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Travel for Transformation: Embracing a Counter-Hegemonic Approach to Transformative Learning in Study Abroad

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An ethnographic study I conducted (Gambrell, 2017) analyzed the experiences of 8 study-abroad participants through a transformative learning lens. The principal finding of this previous research indicated that White participants did not see the embedded codes, customs, and conventions in governmental, institutional, and corporate systems that promote White supremacy within their *own* culture. This group of college-age students could see the flaws in being "othered" by *the host culture* society, but the racial privilege they experienced in the United States was invisible to them. Several negative outcomes that occurred during their study-abroad experience included: regarding the host family as an essentialized version of the host culture, exploiting a fellow participant in the study-abroad program who was the daughter of members of the host culture, and romanticizing a national celebration as how the host culture lived regularly. The normalization of Whiteness within the United States was such a powerful social construct that even the participants who self-identified as political liberals were unable to realize that the marginalization they experienced in *the host culture* was similar to the daily indignities people of color (and other minoritized groups) face in the *United States*. The reason I mention previous research here is the outcomes led me to believe the available literature is overly positive regarding the transformative learning impacts of study abroad. It also made me question if there are better ways to design study-programs to be counter-

hegemonic rather than perpetuating dominant culture beliefs, both during and after, the travel experience.

Hegemony transpires when individuals "embrace (and see as normal) the conditions that serve those in power but work against the people's own interests" (Cranton & Taylor, 2012, p. 9). Similarly, Cordero and Rodriguez (2009) define hegemony as "the deliberate social, political and economic dominance of a particular group that saturates the consciousness of the nation" (p. 139). While critical exploration can help individuals understand their own pasts, "...critical theory's focus on how adults learn to challenge dominant ideology, uncover power, and contest hegemony is crucial for scholars of transformative learning to consider if transformative learning is to avoid sliding into an unproblematized focus on the self" (Brookfield, 2012, pp. 131-132).

The purpose of this article is to review and critique existing academic literature on the potential for counter-hegemonic transformative learning during study abroad. As I began to review the academic literature on the topic, I found that expanding the search to other forms of travel (ex. volunteer tourism and secular pilgrimage) painted a more complete picture of this topic. These searches in *Google Scholar* and *Academic Search Premiere* began in 2016 and delimited the scope of the literature review to 10 years (2006-2016). One outlier (Foster, 1997) is included because it clearly synthesized what was discussed themes that were present across several articles about learning another language during study abroad. Taylor and Snyder (2012) state that literature reviews "synthesize significant findings, help identify areas of concern and questions yet to be explored, and potentially provoke the status quo, challenging the field to question or rethink what is often unquestioned" (p. 37). In order to synthesize

and critique existing literature, the questions guiding the literature review were:

1) What examples of counter-hegemonic praxis are described in current (2006-2016) academic literature relating to travel or study-abroad programs?

2) What is left unquestioned or unchallenged in the academic articles reviewed for this literature review?

This article begins with a brief introduction of transformative learning theory (TLT), including critiques of Mezirow's (2000) version of TLT. Following, I outline why travel and study abroad have been described as settings in which transformative learning is possible. Next, I synthesize the literature reviewed (2006-2016) to describe examples of counter-hegemonic praxis in travel or study-abroad programs. Lastly, I ask what is left unchallenged in the literature reviewed, and make recommendations for future studies.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Social Transformative Learning Theory

Transformative learning theory (TLT) provides a framework for effecting change in a personal frame of reference leading to a more inclusive, permeable, and reflective worldview (Ettling, 2006; Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006; Merriam, 2004; Mezirow, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2004). Mezirow (2000) explained that we transform our frames of reference through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, habits of mind, or points of view are based. Transformation commences with cognitive dissonance, when a person is confronted with an idea or experience that contradicts a prior underlying assumption of a personal belief system (Ettling, 2006; Mezirow, 1998, 2000). Cognitive dissonance then serves as a catalyst for critical reflection (Brookfield, 2002; Ettling,

2006), which in turn leads to a "disorienting dilemma," requiring a reordering of epistemological assumptions and causing a change in beliefs and behaviors (Gambrell, 2016; Mezirow, 2000, p.22).

