose interests does it really serve to work against the affectivity of injustice for the sake of academic “legitimacy”? It is certainly not in the interests of those who are wise.

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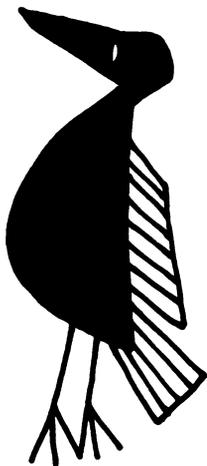
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5. Ibid., 119.
6. Ibid.
7. Arizona Revised Statutes Education, sec. 15-112 at A1-A4 (May 11, 2010).
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9. Ahmed, “Affective Economies,” 124.
10. Ibid., 123.
11. Ibid., 121.
12. Ibid., 119, 128.
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16. W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America, 1860-1880* (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 714.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. My argument is indebted to Jodi Melamed’s analysis of “neoliberalism multiculturalism” as a form of “official race-erased antiracism.” See Jodi Melamed, “The Spirit of Neoliberalism: From Racial Liberalism to Neoliberal Multiculturalism,” *Social Text* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 1-24. My use of “neoliberal

antiracism” attempts to name a specific legislative practice in the US that works to augment racial inequality by naturalizing racial difference, so that racial inequality is maintained and justified through the institutionalization of antiracism.

20. Arizona Revised Statutes, sec. 15-112 at E2 (May 11, 2010).
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