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Authors

Bucholtz, Mary
Casillas, Dolores Ines
Lee, Jin Sook

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FEELING IT

LANGUAGE, RACE, AND AFFECT IN LATINX YOUTH LEARNING



Edited by
Mary Bucholtz,
Dolores Inés Casillas,
and **Jin Sook Lee**



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You Feel Me?

Language and Youth Affective Agency in a Racializing World

Mary Bucholtz, Dolores Inés Casillas, and Jin Sook Lee

Introduction

Racialization—the sociopolitical process of imposing structural disadvantage on certain kinds of bodies that have been categorized as phenotypically marked—is central to all forms of education. Given the very real risks for racialized youth in racist schools and societies, both academic researchers and progressive educators have worked to eliminate the numerous threats to the humanity, the well-being, and the very survival of youth of color. But more importantly, a less acknowledged yet powerful force regularly and courageously contests processes of racial inequality: young people themselves. Youth, and especially racialized youth, are far too often ideologically—and inaccurately—positioned as the passive recipients of others’ actions rather than as effective social actors in their own right. As a result, many of the academic, advocacy, and activist efforts to foster social justice in and around the educational sphere have positioned policymakers, teachers, and parents as the primary agents of social change, with youth framed primarily as its beneficiaries. Increasingly, however, those seeking to bring about educational justice have recognized the limits of an adult-centered perspective and have begun to call attention to young people of color as a fundamental source of sociocultural knowledge and sociopolitical transformation in their own right (Cammarota & Fine 2008; DeJaeghere, Josic, & McCleary 2016; Delgado Bernal 2002; Paris & Alim 2017).

This volume aims to contribute to this scholarly, educational, and political project by examining the agency of young people of color in confrontation with the unrelenting racializing processes of hegemonic society as well as the often disparaging or marginalizing practices of even well-meaning adults. Our starting point for this exploration is the lived experience of Latinx youth, which endows them with substantial linguistic and cultural expertise, including ways of speaking and being that young people draw from their homes and communities as well as practices that youth themselves have created or adapted. Although this expertise is overlooked or overtly devalued in most educational settings, it is in fact the basis of

important forms of knowledge too often missing from conventional classrooms. This knowledge in turn inspires racially minoritized young people to enact social change by resisting, subverting, and dismantling hegemonic ideologies and practices.

We approach the issue of youth agency for social change from a linguistic vantage point because of the crucial importance of language in this dynamic. Language lies at the core of the racializing processes that undergird all forms of racism, from the creation of the potent fiction of “race” itself by means of racializing categories and labels (Leeman 2004) to the linguistic violence (Ek, Sánchez, & Quijada Cerecer 2013) produced by the ideological framing of the language of racialized groups as “disordered” and a “social problem” (Hill 1999; Hurtado & Rodríguez 1989; Urciuoli 1996). Yet language remains largely invisible and off-record as a resource for reproducing racial inequality (Baugh 2003). A “raciolinguistic” perspective (Flores & Rosa 2015; Rosa & Flores 2017; see also Alim, Rickford, & Ball 2016) is therefore needed in order to expose how race is created and perpetuated through language.

But language is not only a central means of producing racial inequality; it is also fundamental to the deeply meaningful social identities created by the groups and individuals subjected to racialization. From this perspective, language is a powerful tool for resisting and rejecting oppression. In order to gain the fullest possible understanding of the role of language in the lives of young people of color, then, it is necessary to adjust one’s analytic perspective, at times zooming out to capture the large-scale sociopolitical processes of racialization at work across time and space and at other times zooming in to see how young people take action at particular moments in their everyday lives to define themselves and their families and communities against these processes.

The chapters in this volume take this dual perspective in exploring young people’s encounters with the nexus of language and race. Some authors concentrate primarily on the forms of structural power that uphold racism—particularly ideology, the taken-for-granted cultural beliefs that sustain power through language and other semiotic processes. Other authors examine the practices of individual and collective youth agency that challenge and dismantle power, actions that are also largely linguistic and semiotic. Many chapters consider both aspects of this struggle, and a number of chapters offer critical reflections on the complex role of adults in this process—sometimes guiding youth, sometimes learning from them, at times working alongside young people to effect change, at other times reproducing racializing and marginalizing processes.

A fundamental point that emerges across the individual chapters is that the raciolinguistic struggles described in these pages cannot be addressed by researchers, educators, and other well-intentioned adults simply by appealing to the traditional scholarly and pedagogical tools of empirical evidence and logical argumentation. What replicates racism, whether virulent individual extremism or the no less violent structural injustices supported by white hegemony, is not reason but emotion. Racializing and other oppressive ideologies are rooted in dehumanizing affects—in visceral, embodied emotions such as fear, hatred, contempt, disgust, desire, and pity (Ahmed 2004; Ioanide 2015; Trainor 2008). In light of this reality, dispassionate

rationality is a woefully inadequate weapon for combating racism. Moreover, youth of color bring their own affects to their efforts to overthrow racism. As a wealth of literature, scholarship, and political writing by authors of color over three centuries makes clear, to be racialized is a deeply emotional and bodily experience, one that cannot be apprehended through the intellect alone. To demand, as conventional schooling does, that students leave their emotions and perceptions at the classroom door and become disembodied thinking machines is to deny the very basis of minoritized young people's knowledge and insight about race and racism. Thus, educators have a crucial role to play in facilitating, supporting, and validating the marginalized affective experiences of racialized youth and in offering young people new conceptual tools and perspectives for interpreting and acting on those experiences.

In the next section we briefly sketch our theoretical understanding of affect in young people's agentic actions to challenge racializing ideologies. This theoretical perspective emerged from our experiences of developing a special academic program focused on language and social justice; this program, which provides the ethnographic context for this volume, is described in the subsequent section. Finally, we offer a detailed description of each of the chapters, which exemplify a range of collaborative efforts within and around the SKILLS program to undo the profound educational and social inequities that youth of color must contend with.

Affect, Ideology, and Agency in the Lives of Racialized Youth

Our conceptualization of affect is influenced in a general way by the recent "affective turn" in the humanities and social sciences, which calls for greater consideration of the emotional and embodied dimensions of human experience (Clough & Halley 2007; Gregg & Seigworth 2010). However, we differ from many of these theorists in their narrow understanding of affect as separate from agency, cognition, and language. Such artificial dualities do not capture the complexity of affect as a social and relational phenomenon. Taking a broader perspective, we define affect as the simultaneously cognitive, perceptual, and emotional experience of embodied encounter with the material world.

