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DECOLONISING DMU



**Storytelling as the
practice of freedom: a
transgressive
pedagogy to enable
decolonising in the
classroom**

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Storytelling

- Storytelling, one of the oldest forms of teaching, is a key theme in critical race theory literature, particularly as a vehicle enabling conversations around race.
- Housed within decolonising it may disrupt traditional canons of thought and knowledge
- Enables counter narratives to be told and considered
- May contribute to creating a platform of globally produced knowledge
- Storytelling can liberate learning



The process of decolonisation and critical consciousness

- “Learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (Freire, 1970)
- Educators need to actively challenge the banking model of education.
- Banking concept denies critical consciousness as the individual is a spectator not re-creator.

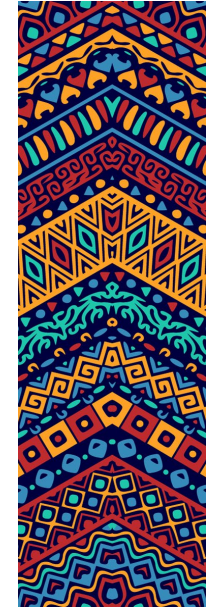
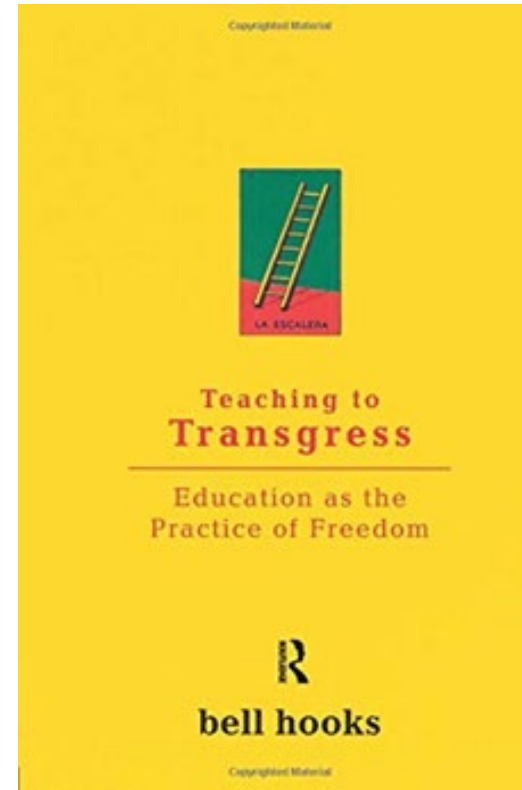


Paulo Freire Pedagogy of the Oppressed



bell hooks: engaged pedagogy (1994: 15)

Teachers must be committed to the process of 'self-actualisation' that promotes their own wellbeing if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students. Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process.





Counter-storytelling to disrupt deficit models

- Whether explicitly or implicitly, social science theoretical models explaining educational inequality support majoritarian stories (Solorzano and Yosso 2002)

Storytelling resistance: the counter-story (Solorzano and Yosso, 2002, p32)



A method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told.

A tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege.

Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform.

There are numerous unheard counter-stories. Storytelling and counter-storytelling these experiences can help strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance.



Storytelling and narratives

- Majoritarian stories, monovocal stories predominate Koessler (2018)
- These stories contribute to social construction of reality and generate power for certain social groups (Koessler 2018)
- Can lead to self- condemnation and invoke and perpetuate white privilege (Solorzano and Yosso 2002a in Koessler 2018, p648)
- Stories can lead to deficit framing, favouring one group over another



CRT Delgado (1989): Role of counter narratives

- Goal of CRT is not to make accessible or convey experiences or arguments of discrimination to the majority but to **resist and deconstruct the dominant racial narratives through the powerful telling of counter narratives**
- Omission and silence may infer negative connotations. Delgado gives the example of "good neighbourhoods", label automatically constructs the opposite: bad neighbourhood



Rewriting narrative through poetry




*When hipsters take selfies
on the corners where our
friends died, the rent goes up.*

- On Magic/ Violence

*Gang signs or prayers-
What one cannot solve the other surely will.
My fingers are bilingual like that.*

- Survivor's Guilt, or Anikulapo



Highlighting linguistic microaggressions through storytelling

- Use of counter storytelling to develop critical consciousness of participants and challenge stereotypes
- Kimberlin sessions as a platform; a safe space to reflect and share my own personal experiences as a racialised English language teacher and use counter-storytelling to disrupt deficit thinking



No but where are you really from?