Students transform fixed frames of reference by critically reflecting on assumptions in two different ways (Mezirow, 1998). One is by objective reframing, which involves becoming critically reflective of *another* person's assumptions in a text, narrative, or premise and then analyzing and redefining the problem (Mezirow, 2012). For example, when reading a text, an educator might ask, have students reflect upon, or write responses to the following questions: What are the underlying assumptions, values, beliefs, or intentions behind this text (Brookfield, 1998)? Whose voices are privileged/marginalized (Hooks, 1994)? How do your life experiences reinforce or disagree with the text (Johnson-Bailey & Alfred, 2006)? Objective reframing is the most common form of transformative learning because it typically takes less emotional work to identify untenable assumptions in the narratives of someone else (Mezirow, 1998).

Another type of transformative learning is subjective reframing, which focuses on critical reflection *one's own* assumptions and requires one to look inward rather than outward to see how one's values and beliefs lead to distorted, constrained, or discriminative ways of being (Brookfield, 2012). Brookfield (1998) identifies the difficulty of subjective reframing: "Becoming aware of our assumptions is a puzzling and contradictory task" (p. 197). He argues that it is almost impossible to see the flaws in personal assumptions and likened it to a "dog trying to catch its tail, or of trying to see the back of your head while looking in the bathroom mirror" (p. 197).

Critical reflection requires students to understand the intentions, purposes, feelings, values, and moral decisions behind what someone means when they communicate an idea (Mezirow, 2000).

It is important to note that many scholars assert that Mezirow's (2000) version of TLT is overly focused on individual transformation and does not deal directly with socio-cultural transformation, causing the theory to be overly individualistic, gendered, raced (White-centered), self-centered rather than earth-centered, and North American-centered (Alhadeff-Jones, 2012; Ntseane, 2012). I label this push among TLT scholars for greater social action *critical social transformative learning theory* (critical social TLT). Furthermore, critics noted that TLT does not adequately address the social conditions that contributed to the unjustifiable thought processes (O'Sullivan, 2012). Therefore, recent (2006-2016) TLT researchers are looking beyond Mezirow for other theoretical orientations of transformative learning (Taylor & Snyder, 2012). For example, empirical research is beginning to indicate that reflective discourse and critical reflection may not be as effective in transforming frames of reference as experience (Baumgartner, 2012). In addition, Johnson-Bailey and Alfred (2006; see also Johnson-Bailey, 2012) posit that marginalization may be a more powerful transformation catalyast than critical reflection. Additionally, Taylor (2007) states that studies have shown that social context may be the most important variable on transformative learning outcomes and calls for experimental approaches with different sociocultural variables (race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and culture) of the participants. However, because individuals occupy multiple social identities and navigate multiple social contexts simultaneously during study abroad, it is difficult to ascertain the role of the influence of context on transformation within individuals (Crenshaw, 2009; Gambrell, 2016). Nevertheless, Baumgartner (2012) asserts that despite the difficulty in teasing out the different variables of marginalization, studies that address sociocultural variables still need to be carried out.

Possible Setting for Critical Social TLT: Travel for Transformation?

Throughout the past decade, TLT researchers are looking beyond Mezirow for other theoretical orientations of transformative learning (Taylor & Snyder, 2012). Indeed, recent studies (2009-2017) have explored the role that settings outside of formal education classrooms like workshops, retreats, and adult learners of English as a second language play in transformative learning (Gambrell, 2017; Taylor & Snyder, 2012). Additionally, a growing body of research explores the effects of travel, tourism, and study-abroad programs on transformation of cultural worldview (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Cordero & Rodriguez, 2009; Falk, Ballantine, Packer, & Brinckerhoff, 2012; Morgan, 2010; Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2011; Ross, 2010).

