UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

“Race”, history, and the African Caribbean diaspora: identity and representation in Bristol, England

Donna Banks

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UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Linguistics, Literary, & Cultural Studies

"Race", history, and the African Caribbean diaspora:

identity and representation in Bristol, England

Donna Banks

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Martin Renes, Maria Grau Perejoan, and Isabel Alonso Breto Isabel for their guidance, encouragement, and assistance throughout the writing of this dissertation.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Michele Curits without whom this dissertation would not exist. She granted me an interview in 2017 and that interview set me on a path to this dissertation. While in Bristol, England, I met others whose assistance contributed to this final product, specifically Dr Joanna Burch-Brown, Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Bristol who facilitated my access to the university's library and Hannah Lowery, Archivist in Special Collections at the university who checked out resources for me until I had my own library card.

I am grateful to all seven individuals who are referred to throughout this work as the Seven Saints of St Pauls®: Owen Henry, Barbara Dettering, Dolores Campbell, Carmen Beckford, Audley Evans, Clifford Drummond, and Lorel 'Roy' Hackett. I was fortunate to meet the two remaining members, Roy Hackett and Barbara Dettering and their continued activism remains an inspiration.

Abstract

This dissertation takes a transatlantic approach in its exploration of identity and representation by examining artistic practices within areas of the Caribbean, Europe, and the United States. Australia is also used as a point of reference to further the discourse on representation and identity. While the focus is on the African Caribbean diaspora, specifically the Windrush generation in Britain, this work also engages with other immigrant and marginalized BIPOC communities to emphasize the social, cultural, and political importance of art that is representative of the diversity that exists within contemporary cities.

This is an ethnographic study that incorporates participant-observation, interviews, and archival research. It is postcolonial by its focus on place as defining identity, and fills a scholarly gap in the field of British history. It is grounded in the discipline of cultural studies, but is cross-disciplinary in nature, engaging anthropology, psychology, performance studies, and urban planning.

In an effort to understand implicit bias, bigotry, and racism -all of which contribute to racialized spaces- this dissertation analyzes place names and the psychological connection people have with places. In examining artistic practices and institutions, the ways that public spaces are racialized and gendered are explored. To that end, public art, specifically community-engaged murals, are contrasted against traditional art institutions. It is argued that such murals challenge the racialized status quo and allow for representation that would otherwise be unacknowledged.

In this work, the term art world refers to traditional art institutions such as museums and galleries, alternative spaces meaning unconventional venues,

academia, and public spaces. The former have long received criticism within public discourse and academia for racism and sexism as women and nonwhite artists have been woefully underrepresented in art exhibitions and museum collections. By comparison, public art has not received as much scholarly analysis and has often been promoted as having wide appeal, acceptance, and appreciation. However, portrayals of public art as universally understood and relatable are false and can further alienate members of society who do not see themselves and their communities represented. Increasingly, individuals and groups are protesting against such public art and in some cases taking it upon themselves to remove contentious and offensive statues from their exalted position.

While this dissertation draws from various geographic locations and populations, the focus is on Bristol, England, and members of the Windrush generation. In this regard, the country's colonial past, specifically its role in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people is examined. The concept of universal Britishness is interrogated for its racial and gendered biases. The racialized ways that public places are marked within Bristol are discussed, and creative placemaking through community-engaged murals is introduced as a means of disrupting the status quo.

In examining how place naming and marking contributes to feelings of belonging and dis-belonging, critiques of previous creative placemaking studies are incorporated. To that end, gender, history, and "race” are added as place-defining parameters. Race relations in twentieth-century England are examined along with the ways that marginalized individuals of the Windrush generation negotiated themselves within dominant power structures, asserted their identity, and gained political strength.

After providing a socio-historical analysis, this dissertation introduces the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*, which consists of seven large-scale murals of individuals of the Windrush generation. I argue that this heritage trail contributes to Bristol's livability by providing positive and authentic representation of a community of Black Britons, while also effectively disrupting the racialized spatial status quo of a city with a history rooted in enslavement and whose public memories of this past are normalized and represented as a regular part of daily life in contemporary Bristol.

Resumen

Esta tesis adopta un enfoque transatlántico en su exploración de la identidad y la representación mediante el examen de las prácticas artísticas en áreas del Caribe, Europa y Estados Unidos. Aunque el interés de esta disertación se focaliza en la diáspora afro-caribeña, específicamente en la generación Windrush en Gran Bretaña, este trabajo también incluye otras comunidades inmigrantes y marginadas de BIPOC para enfatizar la importancia social, cultural y política del arte que es representativa de la diversidad que existe dentro de las ciudades contemporáneas.