Oh you are so articulate... you sound like a native!



Reflections on linguistic capital through Critical Race Theory

- Yosso (2005) reframes traditional deficit thinking; encourages us to consider the linguistic capital of students of colour.
- How can we decolonise our teaching and learning practices so that we recognise and respect diverse voices?
- What opportunities do we give to students to tell their stories of success and struggles?
- What opportunities can we offer in the future?
- (Questions adapted from Stevenson et al; 2019)



Storytelling : Be conscious
of

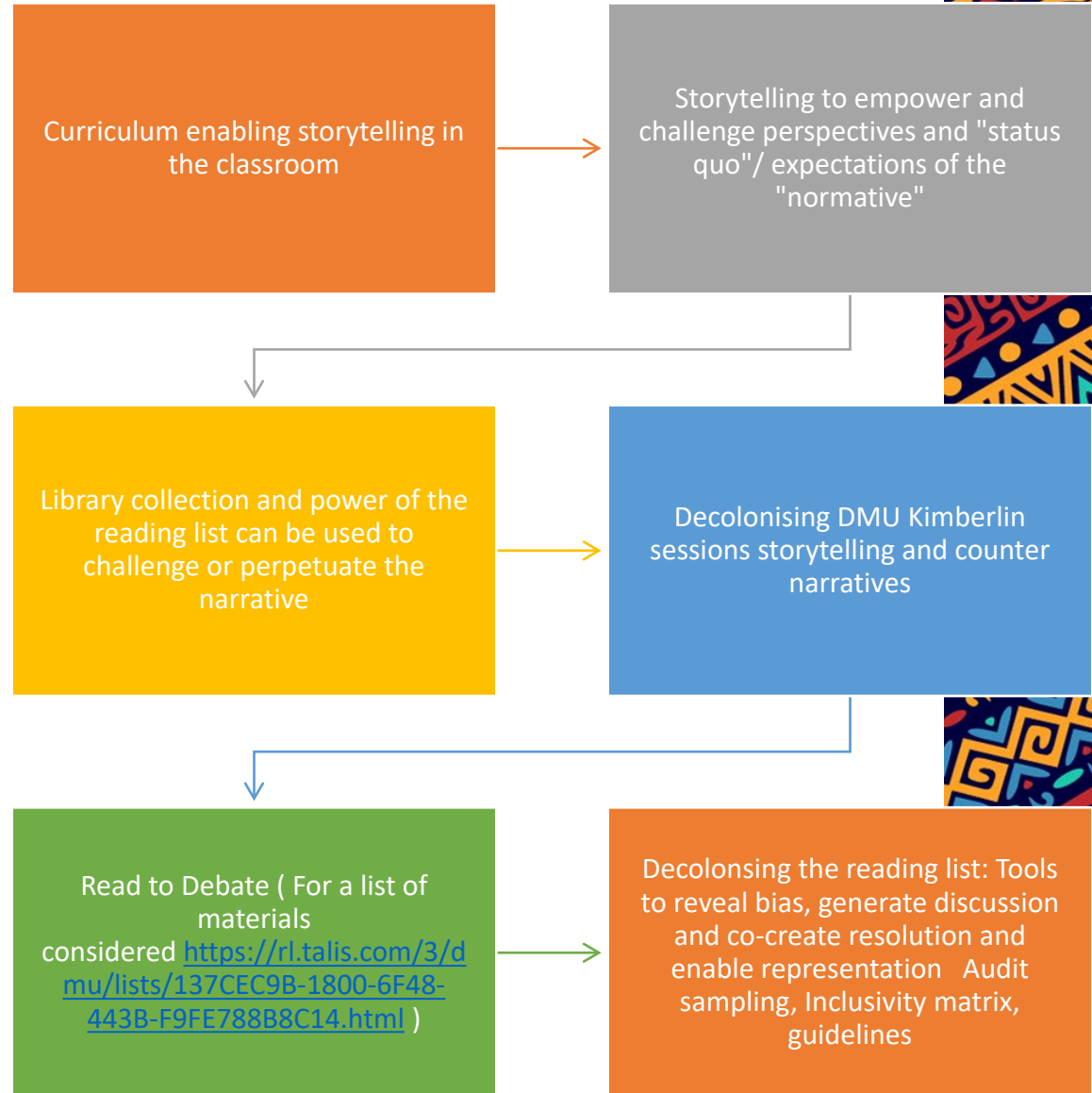
- Emotional burden
- “Those who work for liberation must not take advantage of the emotional dependence of the oppressed” (Freire, 1970, p40).
- Fear of speaking out
- Vulnerability: a two way process