Given the centrality of embodiment to affective experience, it is evident that affect is a key component of racialization (Berg & Ramos-Zayas 2015). For young people, this means that being socialized into a specific racial subject position entails being socialized into its attendant affects. Not only is racial ideology constituted within affects, as discussed in the previous section, but conversely it is also instrumental in the constitution of affects. For example, in educational settings youth of color are inculcated into ideologies of affective appropriateness that regiment their affective comportment and impose a moral order on their affective experience by stipulating the expected feelings and behavior of specific categories of

racialized students (cf. Lei 2003). Similarly, Ana Ramos-Zayas (2011: 86) argues that racialized youth undergo a process of “racial learning” that involves the development of an “affective epistemology,” that is, “a set of rules and assumptions about affect and its adequate expression, interpretations of how others feel or should feel, and the creation or performance of an affective persona.” However, researchers and educators still do not know enough about how this process works in learning settings; as Michalinos Zembylas (2010: 254) notes, a great deal of work remains to be done on “the emotional aspects of racialization and ethnicization in schools.” The chapters in this volume seek to address this gap in knowledge.

Like recent theories of affect, the extensive rethinking of agency across the social sciences and humanities has been deeply influenced by developments in critical race theory and feminist thought. Such theories refute simplistic notions of agency rooted in Enlightenment conceptualizations of the (white, male) social subject as an autonomous, intentional actor effecting his will upon the world through rational cogitation. Many current theorists instead recognize the social, relational nature of agency as well as its rootedness in the embodied specificities of human beings interacting in the material world.

We take up a particular theoretical position in relation to this vast body of work: In our understanding, agency resides not in individuals but in actions; it is interactional and hence both linguistic and material; and it is inherently political (cf. Kockelman 2007). With regard to the first point, even in more recent approaches agency is often conceptualized as a “capacity” or “property” of agents, a formulation that problematically locates agency within individual entities as an immanent potential. We instead understand agency as a social and interactional phenomenon brought about through the relationship between entities, actions, and effects. Secondly, because interaction takes place in a world of both words and bodies, agency is necessarily a matter of both language and materiality. Finally, agency, whether individual or collective, is political: It acts upon the world and thus effects change and engages with power in socially consequential ways—whether to claim that power, to redistribute it, or to incapacitate it.

It should be clear from this discussion that in our understanding agency and affect are closely aligned: While both have traditionally been theorized as individual internal states or qualities, we instead view these concepts as social, relational, and interactional, enacted through language and the body. We have found it particularly useful to bring these two phenomena together in the concept of affective agency, by which we mean the mobilization of social action in and/or through embodied cognition, emotion, and perception (see also Ferrada, Bucholtz, & Corella forthcoming). In other words, affective agency is the interactional experience of moving and being moved.

The concept of affective agency was first developed by feminist scholar Susan McManus (2011, 2013) from the perspective of political theory. Rejecting overly rationalist liberal and radical theories of political action, McManus instead calls attention to social subjects as both thinking and feeling beings. She argues that affective agency is generated through relational encounter, as embodied emotional

experience both constrains and enables sociopolitical action and change. Thus, in her view, an affective perspective on agency is necessarily “attentive to the ‘micropolitical’, quotidian bodily encounters that are constitutive of, rather than secondary to, structural or social agential formations” (2013: 137–138). For this reason, analyses built from the details of linguistic and embodied interaction, such as those exemplified in many of the chapters in this volume, are especially illuminating in understanding the workings of affective agency.

It is important to note that affective agency is not qualitatively different from agency more generally; as with other theoretical refinements of agency that have recently been put forth, such as constrained agency (VanderStouwe 2016) and distributed agency (Enfield & Kockelman 2017), the purpose is not to proliferate multiple types of agency but rather to enlarge the theoretical understanding of agency as a complex but unified phenomenon. Affective agency is therefore a conceptual tool for highlighting the affective dimension of agency and the agential dimension of affect.

Our understanding of affective agency in education is very different from psychology-centered theories of students’ “motivation” or “engagement,” or from pedagogies that claim to teach “social emotional learning,” “emotional intelligence,” “emotional literacy,” or even “moral” feeling. Young people do not need to be taught how to feel or instructed in proper forms and expressions of emotion; they already know how they feel. The problem is that teachers may not know how their students feel, or they may not have been trained to build ethically and responsibly on those emotional experiences as a resource for socially transformative learning.

Thus, just as racialized youth bring often unrecognized yet socially significant “funds of knowledge” to school from their families and communities (González, Moll, & Amanti 2005), they also bring what might be called “funds of feeling,” a closely connected and equally unnoticed form of knowledge and action. In the academic program that is the focus of this volume, young people of color do not separate thinking from feeling, knowing from doing. In this way, they enact affective agency, challenging racializing processes and advancing social justice for themselves, their peers, their families, and their communities.

The SKILLS Program

The School Kids Investigating Language in Life and Society (SKILLS) program began in 2010 based on a simple observation: Students in our undergraduate classes often experienced their initial encounters with academic discussions of language, race, and learning as transformative, yet they also frequently lamented that they had never been exposed to these issues in their previous schooling. The SKILLS program was established at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2010; in its first full year, SKILLS team members developed and taught a twenty-week college-level curriculum on language in social life to a classroom of fifteen high school students. Since that time the program has created partnerships with sixteen sites at ten schools

and community organizations in six municipalities in the Santa Barbara area (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee 2015).

SKILLS has been implemented in a wide range of learning settings, including as part of a required class in U.S. history in a continuation high school; as a stand-alone social science elective in a rural high school; as a fifth-grade social studies class in a bilingual immersion school; through in-school, after-school, weekend, and summer academic preparation programs such as Upward Bound and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) on the UCSB campus and at various urban and suburban high schools; and as an optional enrichment opportunity in youth-serving community organizations. SKILLS has been taught in English, Spanish, and bilingually and has served over 800 young people. Although the majority of program participants have been Latinx high school students who are the first generation in their families to be college-bound, SKILLS has reached children, teenagers, and young adults ranging from kindergarten to community college. In addition to Latinxs, these young people include Native Americans, the children of indigenous Mexican immigrants, and smaller numbers of African American, Asian American, and white youth. Whenever possible, students receive college credit at no cost for their participation in the program, thanks to partnerships with a local community college.