Este es un estudio etnográfico que incorpora observación de participantes, entrevistas e investigación de archivo. Es poscolonial por su enfoque en el lugar como identidad definitoria, y llena una brecha académica en el campo de la historia británica. Se basa en la disciplina de los estudios culturales, pero es de naturaleza interdisciplinaria.

En un esfuerzo por entender el sesgo implícito, la intolerancia y el racismo, esta tesis analiza los nombres de los lugares y la conexión psicológica que tienen las personas con los lugares. Al examinar las prácticas e instituciones artísticas, se

exploran las formas en que los espacios públicos son racializados y se tienen en cuenta las cuestiones de género. Con ese fin, el arte público, específicamente los murales comprometidos con la comunidad, se contrasta con las instituciones de arte tradicionales. Se argumenta que tales murales desafían el status quo racializado y permiten una representación que de otro modo no sería reconocida.

Mientras que esta tesis se basa en varias ubicaciones geográficas y poblaciones, el foco está en Bristol, Inglaterra, y los miembros de la generación de Windrush. En este sentido, se examina el pasado colonial del país, se discuten las maneras racializadas en que los lugares públicos están marcados dentro de Bristol y se introduce la creación creativa de lugares a través de murales comprometidos con la comunidad como un medio para perturbar el status quo.

Después de proporcionar un análisis socio-histórico, esta disertación presenta el Sendero de Arte y Patrimonio Seven Saints of St. Pauls®, que consiste en siete murales a gran escala de individuos de la generación Windrush. Sostengo que este sendero patrimonial contribuye a la habitabilidad de Bristol al proporcionar una representación positiva y auténtica de una comunidad de británicos negros, al tiempo que interrumpe de manera efectiva el status quo espacial racializado.

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Chapter 1 | Introduction

1.0 Why this dissertation[1]

“Where are you from?” I often heard people ask my mother this question. Typically asking a stranger where they are from is considered racist in the United States, particularly when a White person is questioning a person of color. Such a question is one of the daily microaggressions experienced by people of color in the US. By asking such a question, the person is making the assumption that the other is not “American” solely based on physical appearances. This is a loaded and deeply problematic question; yet, in the case of my mother, it had a different connotation -- one that was inclusive not exclusive. My mother was only asked this question by West Indians. It was as if they could recognize their own by sight. This intrigued me and helped fuel my research in identity as well as in the African diaspora.

This dissertation was born out of my interest in identity and the African diaspora. As a Black[2] American woman curious about the ancestral and geographical links within my own family, I am critical of the term *Black community* as it is often used to refer to Black people as a collective[3] and while there are historical, social, and cultural aspects shared by members of this “community”, we are not a monolith. Black artists have been consistent in shining a light on our social, cultural, and political similarities and differences. I am drawn to art, by which I mean the

[1] In this work, I use version eight of the Modern Language Association of America style guide (MLA) released in 2016.

[2] I have chosen to capitalize the “B” in Black and Brown and the “W” in White because I am referring to groups of people and therefore using the words as nouns not adjectives. Some quotes contained within this dissertation, however, do not capitalize these letters, so in these cases, I retain the original spelling.

[3] I am specifically referring to US politics where media and pundits break down voters according to “race” and speak of Black voters as a collective while White voters are recognized for their differences and are subsequently divided into groups e.g. working-class, suburban, soccer-moms, college educated, and evangelicals.

visual, performance, musical, and literary, that interrogates, challenges, and expresses identity and art that is social and political. As Janet Wolff (1981) states, and I believe to be true, each of these art forms can "be seen as repositories of cultural meaning, or, . . . systems of signification" (4). In 2016, I turned to art to examine the social and political events that occurred in the US and the UK following the EU referendum more commonly referred to as Brexit and the election of Donald J. Trump as the forty-fifth president of the United States.

After the onslaught of physical and verbal attacks against specific racial and ethnic groups which followed Brexit and Trump's electoral win, I was motivated to research identity-building in contemporary cities. Throughout the UK and the US, the number of racist attacks increased. Perpetrators did not view their neighbors as compatriots, but instead as interlopers, faux/pseudo citizens or simply unwanted immigrants. It has been noted that these sentiments were not new but that people felt free to express themselves because their bigotry had received "an official sanction" (Ahmed; Khaleeli).