The power of Classroom favoured narratives



- House storytelling and counter narratives in a classroom they become powerful tools for learning and liberation; acknowledging value, voice, identity and belonging
- Eliciting interest , excitement and engagement
- Nurturing imagination, ambition and aspiration
- Conferring agency

Library, learning and liberation

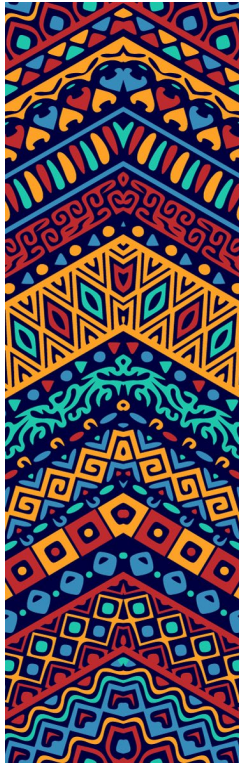




Storytelling and narratives to inspire thought, action and discussion

- **Kimberlin Sessions:** Presentations to share thought, experience and research. To challenge the "status quo" and offer a contemporary culturally aware insight.
- For example : How to decolonise writers' education; Megaphone project (Leila Rasheed, DMU RLFF)
- Cultural myths and cultural insights from around the world to challenge the colonial view.
- To give a voice and recognition, the need for visibility and to have a story that resonates and is recognisable , not someone else's story. (Koessler 2018)
- Language to enable not prevent . To share , to make your own (change the language of your oppressor bell hooks (Bullen 2012)

Examples storytelling for inclusion



- **Literature, mythology and storytelling: cultural insights and connections 9/11/20**
- Myths form a fascinating part of culture, from ancient history through to modern popular culture. Myths can be stories or narratives that are told and retold, and often used to explain the origin and identity of people and communities. (Manjeet Ridon Kimberlin sessions quote from blurb Nov 9 2020)
- **'Pride and Prejudice in the Archives: issues with representation and access' Dr Natalie Hayton 3rd February 2020**
- Specifically, discussion focused on the challenges of describing and providing access to artefacts and documents with racist content, a strategy for acknowledging and reviewing legacy catalogues where descriptions are outdated and often offensive and how we can strive to make archives a space for everyone through decolonisation and 'archival activism'. This latter phrase covers a host of activities from acquiring collections that represent the whole of society, updating catalogues, not whitewashing or erasing offensive content, reviewing our collections for 'hidden histories', working with community.
-