Inevitably, some aspects of the curriculum have shifted over time, but the SKILLS program has maintained its original goal of avoiding a “school-as-usual” approach: There are no tests, no quizzes, no lectures or traditional homework. Youth participants are instead guided to explore issues of language, power, race, and identity in their own lives and communities through open-ended discussions, hands-on activities, critical reflections, and original research, creative projects, and community action. The curriculum in each classroom is developed and taught by one, two, or three graduate student teaching fellows, supported by undergraduate mentors—themselves often first-generation college students—who act as teaching assistants in the classroom and who work with the youth participants one-on-one and in small groups. The mentors also conduct extremely popular interactive workshops and panels on all aspects of college life. The teaching team often benefits from the pedagogical expertise of a partner teacher who already knows the SKILLS students well; some teachers eagerly participate in all aspects of the program, while others prefer to observe from the sidelines or to withdraw altogether, and a few actively challenge the SKILLS curriculum and the UCSB team’s approach. (In the sites that are discussed in this volume, all partner teachers were supportive of the SKILLS program.)

The SKILLS curricula vary from year to year and from site to site based on the interests of students, the recommendations of partner teachers, and the research specializations of the teaching team. The original curriculum consisted of four units of increasingly broad scope, although this general structure is adapted to meet the needs of the teaching fellows in each iteration of the program: language in the peer group (e.g., slang, Spanglish), language in the family (e.g., family language policy, intergenerational language use), language in the community (e.g., varieties of

English and Spanish, language shift), and language in the world (e.g., online language use, linguistic racism). At the beginning of the five-month-long program, youth participants come to UCSB to meet their colleagues at other sites, to receive mentoring regarding college, and to explore the university campus through visits to classes, dorms, and dining halls. Students return to UCSB at the end of the program to share their work within SKILLS with the campus community at a day-long SKILLS Day conference with hundreds of attendees; they also present the results of their work to family members and the general public through bilingual Family Night events at their schools and community organizations and at SKILLS Night events at local public libraries. For most SKILLS participants, this is their first time speaking in public as well as their first time presenting themselves as knowledgeable authorities to an adult audience. This experience is often transformative, as young people's powerful presentations and the deeply engaged audience response help them fully appreciate their own agency as linguistic and cultural experts and initiators of social change.

While social aspects of language are addressed in all implementations of the program, the curriculum varies considerably depending on the expertise of members of the teaching team. Teaching fellows have been recruited from numerous departments at UCSB, including Anthropology, Chicana and Chicano Studies, Comparative Literature, Education, Latin American and Iberian Studies, Linguistics, Sociology, and Spanish and Portuguese. Overarching course themes or foci in specific classrooms have included language and race; language, gender, and sexuality; language and music; indigenous language preservation and revitalization; language and media; family language policy; and translation and interpreting. As the teaching team has expanded and as we have witnessed the potential impact of SKILLS in the lives of racialized students, the program's conceptualization of language and society has likewise expanded to include a wide scope of interdisciplinary topics, and its focus on social justice, race and racism, and activism has become more explicit. Curricula, activities, and team research on the program are made available to other researchers and educators as well as the general public through the SKILLS website (skills.ucsb.edu).

In 2013–14, the SKILLS program received special funding from UCSB's Graduate Division through the interdisciplinary Crossroads Initiative. This funding enabled us to offer a year-long interdisciplinary graduate seminar, *The Politics of Race and Language in Learning Contexts*, as well as a related large undergraduate general education class, *Language, Power, and Learning*, that was cross-listed in all three of our departments. Funding was also provided to support five Crossroads graduate teaching fellows, who served as teaching assistants in the undergraduate class in the fall academic quarter and as teaching fellows in the SKILLS program in winter and spring. In addition, seventeen graduate students from seven departments enrolled in the Crossroads seminar; fifteen continued with the seminar in winter quarter and thirteen enrolled for all three quarters. An international Fulbright Scholar also attended the fall sessions. During the Crossroads seminar, participants explored issues of language, race, and inequality in education and shared their disciplinary

and personal perspectives. All graduate students also created learning activities for the SKILLS program and whenever possible implemented these activities with youth at one of the three 2013–14 partner sites: two academic preparation classes at two different high schools and a youth organization.

Each graduate student also carried out original research on some aspect of the SKILLS program; almost all of these studies are included in the present volume. Some projects examined specific learning activities (Lateef-Jan; Zarate), while others documented particularly significant moments within the SKILLS program (Carruba-Rogel; Corella; Lopez) or emergent themes and issues that developed in individual classrooms over the course of the program (Aragón; Hirsch). Other research focused on various members of the teaching team (Love-Nichols; Mainz) or reflected on the experiences of graduate students within the collaboration, whether as Crossroads students or as SKILLS teaching fellows (Bax & Ferrada; Rys).

As several of the chapters in this volume discuss, this large and largely experimental interdisciplinary collaboration did not always run smoothly. There were significant conflicts in the Crossroads seminar and in some individual partner sites as people with very different life experiences, assumptions, expectations, and goals came together to work, learn, and teach. These struggles, though painful at the time, have helped us to rethink various aspects of the SKILLS program and how we can best prepare and support all participants; we believe that the program is stronger and more effective as a result of these challenges.

Above all, the SKILLS program rejects traditional conceptualizations of what can be taught and learned in K–12 classrooms, by whom, and how, and reimagines taken-for-granted educational arrangements by asking *What counts as knowledge?*, *Who counts as a knowledge producer?*, and *What counts as knowledge production?* With regard to the first question, many of the issues we address in SKILLS curricula are intimately familiar to racialized youth based on their own lived experience, but these issues are rarely broached in students' regular classrooms. By bringing these topics into learning spaces, SKILLS provides an academic reframing and new conceptual tool kit for youth to examine and critically reflect on language in relation to race, power, identity, and community. Comments like "I never had a word for that" or "I've never talked about this before" are common student reactions to SKILLS learning activities.

But the goal of the program is not merely to equip SKILLS participants with academic vocabulary or even to instill in them a body of academic knowledge. As the second question above implies, far more important is the role of youth as producers rather than simply consumers of knowledge (Bucholtz et al. 2014). Young people of color already bring a great deal of knowledge and insight into SKILLS both as innovative linguistic and cultural experts and as agents of social change—as speakers of Chicana English, Chicana Spanish, Spanglish, and other languages and varieties; as participants in youth culture as well as the cultures of their families and communities; as racialized individuals and groups making their way in a racist society. Youth in the program create valuable new knowledge by combining their existing expertise with the insights they develop through their encounters with the

SKILLS material. Because our model of teaching and learning is multidirectional and nonhierarchical, we learn at least as much from the SKILLS youth participants as they do from us (Lee & Bucholtz 2015).