In the UK, there was one aspect that was deemed different from past acts of racism. It was reported that while earlier racist behavior targeted specific groups, post vote there existed, "a generalised kind of racism oriented against any groups perceived not to be in that narrow category of white English identity" in the UK case (Khaleeli). I know how Black Americans have dealt and are currently dealing with institutionalized racism because it is part of my history; yet, I knew far less of the experiences of Black Britons and wondered how they handled matters of identity and belonging. Knowing that the UK has a large West Indian population, I was specifically interested in examining the Caribbean diaspora and the ways,

individually and as groups, they forge an identity when they are a racial and ethnic minority.

I also wanted to understand why such vehemence might continue to exist in 21st century metropolitan areas where one would assume that people have become accustomed to living amongst a diverse population. The melting pot analogy is often used to describe multicultural societies and the assimilation which supposedly occurs; however, as Mohamed Berray (2019) points out, this theory prioritizes the dominant culture and “expects minority cultures to morph into a society with norms, values, and behaviors that reflect [those of] the dominant culture” (144). While overall problematic, Berray argues that this assimilationist theory has its advantages because “it consolidates the concept of citizenship by creating an environment that integrates different ethnicities to celebrate national pride under a single banner … and solidifies the idea that national identity can be made up of multiple identities fused together under a single national emblem” (143). The more pluralistic view of the salad bowl theory, however, allows for unique identities and cultural differences to be integrated into a society thereby existing “side-by-side [with] dominant cultures” (143). Berray concludes by stating “instead of focusing on the constant of commonalities between identities, we should agree that the communal constant is that no one ethnic, religious, or cultural value should define us” (Berray 149). Post-Brexit and the 2016 US election, the exact opposite took place.

Even though attacks in both countries were clearly racist as they targeted specific racial and ethnic groups, I decided to explore possible underlying reasons, aside from racism, and this query brought me to the urban planner Leonie Sandercock (2003) who refers to “a new world disorder” (4) noting that the multiplicities of contemporary cities are viewed by some as a threat psychologically,

economically, religiously, and culturally. This results in cities being sites of struggle "over space, . . . life space against economic space . . . [and] . . . a struggle over belonging" (4). Some feel as if they are losing their way of life to those not like themselves and this fear leads to violence which in turn threatens the stability of cities and regions much more so than economic forces.

I then began searching for other urban planners who addressed issues of identity and belonging and this led me to the urban planner Ann Markusen and the 2010 white paper she co-authored with economist Anne Gadwa for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), an independent federal agency of the US government, where they coined the term creative placemaking. Arts and culture are at the core of creative placemaking and history of place is an equally important factor. Since my background is in the arts and humanities, I found creative placemaking intriguing and decided to explore it in more depth. It should be noted that scholarship on creative placemaking is more substantial in the US than in other countries. For this reason, I frequently use the US as a point of reference.

1.1 Purpose of the dissertation

This dissertation analyzes the social, cultural, and political power of a creative placemaking project in the St. Pauls' neighborhood of Bristol, England and the larger city of Bristol. Creative placemaking is a movement to improve the social, cultural, and economic health of cities. This is done by shaping, and in some cases reshaping, the physical and social landscape which, Markusen and Gadwa argue, brings new life and energy into spaces. In doing so, the livability of a place increases. Livability refers to the sum of a variety of factors that contribute to an individual's quality of life. These include affordable housing, public safety, and

community identity. Livability is expressed in varied forms from bringing neighbors from diverse backgrounds together to making businesses more viable.

This dissertation centers around the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* which features seven large-scale murals of seven individuals of the Windrush generation. This term, fully defined in appendix A, refers to people who emigrated from the West Indies to the United Kingdom between 1948 and 1971. It is important to note that this term is not limited to those of African heritage as the Caribbean is home to indigenous populations and people whose ancestry lies in Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. The first ship to dock in 1948 was named the *MV Empire Windrush*, hence the name Windrush generation. Later chapters will detail the contributions these seven individuals made to the city of Bristol.

In examining murals that are part of an art and heritage trail, this dissertation also explores creative placemaking's role in identity construction and representation. One is encouraged to think about public spaces in a new way as the following chapters highlight the gendering and racializing of public spaces, a fact which is often taken for granted and normalized. Although cities throughout the world are increasingly diverse, there remains a disconnect when it comes to urban planning. There seems to be a belief that public art is for everyone, which, as will be shown, is not the case. While intentions may be well-meaning, the existence of public art does not automatically contribute to a city's emotional economy. In fact, the art may serve to further exclude members of the society. Judith Baca (1996) notes, "[i]n many instances, art uses beauty as a false promise of inclusion. Beauty ameliorates the erasure of ethnic presence, serving the transformation into a homogenized visual culture" (133). Creative placemaking aids in this regard. The inequities and disparities that are rooted in racism need to be exposed and dealt with. This study

adds to studies of “race” and racism and encourages new ways of understanding one’s position in society whether of racial or gendered privilege, or subjugation.