One burgeoning area of critical social TLT literature is its intersection with travel, volunteer tourism, and study-abroad programs. Because travel has the potential to situate the learner in the position of "other" and travel is often done with a purpose for personal growth, study abroad (especially where one has to learn another language) is especially well suited to transformative learning (Foster, 1997; Morgan, 2010). However, it must be acknowledged that the positionality of the traveler—including one's (un)intended biases—plays a significant role in whether travel disrupts or

perpetuates the dominant ideology (Gambrell, 2017). This is especially true when a person from the United States or Europe travels to places that have been exoticized through Western frameworks of the "other" because the power dynamic between the so-called Western world and the place of travel remain the same, even when the student is placed in an "other" context (Ntseane, 2012).

This otherness can be a catalyst for cognitive dissonance and disorienting dilemmas described earlier[1]. Additionally, travel, especially for volunteerism (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011), spiritual or secular pilgrimage (Morgan, 2010), second language learning (Foster, 1997), or study abroad (Brown, 2009), is often initiated by the participant's desire to be changed—or transformed—by the experience. This willingness to be changed by the travel experience creates a condition with increased odds of transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000). To be considered travel for transformation, the travel experience must respect the values and knowledge of the host culture, acknowledge the presence of differences in privilege, and utilize environmentally sustainable practices (Ross, 2010).

Moreover, Ross (2010) concludes that travel may be the best activity to lead one toward transformation of frames of reference, because individuals often undergo travel as a means of expanding consciousness (see also, Morgan, 2010). Furthermore, Ross (2010) posits that an individual frequently wants something from travel that does not fit that person's

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[1] For a more thorough explanation of Mezirow's framework of the transformative learning process read Mezirow (2012). In addition, Baumgartner (2012) offers an in-depth historical analysis of the critiques of Mezirow's TLT.

paradigms, assumptions, or worldview: "transformative travel and transformative tourism aim to honor the delicate interplay between the self and anyone who is different, or 'other,' during travel" (p. 55). However, traveling does not necessarily guarantee one's intent and motivation to change, and one's willingness to act upon this change during and after travel, as will be discussed in the last section.

Falk, Ballantyne, Packer, and Benckendorff (2012) provide a review of both empirical and theoretical articles about tourism and transformation. They maintain "tourism's concentrated, 'first- person' engagement with the culturally unfamiliar lends its subjects a mantle of cosmopolite authority that years of classroom instruction rarely approach" (p. 909). However, they additionally assert that the connection to travel and transformation is a relatively under-researched, under-theorized, and under-scrutinized field. In addition, they maintain that in addition to acquiring knowledge, individuals can look to tourism as a vehicle for changing themselves, their vision of themselves, and their vision of the world around them. They argue that learning that occurs in a travel situation almost always exceeds what could be learned *about* other cultures through formal classroom activities because individuals may construct a personal connection *with* people from another culture. Therefore, Falk, et al. (2012) believe that "the travel experience can contribute personal benefits to the individual visitor, to society, and the planet; benefits that long outlive the temporal boundaries of the experience itself" (p. 922). I will problematize and complicate this commonly accepted assumption that travel—and study abroad, in particular—is transformative in the section on critical social TLT and travel. Nevertheless, in the following section, I review literature on the

possibilities of transformative learning in different travel opportunities.

Question 1: What examples of counter-hegemonic praxis are described in current (2006-2016) academic literature relating to travel or study-abroad programs?

This section reviews literature from 2006-2016 on study abroad (and other forms of travel) to investigate frameworks that create the best plausible opportunities for transformative learning within study-abroad experiences. Several articles indicated that willingness to be changed by the travel experience increases when there is a purpose behind the travel whether it be volunteer tourism, study abroad, or a secular pilgrimage (Morgan, 2010). In this section, I outline the potential for transformative learning during each of these travel experiences.

Volunteer Tourism

Coghlan and Gooch (2011) conducted a literature at the intersection of TLT and volunteer tourism. They state that in the mid-2000s there started to appear literature that combined the idea of transformation and travel. Their article describes volunteer tourism, which is a type of tourism where the traveler goes to another place specifically to do some form of service that benefits the host culture. Elements that make volunteer tourism a potential fit for transformative learning studies are the following: the individual seeks deeper involvement with the social and natural world, the change in context situates the learner in a position where cognitive dissonance and disorienting dilemmas are more likely to occur, and the desire of the tourist to attain self-actualization increases the traveler's capacity for transformative learning. Volunteer tourism can increase the

likelihood of a shift in underlying assumptions and a switch from the rational (cognitive) toward the affective (emotional/spiritual) dimensions of learning.