Finally, our answer to the third question above has changed considerably over time. Originally, SKILLS emphasized research as the basis of youth knowledge production within the program, including audio documentation of students' own linguistic practices with their friends such as slang and translanguaging, linguistic oral histories of family members, and ethnographic studies of language use in local communities of practice, from surfers to firefighters to restaurant workers. However, the range of research activities quickly expanded to include additional topics, such as linguistic stereotypes in animated film and sexist microaggressions in everyday life. At the same time, we began to interrogate our focus on research as a privileged form of knowledge production. Teaching fellows led the way in guiding students to bring a critical lens and a social justice angle to their work within the program and to communicate through creative expression and community-based action as well as academic language. We began to refer to the SKILLS participants as "student researcher-activists" to capture their multiple roles and contributions within the program (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee forthcoming).

Our experiences in partnership with youth of color over the years have led us to formulate a set of guiding principles for the work we are trying to do. These principles—sociolinguistic justice, linguistic and cultural sustenance, and accompaniment—stem directly from what we have learned within the SKILLS program and are also shaped by the ideas of other scholars who share our concern with educational and social justice for racialized youth.

The Guiding Principles of SKILLS

The creation of the SKILLS program has been organic and collaborative, guided not by top-down pedagogical or social theories but by our own and others' experiences as educators seeking to support young people of color in their educational trajectories. The principles we outline here emerged from our work with youth and have continued to evolve as our experiences give us new insights into how best to do that work.

The first of these principles, sociolinguistic justice, is central to the SKILLS program's goal of supporting young people as they stand against policies, practices, and ideologies that deny them linguistic self-determination. The elements of sociolinguistic justice that we have identified are as follows (Bucholtz et al. 2014; Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee 2016):

- societal awareness and appreciation of linguistic diversity and variation,
- the legitimation of all community languages and varieties for use across social spheres,
- access to knowledge of and about one's own linguistic heritage and

- repertoire as well as of sociopolitically powerful languages and varieties,
- acknowledgment of all language users as linguistic experts, and
- critical evaluation of how language is used to reproduce inequality and oppression.

In the SKILLS programs we strive to advance all of these goals in different ways, from supporting students' use of their full linguistic repertoires in the classroom to exploring academic research and critical perspectives on language to creating opportunities for youth to share and create their own linguistic and cultural knowledge.

Our specific focus on a linguistic form of social justice originates in our recognition of the paramount importance of language in identity, culture, and community. For young people of color, the sense of selfhood and of familial and community belonging that is bound up with language is constantly under assault from dominant ideologies that racialize, marginalize, and devalue sociopolitically subordinated ways of speaking (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee forthcoming). Thus, language is a crucial form of cultural sustenance for young people. Our thinking about this issue is stimulated by recent calls to create pedagogies that are not only culturally relevant (Ladson-Billings 1995) but also culturally sustaining (Paris 2012; Paris & Alim 2014, 2017). As our experiences within the SKILLS program have shown us, educators must work to sustain young people's languages and cultures in learning settings because language and culture in turn sustain young people (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee 2017).

A final principle that guides our work is accompaniment, a form of collective action in which people with different life experiences and forms of expertise come together for a time to negotiate collaborative relationships that foster social change (Tomlinson & Lipsitz 2013). This principle stems from our unease with the neoliberal view that the purpose of social justice work with young people is youth empowerment (Bucholtz, Casillas, & Lee 2016; Kwon 2013). The notion of empowerment carries with it deeply problematic associations that reproduce rather than challenge social inequality by framing scholars, educators, and activists as benevolent agents of uplift and young people as hapless victims at worst, as self-sufficient bootstrappers at best. But in the SKILLS program socially transformative learning does not reside with only one person or role, and young people are well equipped with the agency to speak and act for themselves. The goal of SKILLS is simply to provide resources—from texts to tools to information to a forum for discussion and exploration—in order to enable youth to take action for social change in the way that means the most to them personally.

These three principles—sociolinguistic justice, sustenance, and accompaniment—help us reflect on our work within the SKILLS program and keep us humble in assessing its effects. Our steps toward sociolinguistic justice are inevitably smaller than we would like and sometimes frustratingly slow. Our efforts to sustain the languages and cultures of the young people in the SKILLS program do not always turn out as hoped. And although it would be tempting to imagine that our collaborations with youth are always transformative in a deep and lasting way,

accompaniment always comes with temporal limits, and the uncomfortable truth is that our brief time with these student researchers–activists often benefits our lives more than we benefit theirs.

Our commitment to these principles has also helped us to understand the central role of affect in our work with youth and has enabled us to see how even as we try to move beyond rationalist discourses within the SKILLS program, we sometimes unintentionally reproduce them. At the same time, we also recognize that the impact of our acts of accompaniment in pursuit of sociolinguistic justice and cultural and linguistic sustenance may not always be immediately visible. As a number of chapters in this volume suggest, even singular moments—from a first encounter with an instance of racist discourse to publicly claiming the right to one’s own language—can have enduring effects.

Overview of the Volume

Feeling It is organized into three sections. [Part 1](#) considers the affective experiences and perspectives of faculty and graduate students involved in the SKILLS program in a variety of educational encounters. [Part 2](#) examines how ideologies of race and language are affectively co-constituted in the everyday experiences of students of color both in and beyond the classroom. [Part 3](#) investigates the variety of ways that Latinx youth use their affective agency to challenge ideological systems and take up positions of expertise in educational settings. Throughout the volume, the authors contemplate the intimate relationship between language, race, and affect and its role in the workings of structural power as well as individual and collective agency.