1.2 Project significance

This dissertation is my contribution to Caribbean and diaspora studies and my response to Winston James’ 1998 call for more research of the Caribbean diaspora. Typically research on this group centers on Carnival’s transnationalism and while this is, as shown in chapter four, an important aspect of intangible cultural heritage, the diaspora is not limited to this singular cultural expression and future scholarly research should not be constrained in a similar manner.

This study fills a scholarly gap in the field of British history. It is grounded in the discipline of cultural studies, but is cross-disciplinary in nature, engaging such disciplines as anthropology, psychology, performance studies, and urban planning. This work interrogates the concept of ‘universal Britishness’ and the social and political positions of non-White Britons. While scholarship on populations who are viewed as outsiders or hyphenated citizens has increased, there is still a tendency to isolate such discourse from the “everyday general knowledge” of citizens (Couchman and Bagnall 8-9). As such, I have examined how creative placemaking projects that are centered on public art and especially community-engaged murals, “disturb the status quo” and contribute to a more culturally diverse and representative community (14).

Chris Kearney (2003) refers to identity as a “knotty problem” and notes there are few studies which examine the ways in which we construct our identities (xi). This research contributes to discourse on identity and visual politics by examining the ways in which community and cultural identities are constructed and then how these resonate through art. Throughout this work, Stuart Hall is used as a point of

departure to examine cultural identity and visual representation. Hall, a Jamaican-born British sociologist, wrote extensively on identity, specifically cultural identity and Black British identity. Hall (1990) offers two ways of understanding identity. The first, which he believes is of key importance when exploring diaspora, is a shared culture or as he terms it 'one true self' that is part of one's many other selves that serves as the foundation for all other superficial differences (223). Within this definition, one's cultural identity reflects a common historical experience, ancestry, and cultural codes. The other perspective is that despite similarities, there are significant differences where life has intervened which constitute 'what we really are' or 'what we have become' (225). In this second way, cultural identity is a process; it is not static, but is constantly transformed. As such, any discourse on identity needs to bear this in mind. It must be noted that although Hall is often referenced in scholarship on identity, a key aspect of his argument is often left out, namely the importance he places on visual representation, which will be explored in the following chapters (Hall 1997).

Iain Chambers (1994) who has also written on identity and migration argues that one's culture, history, language, tradition, and sense of identity "is not destroyed but taken apart, opened up to questioning, rewriting and re-routing" and that because of this dismantling, the pieces that make up one's identity "can neither be put back together again in a new, more critically attuned whole, nor be abandoned and denied" (24). Instead the person inhabits a zone that is "full of gaps" and where "other stories, languages and identities can also be heard, encountered and experienced" (24). In the case of Black Americans, in encountering and experiencing these 'other stories', a psycho-social division or "double consciousness" results (Du Bois). The sociologist and civil rights activist, W.E.B. Du Bois reveals the complexity

of having an American identity when you are a Black person because there exists a "two-ness" or duality of feeling and being both American and Black (Du Bois). Gilroy argues that this is not just a duality that affects Black people in the US, rather it is applicable to all those within the African diaspora (126). Poet, playwright, and Nobel Prize in Literature recipient Derek Walcott eloquently explains the fragmentation of Caribbean identities as follows:

> Break a vase, and the love that reassembles the fragments is stronger than that love which took its symmetry for granted when it was whole. The glue that fits the pieces is the sealing of its original shape. It is such a love that reassembles our African and Asiatic fragments, the cracked heirlooms whose restoration shows its white scars. This gathering of broken pieces is the care and pain of the Antilles, and if the pieces are disparate, ill-fitting, they contain more pain than their original sculpture, those icons and sacred vessels taken for granted in their ancestral places. Antillean art is this restoration of our shattered histories, our shards of vocabulary, our archipelago becoming a synonym for pieces broken off from the original continent. (Walcott)

This duality and/or fragmentation referenced by Du Bois, Gilroy, and Walcott becomes even more complex when gender is added as will be discussed in chapter six.