According to TLT, critical reflection requires learners to understand the intentions, purposes, feelings, values, and moral decisions behind what someone means when they communicate an idea (Mezirow, 2000). According to Coghlan and Gooch (2011), by stepping away from "the learner's socio-cultural context and the dominant ideologies" (p. 9), the traveler has an opportunity to develop the skills of critical reflection. Through critical reflection, the volunteer tourist first has a chance to learn about another culture (objective reframing), but then this learning may be applied to the participant's culture of origin (subjective reframing). Therefore, there is an increased opportunity for the traveler to situate herself or himself within the larger political, economic, and socio-cultural domain. Finally, volunteer tourism often allows the traveler develop awareness of social justice. This awareness can awaken the volunteer tourist to "re-appraising personal values and redressing power imbalances, [which] may be related to the issues of individuation, authenticity and emancipatory learning discussed in the literature on transformative learning" (p. 11). As further evidence of the subjective reframing, many volunteer tourists experience "reverse culture shock" upon returning to their culture of origin and that they "may not be able to reconcile their skills, values and attitudes they developed during their volunteer tourism experience" (p. 12).

Secular Pilgrimage

Morgan's (2010) work focused on travel experiences of individuals that experienced transformation during travel abroad, arguing: "by undertaking an actual journey

involving a profound engagement with unfamiliar places and experiences, a person may experience a degree of disruption to their subjective orientation to the world (worldview or inner consciousness) sufficient to engender transformative learning" (p. 249). He situates the idea of travel for transformation within Mezirow's TLT concept of cognitive dissonance and disorienting dilemma leading to critical reflection and eventually perspective transformation. Furthermore, Morgan argues that the traditional classroom environment is not a sufficient vehicle for transformation because it does not situate the learner in a position of otherness. Travel, on the other hand, requires that the learner be engaged in a disruptive encounter with otherness that provides significant contrasts to ordinary home experience. Consequently, otherness in the new culture can be identified with different cultural customs, mores, values, and attitudes. Typically, such experiences are likely when traveling to another country although a contrasting locality within the same country (e.g., urban dweller visiting a rural area or vice versa) could also lead to transformation of worldview.

For transformation to occur, the more "other" (both geographically and culturally) the place is, the more likely transformation will take place (Morgan, 2010; Ross, 2010). This feeling of being an outsider that an individual might feel in a new environment increases the likeliness that a disorienting dilemma—often referred to as "culture shock"—will occur (Mezirow, 2012; Morgan, 2010). Even more important, Morgan (2010) posits that participants who have experienced otherness are less likely to universalize, essentialize, or generalize other cultures within their home environment upon return to their original country. Furthermore, he asserts that transformation is most likely to occur if the traveler has the opportunity to reflect upon the experience either individually or collectively in order to reevaluate one's perspective of the other.

Morgan (2010) labels travel for transformation a *pilgrimage*, but says it is not with the obvious religious connections, but travel for personal development. Rather, he maintains a pilgrimage should "seek to elicit deep, experiential encounters with 'Otherness' through nature and wilderness vis-a`-vis through intercultural dialogue represents a particularly important direction for future research" (p. 263). However, Morgan warned:

> Crucially, overemphasizing cultural Otherness over commonality runs the risk of exoticizing, romanticizing, essentializing, and superficializing the lived experience of people encountered through travel which is more likely to reify than transform existing frames of mind and consequent power asymmetries (Said, 2003), the very antithesis of transformative education. Travel has the potential to act as a powerful vehicle for transformative education. However, it is incumbent on all who wish to utilize such an approach to do so in an informed and ethically responsible manner. p. 264

This paragraph highlights that not all individuals who undertake journeys experience transformative learning outcomes. It is even possible for a participant to reinforce unjust deficit viewpoints through travel, perpetuating dominant ideologies rather than questioning them. Therefore, it is essential that the educator be prepared to guide students toward the subjective reframing domains of critical reflection so the focus becomes on one's own culture and self rather than over-emphasizing the "otherness" of the host culture.