The chapters in [Part 1](#) set the stage for the volume as a whole by offering behind-the-scenes accounts of how the UCSB team members navigated their affective hopes and struggles in relation to SKILLS. [Chapter 2](#) opens this section with an exploration of the complex and difficult emotions that arose during the year-long interdisciplinary Crossroads graduate seminar. Rachel Rys examines how this interdisciplinary space became fraught with tension, anxiety, and pain for many seminar participants as racial and disciplinary fissures formed in the first weeks of the course. Her chapter explores how ideologies of the role of affect in education shaped the seminar and how it was experienced by participants. Rys recounts a pivotal incident that took place early in the seminar, in which a graduate student expressed skepticism regarding the ongoing relevance of colonization for discussions of race and language, and in response several class members voiced strong and affectively layered disagreement. Drawing on Sara Ahmed’s (2004) resonant phrase *just emotions*, Rys identifies two competing ideologies of “just emotions”: *just* in the dismissive sense of ‘merely’ or ‘only’, and *just* in the sociopolitical sense of ‘equitable’ or ‘righteous’.

Through an analysis of her interviews with graduate students in the class, Rys shows the dominance of the first ideology in the discourse of seminar participants, who—despite explicitly valorizing affect in the abstract—nonetheless framed

emotion as individual, ahistorical, and hence irrelevant to and disruptive of the educational process. She notes that by erasing the historical and political context of race and gender inequity, this ideology positions women and people of color as “oversensitive,” “out of control,” and even oppressive when they respond affectively to systemic oppression. Pointing to the alternative ideology of “just emotions” as affects that are tied to structural equity, Rys concludes by arguing that scholars, educators, and students who seek to advance social justice must also enact affective justice in the classroom. Although her chapter revisits an especially painful moment in the history of the SKILLS team’s collaborative work together, it is a necessary reminder of the often stark yet unacknowledged differences that may divide us from one another, as well as the difficulties many of us face in trying to move from a theoretical and political commitment to emotion to—as Rys puts it—“feeling and fighting for justice” in our own everyday lives.

[Chapter 3](#) shifts the focus to the anticipatory affects of the graduate teaching fellows in the SKILLS program as they looked ahead to working with youth on issues of race and language. Elizabeth Mainz discusses how the diverse personal histories, social relationships, and affective experiences of the five teaching fellows informed their language beliefs, and how they reflected on these beliefs in interviews with Mainz as they began to teach. Mainz draws a valuable distinction between language ideologies, which are constructed and circulated at the societal level, and individually created and held language beliefs, which are shaped not only by larger language ideologies but also by individuals’ histories of social encounter. She uses the SKILLS program’s guiding metaphor of accompaniment to discuss her interviewees’ beliefs and goals as teachers as well as her own research process.

Critically reflecting on her initial use of traditional social science methods and concepts in designing and carrying out her study, Mainz notes that social justice-centered research, like social justice-centered teaching, cannot be rigidly controlled but should instead be understood as a fluid interaction among participants. She suggests that at its best, such research and teaching are forms of improvisational artistic and hence affective creation. A musician herself, Mainz identifies five language-related “motifs” that shape the overarching theme of accompaniment across the interviews: home and family, agency, political awareness and action, power and education, and expression. Although these motifs can be found in more than one interview, each interviewee develops a particular motif at length in their individual discussion. As a way of achieving accompaniment in her research, Mainz presents each speaker’s words at length and gives the interviewees the final word at each step in her analysis. In a final “coda,” she observes that through accompaniment both researchers and educators gain ideas, experiences, and feelings that continue to shape their language beliefs and thereby advance the collaborative work of sociolinguistic justice.

[Chapter 4](#) is coauthored by two of the graduate teaching fellows, Anna Bax and Juan Sebastian Ferrada, who worked as a team in a challenging nontraditional context, an after-school youth center. Whereas the other SKILLS sites were based in conventional educational settings, the Teen Center was institutionally and

ideologically separate from school. Created as a safe space for low-income Latinx youth from ages 7 to 18, it enabled young people to experience freedom and exercise agency to a much greater extent than in their lives as students. Bax and Ferrada point out that despite the SKILLS program's goal of offering youth an alternative to "school as usual," its educational framing and structure fit uneasily with the openness and flexibility of the Teen Center, where young people could come and go at will, engaging in activities of their own choosing. In addition, as the authors note, it is often difficult for academics to adjust our ways of speaking in order to reach younger audiences.

Bax and Ferrada reflexively analyze how young people at the Center agentively—and affectively—resisted the school-oriented nature of the SKILLS program by constructing racialized and linguistic difference between themselves and the graduate students, a project that was crystallized in one girl's declaration that one of the graduate students "sounds white and boring." Interweaving the daily reports that they and the undergraduate mentors wrote at the time with their own later critical reflections on their efforts to engage youth, Bax and Ferrada retrace key moments of friction during their sessions at the Center. This is a brave chapter: Rarely do educators and researchers fully acknowledge the painful stumbling blocks we encounter with such clear-eyed honesty and astute analysis (to be sure, we as the program directors are also well aware of the authors' many pedagogical successes, which they do not recount here). In their conclusion, Bax and Ferrada reflect on how their affective encounters with young people can help adults who seek to connect with youth through the critical analysis of race and language.

While the chapters in [Part 1](#) valuably illuminate both the potential and the limits of social justice efforts, those in [Part 2](#) turn attention to the ideological ground on which the education of Latinx youth plays out, and how these ideologies, simultaneously racial and linguistic, give rise to a range of affective positionings of and toward racialized young people within classrooms and other spaces.

In [Chapter 5](#), Jessica Love-Nichols discusses the raciolinguistic ideologies of three SKILLS partner teachers, concentrating in particular on the ideology of appropriateness, which has at least superficially replaced the ideology of deficit as the dominant discourse surrounding the education of minoritized language users (Flores & Rosa 2015). Love-Nichols notes, however, that the ideology of appropriateness still relies on deficit thinking and negative affects, with the result that even educators with a strong commitment to their students' well-being may reproduce harmful ideologies in the classroom. Based on interviews that she conducted with the SKILLS partner teachers before the program began, Love-Nichols examines two subideologies that contribute to the ideology of appropriateness: the ideology of formality and the ideology of worth. The first privileges "standard" English and academic language as "professional" and therefore more suited to the classroom setting than minoritized languages or varieties. The second imbues "standard" English with enhanced value that is then extended to speakers of this variety, so that speakers of other varieties are viewed as unintelligent or unworthy to be heard. Both ideologies position language form rather

than the language user as the central issue, thereby erasing the reality that racialized speakers experience systemic racism and inequality regardless of the form of language that they use.