Read to debate

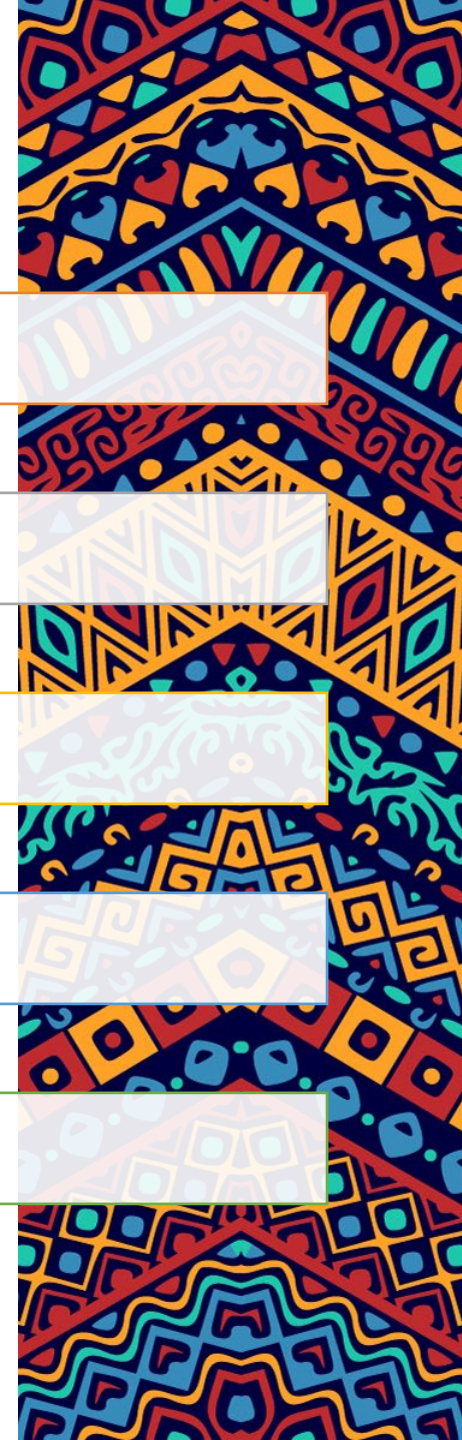
New perspectives and discussions

Research

Experience

From the heart

Diverse audience from across university





The Power
of the
reading list

- Sets boundaries or lays foundation for curiosity, learning and research. Imbues certain authors and texts with authority, should this be examined and discussed?
- Representation vs majoritarian stories (which generate power and status for certain groups)
- Challenge with different narratives
- Increase belonging and engagement
- Danger of the single story (Adichie 2009)

Hidden voices and research

- + • Challenge : Seek "hidden" , diverse, non-majoritarian voices to expand and complement existing reading list
- • Library collection expanding and diversifying:
 - Library Search
 - Specialised databases
 - Open Access Journals
 - E-book collections
 - Kanopy, BoB, LinkedInLearning, TED
 - Blogs, social media and more
 - Archives
- New views
- Co-creation share and value



Archives: Essential stories

- An essential role that will ensure the safe keeping and telling of multiple stories to ensure feelings of belonging, wellbeing and a sense of full and valued citizenship.
- Didion (1979): We tell ourselves stories in order to live...We look for the sermon in the suicide, for the social or moral lesson in the murder of five. We interpret what we see, select the most workable of the multiple choices. We live entirely, especially if we are writers, by the imposition of a narrative line upon disparate images, by the "ideas" with which we have learned to freeze the shifting phantasmagoria which is our actual experience." How does it feel to be excluded from that story or try to live with someone else's?





Storytelling: "Journeys to belonging"

- "Journeys to belonging as full and valued citizens"
Recording the experiences of recent migrant settler communities is both essential and empowering.
- Prescod, C. (2020) Archives are a site of struggle against social and political marginalisation and exclusion. Archivists have a key role in reparative history making , to recognise the omission in dominant heritage narratives.
- Can the same be said for libraries? Fed by the stories, counter narratives and knowledge we share in the classroom



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- What opportunities can we offer in the future?
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Any questions?





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