Study Abroad

Study-abroad programs are another medium through which travel has potential for transformative learning. Brown (2009) conducted an ethnographic qualitative research study that combined participant interviews and long-term observations of 150 post-graduate student participants from Asia, Africa, Europe, and Middle East in a yearlong study-abroad program in England. Brown (2009) questioned if exposure to a new culture had potential for transformation, increased tolerance, and made it possible to bridge the various cultural elements in their home countries leading to the development of a less ethnocentric perspective. She examined if prolonged absence from the student's home culture could help students re-vision or reframe their professional and domestic roles. Brown (2009) found that the duration, purpose of travel, and degree of immersion plays a significant role in perspective transformation.

Removal from the home environment for an extended period of time allowed students to experience freedom from cultural and familial expectations. Consequently, this increased freedom allocated space for students to experience self-discovery and transformation. Every student ($N = 150$) experienced transformation of cultural perspectives that outlasted their study abroad and carried implications in their subsequent business and interpersonal roles. Almost all of the students experienced disorientation at early stages followed by increased autonomy, self-confidence, self-efficacy, vision of one's place in society, and self-control. In the final interview, most of the participants viewed the sojourn as a life-changing, vision-altering, and irrevocable event. They all experienced concern at how their family, friends, and business associates would view their transformed state. Furthermore, some of the students became so adept at the new culture that many of them were apprehensive at re-entry to their culture of origin.

Learning Another Language May Accelerate Travel for Transformation

In addition to traveling to a different culture, learning another language is often transformative (Goulah, 2007). Foster (1997) states that when learning another language, one has to learn not only vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and other communication skills, but how another culture thinks. Moreover, the learner may become one with a new "culture, music, literature, film—the dynamics involved can often be quite destabilizing" (p. 35). Because language learning appeared as a thread throughout several of the articles reviewed, I sought further information on the potential for transformation through language learning in study-abroad programs. Foster (1997) more clearly articulated themes repeated in the other articles, so I included it in this review despite being published outside of the timeframe selected.

Although there are various reasons why students enroll in a foreign language course, there is typically a mild degree of anxiety or vulnerability associated with learning another language. According to Foster (1997), this vulnerability sets up an excellent situation for transformative learning to occur. Furthermore, she argues that learning to communicate in a different language is unsettling, causing a distorted view of self in which the individual doubts their ability to effectively communicate in the new language. Subsequently, the distorted self-perception leads students to feel trapped, but as communication skills develop, the language learners start to feel more liberated (Goulah, 2007).

Foster (1997) asserts that learning a second language can be linked to the destabilizing experience of Mezirow's (2000) disorienting dilemma: "This process

can be a profoundly unsettling psychological proposition. The immediate interaction with the language and culture can directly threaten an individual's self-concept and worldview" (p. 35). Trying to participate in a second language involves taking risk. This risk requires the learner to relinquish her or his view as a competent communicator in the native language. In addition, Goulah (2007) found that students who learned another language while immersed in that culture developed critical socio-cultural attitudes about their home culture.

Travel for Transformation: Pedagogy of/for the Privileged

It is often privileged learners who can take part in travel for transformation because the traveler would either have to have the ability to pay or access to institutional funds in order to afford travelling to an "other" place to experience study abroad. However, Curry-Stevens (2007) posits that a "pedagogy for the privileged, which seeks to transform those with more advantages into allies of those with fewer, presents a considerable impetus for broad, societal change" (p. 35). She asserts that privileged individuals—if enlightened—could be powerful allies for social change (see also Bolman & Deal, 2008). Therefore, Curry-Stevens (2007) asserts it is incumbent upon adult educators to become more effective to motivate this group toward broader social justice objectives. She further contends that transformative learning theorists rarely distinguish between pedagogy of the oppressed and pedagogy of the privileged, making this area of research both under-theorized and under-studied.