Love-Nichols approaches her analysis both critically and sensitively. She insightfully notes the ways in which the partner teachers devalued the linguistic practices of their Latinx students, but she also acknowledges that as a former teacher, she herself has reproduced the ideology of appropriateness in her own classroom, motivated by emotions of care and concern for her students. Yet she also finds some hopeful signs in her data: The more experience a teacher had with the SKILLS program, the more likely they were to reject this ideology and embrace alternative affects. Love-Nichols concludes that programs like SKILLS, which are centrally concerned with youth, need to expand to include more opportunities for teachers to explore and engage with the counterhegemonic ideas on which such programs are based.

Building on [Chapter 5](#), [Chapter 6](#) examines how a different but equally potent ideology, the racial ideology of colorblindness, reinforces hegemonic whiteness in the classroom. Meghan Corella investigates the use of colorblind strategies by white students and their white teacher to deracialize mock language as a form of racialized humor. She focuses on a classroom that differed from most other SKILLS partner sites in that it was a general social science class that included a majority of white students as well as smaller numbers of Latinx and mixed-heritage students; in addition, the curriculum was taught by a high school teacher supported by undergraduate mentors, rather than a graduate teaching team. The chapter considers in depth a class discussion of mock language led by one of the undergraduate mentors, a woman of color. Corella shows that in this context the deployment of what she calls “white laughter”—that is, laughter that upholds rather than disrupts white supremacy—resulted in an affective order in which the perspectives of students of color as well as an educator of color were marginalized and devalued.

Corella analyzes students’ white laughter in response to the examples of mock language-based humor presented by the mentor leading the discussion. She points out how white laughter and discourse worked together both to avoid acknowledging race and racism and to diminish their central role in such humor. Although some students of color aligned with the mentor’s attention to racism, white students pushed back, resisting the discourse of “offensive” racialized humor with a framing of such humor as “just funny” (a phrase that resonates with the dismissal of “just emotions” discussed by Rys in [Chapter 2](#)). Corella concludes that the strategies of colorblindness to which white laughter contributes constitute the classroom as a white public space (Hill 1999; Page & Thomas 1994). The chapter thus interrogates the simplistic view of laughter—or indeed, of any particular affective expression—in classrooms as inherently transformative or pedagogically valuable. Further, it demonstrates the persistence of the hegemony of whiteness even, and perhaps especially, within multiracial classrooms.

[Chapter 7](#) shifts analytic attention from the deracialization to the racialization of language in the lives of Latinx youth. Adanari Zarate considers how Latinx bodies

are policed in everyday life based on ideological expectations regarding how perceived race and language should align. Drawing together Jonathan Rosa's (forthcoming) work on raciolinguistic enregisterment, the human rights issue of racial profiling, and the closely related sociolinguistic phenomenon of linguistic profiling (Baugh 2003), Zarate offers the concept of raciolinguistic profiling as an ideological process that maps language onto racialized bodies. Recognizing raciolinguistic profiling as a form of everyday microaggression that Latinxs confront and affectively manage, she uses this concept to analyze three SKILLS students' narratives of being racially interpellated in their workplaces through the use of language.

Zarate begins her analysis by critically reflecting on her own experiences of being racially and linguistically policed as a light-skinned Chicana. She explores the affective complexities of this racial positionality, from the structural benefits of colorism to her experience of not being recognized as a speaker of Spanish. She then considers narratives of raciolinguistic profiling shared by three young Latino men in two different SKILLS classrooms. In each case, these young men were positioned in their workplaces as speakers of Spanish rather than as speakers of English. The narratives demonstrate the students' impressive affective agency and linguistic ingenuity in challenging these microaggressions in a variety of ways, both in the moment and through their projects and presentations within the SKILLS program. Zarate argues that their agency enabled these young Latinos to politicize and bring to public awareness these episodes of racism, which they could have suppressed as humiliating personal experiences. The value of programs like SKILLS, she concludes, is to facilitate meaningful conversations about how individuals affectively experience and interrogate these systemic racializing processes. As a crucial component of such work, Zarate herself has played a crucial role in bringing issues of race and racism more explicitly and centrally into the SKILLS curriculum.

[Chapter 8](#) further broadens the contextual scope of analysis by considering family members' affectively laden ideological understandings of the language of young bilinguals. Zuleyma Nayeli Carruba-Rogel analyzes a *Noche de Familia* ('Family Night') event that she and her co-educator organized at the high school where they taught in the SKILLS program. She finds that even in this intentionally inclusive bilingual event, parents' complex ideologies of Spanish and English sometimes supported and at other times undermined the linguistic practices of youth.

Carruba-Rogel discusses how she emotionally and intellectually accompanied her students through the shared process of understanding their bilingual worlds in new ways within SKILLS. The class's reframing of Latinx linguistic practices like receptive bilingualism and translanguaging as bilingual abilities rather than as linguistic deficits was surprising, sometimes challenging, and potentially transformative—not only for her students but also for Carruba-Rogel herself, whose own life experiences as a bilingual Latina in some ways paralleled those of her students. Eager to share her students' learning experiences with their families, Carruba-Rogel invited their mostly Spanish-speaking parents to the special bilingual *Noche de Familia* event, where students shared their own linguistic autobiographies

as well as family members' linguistic oral histories in English, Spanish, and Spanglish. In the audience responses afterward, many parents expressed pride in their children and appreciation of the SKILLS program, but Carruba-Rogel also noted three dominant themes that sometimes introduced more negative affects toward their children' language abilities: the celebration of Spanish language maintenance, the importance of language brokers, and the positioning of widespread youth linguistic practices such as Spanglish within deficit ideologies. Thus, some aspects of bilingual youth linguistic practices were valorized by these comments, while other aspects were overlooked or devalued; consequently, parental affects at times fostered and at other times constrained young people's own affects toward their bilingualism. Carruba-Rogel concludes that in order to have the greatest impact, programs such as SKILLS must be more inclusive of families, creating opportunities for youth and their parents to have meaningful conversations about the effects (and affects) of language ideologies in their lives.

Whereas the chapters in [Part 2](#) collectively raise vital issues of how affectively rooted ideological work is done on and through language, [Part 3](#) of *Feeling It* extends this discussion by considering how young people's affective agency enables them to shape and make sense of their racialized educational experiences as expert language users. The chapters in this final section thus place racialized youth at the center of theory and analysis and provide powerful examples of youth as affective agents, linguistic and cultural experts, and critical producers of knowledge and social action.

[Chapter 9](#) shares with [Chapter 8](#) a concern with the dynamics of bilingual and multilingual families. Tijana Hirsch, one of the SKILLS teaching fellows, investigates how the students in her classroom—the vast majority of whom were of Latinx heritage—took up the concept of family language policy to reflect on and shape the role of language in their current and future lives. The starting point for Hirsch's examination of this issue is a poignant discussion of her own family language policy as a multilingual mother living in the hegemonically monolingual United States. She goes on to describe her discovery of a Spanish-versus-English linguistic divide in her Latinx students' linguistic autobiographies and discusses how she guided students to bridge this divide by formulating their own future family language policies, both collectively and individually, in order to promote bilingualism for their children and grandchildren.

Through their group projects on family language policy, Hirsch's students negotiated an overall statement or message and then engaged with that statement in a set of individually crafted posters. Her analysis demonstrates that different groups took up the idea of family language policy in different ways based on the policies in their own homes, which had had differential effects on their linguistic identities and hence on their affective agendas with regard to language in their future families. Although all of Hirsch's Latinx students could be viewed as bilingual from the standpoint of linguistics, she found that some of the young people in her classroom identified as English-dominant and others as Spanish-dominant. As Hirsch demonstrates in her analysis, the first group focused its family language policies on

the effect of language shift on family ties, the issue of most immediate affective concern to them, while the second called attention to the sociopolitical aspects of language and race, which was more affectively urgent in the lives of these youth. In her conclusion, Hirsch emphasizes the importance of providing classroom space for students to discuss their hoped-for linguistic future alongside their past and present, so that they can make deliberate agentic choices about family language policy for themselves and their children.

Developing the theme of youth meaning-making around language in their families and communities, [Chapter 10](#) considers how classrooms can create space for affective encounters among bilingual Latinx youth who act as language brokers in familial and public spaces. Audrey Lopez examines students' sometimes conflicted and contradictory feelings about language brokering and how through linguistic and embodied action they negotiated these complex feelings with their peers. In a rich analysis of students' on-record and off-record comments as well as their embodied communication through facial expression, posture, gesture, and eye gaze, Lopez traces the unfolding interaction through which students positioned themselves as affective agents by agreeing and disagreeing, forging alliances, and representing the affective experience of doing brokering work.

Concentrating her analysis on a discussion of youth interpreting and translating activities that spanned two class periods, Lopez examines the contributions of two Latina students in particular: one who expressed pride and happiness in her work as a formally recognized interpreter in the public school system, and another who expressed anxiety and stress in her work as an informal interpreter and translator in helping her family with important institutional paperwork. The drama that unfolds reveals the high affective stakes involved in classroom discussions of language; Lopez's analysis makes clear that simplistic feel-good rhetoric is inadequate to the task of understanding how Latinx youth navigate their bilingual worlds. In a powerful epilogue, Lopez describes how one of the students in the interaction under analysis so valued her Spanish-language abilities that when she was selected as a commencement speaker she ended up successfully challenging the school's decades-old requirement that commencement speeches must be given in English only. Reflecting on both the classroom discussion and its resonances throughout the school and beyond, Lopez argues that educators must be attuned to the dynamics of peer discussions in order to understand the complexity of their affective experiences and how these can ultimately lead to social change.

[Chapter 11](#) builds on [Chapter 10](#) by considering bilingual students' affective engagement with the broad concept of translation, including the familiar youth practice of language brokering but also extending to a fundamental question for Latinx youth: how and whether languages can be made to mean "the same thing" and when and why languages—and even varieties of the same language—are construed as nonequivalent. Katie Lateef-Jan describes a learning activity she developed and led in one SKILLS classroom around the theme of translation, in which students explored this topic through written reflections and discussion of the bilingual poetry and prose of Chicana feminist theorist Gloria Anzaldúa, which

offers a potent political statement about the limits of translation for bilingual Latinxs.

Lateef-Jan emphasizes the importance of freewriting, a method she borrows from composition pedagogy, as a resource for enabling students to engage affectively with their own thoughts and ideas about language. Because of the process of sense-making that is inherent to this writing practice, she characterizes freewriting as a form of translation. In her analysis of student writings, Lateef-Jan identifies multiple interrelated themes, including the incommensurability between English and Spanish, the affective dimension of translation, the question of linguistic identity for bilingual Latinxs, and the ideological gap between the Chicano Spanish of the peer group and the prestige variety taught in students' Spanish classes at school. Given the intimacy of both Spanish and English in these young people's lives, Lateef-Jan, much like Lopez in [Chapter 10](#), finds that translation is a deeply personal and profoundly affective issue for bilingual Latinx youth, giving rise to a wide variety of emotional responses. Hence, some students' reflections aligned with hegemonic ideologies while others offered resistant or transformative perspectives, but all were deeply engaged with the question of translation and its role in their lives. In light of these moving personal responses, Lateef-Jan calls for the integration of the full range of youth translation practices in schools and classrooms as a way of validating and nurturing the expertise of bilingual youth.

Finally, [Chapter 12](#) investigates the process through which young Latinxs in the SKILLS program expanded their linguistic repertoires as they took up academic language as a tool for expression and reflection. María José Aragón focuses on how, in one classroom, students embraced the concept of the community of practice (Lave & Wenger 1991) to theorize their lived experience of Latinx language and culture as well as to evaluate others' intellectual contributions. Earlier chapters demonstrate the damaging effects of privileging the language of school over the language that young people bring to school, an approach that imposes a deficit perspective on youth linguistic practices. Aragón instead considers a situation in which academic language is integrated with affectively rich everyday language in the hybrid learning space of the SKILLS classroom.

Aragón begins her chapter by critically examining the theoretically and politically problematic notion of academic language in the education of minoritized speakers and then examines how a concept that is relevant to students' lives can support rather than undermine their linguistic development. She traces the circulation of "community of practice" as a key concept in students' discourse over several months, from its initial introduction as part of a classroom exploration of the concept to its incorporation in students' discussions as a shared and familiar linguistic resource. Aragón launches her analysis by demonstrating how in their first encounter with the term, students and instructors jointly constructed a shared understanding of *community of practice* by embedding it within affectively resonant colloquial language and translanguaging practices. She goes on to demonstrate that as the program progressed, students took up the term as their own to make sense of their experiences as transnational bilingual Latinxs. By the end of the course,

students were using the term as part of their linguistic repertoires to critically evaluate the research of their peers at other SKILLS partner schools during presentations at SKILLS Day. Aragón's nuanced analysis shows that through the SKILLS program, youth gain new resources for critically, analytically, and affectively engaging with the world as well as contributing to academic knowledge.