In order to analyze and understand the pedagogy for the privileged, Curry-Stevens (2007) used grounded theory to analyze life history interviews of 20 educators to determine how their personal narratives of teaching privileged learners about

oppression informed their teaching. This research found that educators reported their students going through first a series of confidence shaking processes of awareness of oppression, awareness of oppression as structural, awareness as oneself as oppressed, locating oneself as privileged, understanding the benefits that flow from privilege, and understanding oneself as implicated in the oppression of others and understanding oneself as an oppressor. Following the disorienting processes, the educators believed that students proceed to build confidence as an ally for social justice through building confidence to take action, planning what actions one will undertake, building confidence and agency focuses on arranging for ongoing support, and individuals in the group covenant with each other about their new commitments and plans to act for social justice. Curry-Stevens (2007) concluded, "Accordingly, pedagogy for the privileged, if successfully navigated, enables us to reconnect to all humanity—not just to those like us" (p. 40).

Critical Social TLT and Travel

Travel can also be a vehicle for critical social awareness and transformation. Pritchard, Morgan, and Ateljevic (2011) maintain that a method should be developed that combines transformative learning and social action to offer a distinctive approach to tourism knowledge production. They incorporated critical theory in trying to analyze transformative learning within tourism studies. Like Curry-Stevens (2007), they claim that the dominant meta-narrative of the Western world's value system is at a crisis point environmentally, financially, and politically. Pritchard, Morgan, and Ateljevic (2011) assert that the current use of travel as a vehicle solely for knowledge production is in need of change. Therefore, they state that a critical social TLT perspective is needed in tourism and travel abroad studies. They

propose that travel and tourism offer time for reflection of one's values and one's place in the world that formal classroom studies do not. However, it is important to note that they are not merely arguing that tourism *can* allow time for critical reflection and activism. Rather, they posit that tourism and travel *should* be specifically *designed* to be transformative and give space for the tourist to participate in social action. According to the authors, this lack of specific directional time for transformative action and social action is a theory gap in the existing literature in both TLT and tourism studies.

In short, Pritchard, Morgan, and Ateljevic (2011) match the growing number of TLT scholars who challenge Mezirow's ontological assumption that transforming the individual is enough. Like many critical social theory critics of Mezirow (Brookfield, 2012; Craton & Taylor, 2012; Johnson-Bailey, 2012; O'Sullivan, 1999), they maintain that social action should be a direct part of the travel experience: "And yet the continued conceptual development of tourism depends on the exploration of new paradigms and perspectives, because when we push ourselves away from dominant and taken-for-granted thinking we open up possibilities of seeing ourselves and our multiple worlds anew" (p. 943). This paradigm shift should be transformative, not only in how the individual thinks about other cultures, but how the individual acts toward and helps others act toward the host culture. Therefore, Pritchard, Morgan, and Ateljevic (2011) maintain that by being immersed in another culture, the traveler gets to experience a narrative separate from the dominant western narrative and that the individual can come to "value planetary rather than national interests, eco-sustainability rather than sentimental environmentalism, feminism rather than heroic models, personal growth rather than

personal ambition" (p. 944). Furthermore, they posit that tourism's complex, variegated, and interdisciplinary nature make it a perfect vehicle for critical social TLT work. Another benefit of tourism and study abroad, according to the authors, is that it opens a space to talk about race, class, gender, globalization, and community both in the host culture and in the place of origin.

Cordero and Rodriguez (2009) also maintain that travel should be created to be a medium for critical social TLT. They conducted a study wherein social work graduate students first took a class on diversity and social justice education followed by a 12-day immersion experience in Puerto Rico to conduct social work. Cordero and Rodriguez (2009) argue that educators must prepare students in a culturally competent manner to prepare practitioners to understand and address the causes, dynamics, and consequences of oppression, thereby preparing practitioners to promote social justice. Furthermore, they maintain that cross-cultural learning and exposure is best accomplished through immersion experiences: "while most practitioners have taken a multicultural education course, fewer have immersion experiences where they could gain culturally specific practice experience with ethnic minorities and be supervised by instructors with such expertise" (p. 138). Through the course and the immersion experience, Cordero and Rodriguez (2009) found that participants experienced a fuller appreciation and understanding of their *own* ethnocultural identity, increasing the participants' self-awareness and critical consciousness. Consequently, the increased awareness of other cultures lead students to desire social action for the *marginalized*. To be transformative, Cordero and Rodriguez (2009) assert that the transformative learning experience should engage students in a cross-cultural learning process in which

they: "examine, question and expand their cultural assumptions, acquiring behavioral and cognitive repertoires that foster critical consciousness" (p. 136). They suggest that a "multi-method, cross-cultural teaching approach can be used across ethnocultural groups and with diverse student groups to move beyond traditional classroom learning to include immersion learning from and within the community under study" (p. 147).