In a brief afterword, the three of us, as co-editors, reflect on our own affective responses to these deeply insightful chapters and the next steps they direct us to take as interdisciplinary researchers and educators in our efforts to advance linguistic, educational, and racial justice for Latinx youth.

Research as Linguistic Activism

Given our political commitments, we view *Feeling It* not simply as a research report on sociolinguistic justice but also as an enactment of linguistic activism in its own right (cf. Charity Hudley 2013; Combs & Penfield 2012; Flores & Chaparro 2017; Mallinson 2017). Our direct action to support sociolinguistic justice through this volume takes three forms. First, all royalties from the sale of the book will go directly to the support of the SKILLS program.

Second, throughout *Feeling It*, we use the form *Latinx* to designate people of Latin American descent regardless of gender identity, and *Chicanx* specifically for Mexican-heritage people. This form has rapidly gained ground recently over other supposedly gender-neutral forms such as *Latina/o* (or *Latino/a*), which continue to perpetuate patriarchy and the gender binary. When we refer to specific individuals whom we know to be female-identified or male-identified, we use *Latina(s)/Chicana(s)* or *Latino(s)/Chicano(s)*, respectively. We leave these forms unaltered when they appear as part of official names (e.g., the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies). (For a more detailed discussion of *Latinx*, see deOnís 2017.)

Second, a number of contributors to this volume make linguistic choices in their chapters that push back against U.S. racial, linguistic, and class-based hierarchies regarding the Spanish language. Their linguistic strategies disrupt the rarely questioned expectations of formal academic writing. For example, some authors have chosen not to translate some or all of the Spanish-language text that appears in their chapters. This decision stems from a variety of motivations. To begin with, for many bilinguals such translations are unnecessary and disruptive of the reading experience. In addition, treating Spanish and English as distinctive, sharply bounded codes promotes a rigid ideology of languages that does not correspond to the lived reality of translanguaging for many bilinguals (Otheguy, García, & Reid 2015). Moreover, contesting the ubiquitous imperative to defer to English monolinguals is a seemingly small yet deeply significant act of resistance to the racializing logic of language politics in the United States. A powerful passage from Gloria Anzaldúa's celebrated essay "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," which is quoted by Lateef-Jan in [Chapter 11](#) of this volume and also informs several other chapters, concisely explains

the issue:

Until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate, while I still have to speak English or Spanish when I would rather speak Spanglish, and as long as I have to accommodate English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate.

(1987: 39–40)

For similar reasons, most authors have chosen not to mark Spanish-language text in italics, as is conventional in most formal writing. As a visual index of linguistic difference, the use of italicized Spanish in U.S.-based writing ratifies English as normative and Spanish as marked and even “foreign.” Once again, this practice positions readers as English monolinguals and marginalizes Spanish and its speakers.

However, not all authors choose to omit translations, and not all view the use of italics as inherently problematic; individual contributors have made their own thoughtful and well-reasoned decisions regarding these complex matters. We refer readers interested in learning more about such issues to Anzaldúa’s (1987) essay as well as to Dolores Inés Casillas (2014: xiii–xiv), Allison Fagan (2016), and Sonia Saldívar-Hull (2000). We also note that many chapters within this volume explore the racial politics of Spanish in the United States and provide useful references for additional reading.

Conclusion

This volume aims to issue a challenge to traditional schooling, which enforces an ideological hierarchy of cognitive processes that devalues affect and valorizes forms of knowledge purportedly produced by an idealized “pure” reason separate from embodied, emotional experience. As we have argued in this introduction and as the contributors demonstrate in various ways in the chapters that follow, this ideology may be especially harmful to students of color by devaluing ways of knowing that are necessary to understanding racialized experience.

When we began the collaboration that culminated in this volume, we did not anticipate that affect would be at its center. Instead, we discovered the vital theoretical, pedagogical, and political importance of affect only over time, as we interacted with young people and with one another. When we created the SKILLS academic program that is the focus of *Feeling It*, we set out to avoid, as much as possible, the trappings of “school as usual.” To that end, the program explores nontraditional topics with youth of color from both intellectual and experiential perspectives, it recognizes them as experts, knowledge producers, and agents of social change around issues of language, power, race, and identity, and it guides them to share their discoveries and insights and to use these to work toward social and especially sociolinguistic justice. And in the process, the program attempts to create learning spaces where emotions can be expressed, ideologies confronted, and change enacted.

Our point is not to argue that scholars and educators should replace thinking with feeling. As Megan Boler writes, “A pedagogy that recognizes emotions as central to the domains of cognition and morality need not preclude intellectual rigor or critical inquiry” (1999: 110). Rather, we advocate incorporating affect into learning experiences as a necessary foundation for effective critique and transformation. To be sure, to call for the greater use of affect as a scholarly and pedagogical tool is not without dangers. In scholarship, intellectual argumentation continues to be the coin of the realm, and authors who veer too sharply from discursive norms may suffer in their professional advancement. The pedagogical risks are even greater. Educators may be tempted to spark strong emotional responses from students through the use of sensationalistic or painful material, without recognizing that such strategies may reenact historical racial trauma (Alvarez, Milner, & Delale-O’Connor 2016). Or classroom discussions of race and racism may devolve into outlets for white students (and teachers) to air their personal feelings of racial anguish or ambivalence, thus marginalizing the experiences of members of racialized groups, who are by definition those most affected by the racial system. Thus, educators who seek to make space for affect in their classrooms must exercise great care and attentiveness to the risks involved.

But affect, as embodied, relational encounter with the world through thinking, feeling, and perceiving, is too socially and politically important to be relegated to the margins of teaching and learning. Affect enables youth and adults to come together in educational settings as whole human beings with specific subject positions and life experiences. Affect is also the basis of social justice, as other scholars have suggested:

Though the presence or absence of emotions does not guarantee justice or injustice, emotion is still a significant component in the production or prevention of greater justice. Deeply entrenched social norms create and sustain the structures that privilege or oppress—norms which are attended by significant emotional response. Challenging those social norms means changing our emotional relation to them; that is, seeing the consequences of these norms as either gain or loss.

(Zembylas & McGlynn 2012: 43)

As the following chapters demonstrate from a variety of perspectives, this recognition—that the agency that drives social change is rooted in affect—is a necessary starting point for educators and researchers seeking social justice for racialized youth.

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