To summarize the literature, in order to be considered travel for transformation, the travel experience must respect the values and knowledge of the host culture, acknowledge the presence of differences in privilege, and utilize environmentally sustainable practices. In addition, the duration, purpose of travel, and degree of immersion plays a significant role in the possibility of perspective transformation. A reason that transformative study abroad is better positioned toward cognitive dissonance and disorienting dilemmas than the traditional classroom environment is that it situates the student in a new context where the place, culture, people, and hopefully the language are "other" (Morgan, 2010). Duration of time in "other" culture also has an impact: Cordero and Rodriguez' (2009) study with 12 days had limitations (not every student experienced perspective transformation), whereas every student in the Brown (2009) study where participants spent a year immersed in the host culture experienced irreversible transformation in their frames of reference. Moreover, willingness to be changed by the travel experience increases when there is a purpose behind the travel whether it is volunteer tourism, study abroad, or a secular pilgrimage. In addition, learning another language can be disorienting because the second language learner has to learn not only vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and other communication skills, but how another culture thinks. It is also important that the

transformative travel educator understands that study-abroad research is a "pedagogy of the privileged" wherein students are coming to understand their role as members of dominant society from an oppressive culture. Most importantly, the educator must motivate this group toward broader social justice objectives. Finally, it would be ideal if a class about equity and social justice were combined with the study-abroad experience.

Question 2: What is Left Unquestioned or Unchallenged in the Academic Articles Reviewed in this Literature Review?

While almost all of the literature reviewed for this article included cautions to avoid essentializing and exploiting the host culture, very little could be found on the possible negative outcomes to participants— and especially to members of the *host* culture—when students from the United States study in "other-ed" locations. Clearly, travel as hobby or vacation does not guarantee transformational learning. In addition, study abroad may serve to reify colonial ideologies without acknowledging the contexts of power and privilege of the traveler as well as members the host culture. This section begins with a critique of Mezirow's concept of willingness, examining how the social identities of the study-abroad participant can influence whether willingness becomes colonizing or co-learning. Following, I use the framework of Hooks (1992) "Eating the Other" (p. 39) to analyze how the power and privilege of the traveler can re-create dominant ideologies both during study abroad and upon return to the home culture. The last section makes recommendation for future study regarding the need to specifically address issues of power within study-abroad literature.

Is "Willingness" Enough?

Mezirow (2000) indicated that *willingness* to listen and speak was a key component in TLT (see also Mezirow, 1996). Throughout Mezirow's writings (1996, 1998, 2000, 2012), he maintains willingness is a key component in bringing about a disorienting dilemma, which, in his theory, is a pre-requisite to transformative learning. However, reviewing literature at the intersection of TLT and travel lead me to question Mezirow's repeated use of the term *willingness* in his writings. Many of the participants of my previous study mentioned in the introduction were very willing to participate in activities and have open dialogue with members of the host culture (Gambrell, 2017), yet this willingness did not necessarily change students' perceptions of dominant culture ideologies, especially concerning their beliefs about power structures within the United States. Moreover, several of the White students recreated colonizing roles during the study-abroad program of fellow students from marginalized social identities and in their interactions with members of the host culture.

That previous research, combined with the literature reviewed for this article, led me to believe Mezirow's concept of willingness is unfocused, needing refinement, further definition, and reframing. For example, is the permeability required to break through dominant paradigms a personal characteristic or something that can be fostered? If it can be fostered, how can opportunities be designed that encourage permeable, rational worldviews that TLT scholars discuss as a prerequisite to transformative learning (Ettling, 2006; Mezirow, 2000, 2004, 2012; Taylor & Cranton, 2012; O'Sullivan, 1999)? How can study-abroad programs design opportunities to serve as a catalyst for transformation in less permeable students?

Therefore, I recommend future studies be carried out to clarify, refine, and reframe what is meant by willingness in TLT, what role it plays in transformation, and how it can be fostered in study-abroad participants.

Eating the "Other"

As I write the final section of this article, I find myself continually grappling with the embedded Whiteness embedded in a "pedagogy of the privileged" (Curry-Stevens, 2007, p. 35). Even though this study-abroad format creates spaces where students confront dominant culture paradigms, it presumes that the program is designed for privileged students. Additionally, I keep thinking about assumptions about the "other" embedded in many of the articles. To clarify, I must distinguish between "other" and "other-ed," because I do not want to misrepresent the scholars synthesized for this article. The scholars who used "other" (Curry-Stephens, 2007; Foster, 1997; Goulah, 2007; Morgan, 2010; Ross, 2010) signified novel or cognitively removed for the *participant* (a technophile in a natural setting, for example). However, "other-ed" indicates already oppressed groups of individuals due to social, educational, political, or economic institutions that promote the normativity of White, upper-middle class values. In order to access most forms of study abroad, the participant must have access to personal or institutional money, which is a form of privilege. Indeed, Hooks' (1992) critique of White consumerism of Black bodies, media, and culture aligns to the colonialism of White American students travelling to "other" places:

> The over-riding fear is that cultural, ethnic, and racial differences will be continually commodified and offered up as new dishes to enhance the white palate – that the Other will be eaten, consumed, and forgotten (p. 39).

Even though "other" does not mean "other-ed" by the authors reviewed above, I keep returning to the questions that began this process: *For* whom and *by* whom are study abroad programs created? Is there a way to create a counter-hegemonic praxis in study abroad?

I also came to critique the deficit views of the very idea of traveling to an "other" location. This observation led me to question if students need to travel across the world if socio-cultural transformation is the desired outcome of study-abroad. It seems logical that a visit to parts of town that students feel are "other" may have an equal—or more powerful—outcome in understanding and acting to disrupt social disparities (Slattery, 2013). Visits to parts of town that participants' view as "other" may produce equally "novel" destinations that pull a participant away from known experiences (Ross, 2010). Furthermore, the intercultural dialogues, reflections, and intimate intercultural experiences required in travel for transformation could more naturally and logically be transferred "home." Consequently, reflections with previously "other" (to the participant) communities could lead to critical reflection and breaking down barriers to equity within the participants' *own* culture. Also, this kind of dialogue would remove the "pedagogy for the privileged" necessity because transportation to an "other" (to the participant) place within the same city would be exponentially more affordable and open to most students.

Although this form of travel transports an individual to an "other" (for the participant) place within her or his community, my grapple with this suggestion for future study is the potential to reify already existing modes "taking" from already taken-from peoples. I fear the added emotional labor and tokenism that may be experienced by minoritized participants.

With study abroad, if the "pedagogy of the privileged" converts into voyeurism or appropriation, the participants at least have limited realistic chances for interacting with members of the host culture in the future. In contrast, when the host culture *is* one's community of origin, the potential harmful effects of essentialism, stereotyping, or tokenizing exponentially increase (but so do the potential gains). Therefore, the same cautions that exist for travel for transformation would need to be explicitly followed in a travel to an "other" (for the participant) place within an individual's own community: the travel experience must respect the values and knowledge of the host culture, acknowledge the presence of differences in privilege, and utilize environmentally sustainable practices (Ross, 2010).

Johnson-Bailey and Alfred (2006) argue that Mezirow's (2012) TLT model largely ignores culturally-bound or silenced students (see also Cranton & Taylor, 2012; Tisdell, 2012). They maintain that experience in a socially marginalized group may be a more powerful transformer than any other component of the transformative learning process because oppression requires a person to confront a lack of social, economic, or political capital on a daily basis. I maintain that study-abroad praxis will remain a White-centered "pedagogy of the privileged" until programs and literature are created *by* and *for* historically sidelined participants (Tuck & Yang, 2014).

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