The case study developed in this dissertation is illuminated through an analysis of the St. Pauls Festival, now known as St. Pauls Carnival. To help situate the Carnival[4] celebration and its relevance, I have used a combination of theoretical frameworks including Mikhail Bakhtin's seminal study of Carnival in the Middle Ages, *Rabelais and His World*. Carnival held an important place during this period of

[4] Throughout this work, I use a capital "C" when discussing Caribbean Carnivals to differentiate them from other carnival celebrations that occur throughout the world.

history and various forms of rituals and traditions occurred throughout Europe. Bakhtin argues that during Carnival "all were considered equal" and that "a special form of free and familiar contact reigned among people who were usually divided by the barriers of caste, property, profession, and age" (10). Being able to escape, if only for a short time, one's station in life and living without regard for social rank was "an essential element of the carnival spirit" (10). While Bakhtin's theory is typically applied in carnival discourse, Richard Schechner (2004) argues its unsuitability when discussing Caribbean Carnival as discussed in chapter four.

Carnival is not formulaic; it continues to evolve. In fact, Carnivals inspired by Trinidad Carnival are celebrated in numerous countries and each iteration has its differences. This argument is emphasized by scholars such as Constance Sutton, et al. (1987), Philip Kasinitz (1992), Philip Scher (2003), Connor Geraldine, et al. (2004), and others who highlight the innate transnationalism within this Carnival.

There is solid evidence that creative placemaking has increased the livability of areas in various ways. A 2008 study reveals that a project aimed to "build on Seattle's music legacy" resulted in the creation of "20,193 jobs in the region, with $2.2 billion in sales and $840 million in earnings, and generated $148 million in tax revenues" (Markusen and Gadwa 33-34). Creative placemaking often originates within one's community after noticing a need; because of this, it is not limited to big cities. One such example is the Min No Aya Win Human Services Center located on the Fond du Lac Reservation in Minnesota where art has been fully integrated into the space. At this center, art is a means to heal both physically and psychologically while providing patronage to Indigenous artists (44).

As noted above, most of the scholarship on creative placemaking is US focused. Additionally, it does not appear that any projects have addressed an

underlying deep-rooted systemic issue on such a scale as does the creative placemaking project within Bristol, England.

1.3 Theoretical framework

My research centers on creative placemaking and the relationship between visual politics, identity, and the politics of belonging in contemporary cities. A case study on a creative placemaking project in the North Collinwood neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio follows the typical narrative. Creative placemaking was used to make the neighborhood more livable and to address a range of social issues including education and youth engagement. While the concept received praise, there was a “disconnect” between the artists, the art district, and members of the community (The Kresge Foundation).

Discourse on creative placemaking mostly focuses on spatial planning and economic development. Case studies, like the North Collinwood example, have highlighted aspects of the built environment such as cultural districts and artists’ live-work spaces. However, few studies have addressed the issues of gender, social and racial injustices, or interrogated the politics of belonging that are continuously at play. This dissertation focuses on these key omissions within the current discourse and in so doing engages the works of West Indian scholars such as Eric Williams, Sir Hilary Beckles, and my previous professor Selwyn Carrington when discussing enslavement and its economic effect on the UK and Europe. In my exploration of the Windrush generation and identity, I have consulted the scholarship of C.L.R. James, Carol Boyce Davies, Homi Bhabha, Paul Gilroy, and Stuart Hall. Mikhael Bahktin’s carnivalesque theory and its applicability to Caribbean Carnival in the diaspora is also examined.

1.4 Methodology

This research is an ethnographic study and as such my method is largely participant observation. I also conducted in-person interviews, interviews via email/Skype/Whatsapp, and archival/library research. The chosen research method allowed me to understand and appreciate the project on a much deeper level. As Dwight Conquergood notes, participant observation "privileges the body as a site of knowing" (180). I spent six months on-the-ground in Bristol, England engaged in the ethnographic methodologies established by social anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski. I met current and past residents of the St. Pauls' area such as members of the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association (BWIP&FA), attended meetings and conferences held by community members and educators, and participated in cultural events. At times, I was the proverbial fly on the wall and in other situations, there were varying degrees of "bodily participation" (Conquergood 180). In examining his own research and that of others, Martin Gerard Forsey (2010) states:

> I think it is fair to say that ethnographers report more of what they hear in the field than what they observe, that we listen to people at least as much as we watch them and that it is therefore useful to allow engaged listening to sit on an equal fitting with participant observation when discussing what it is that ethnographers do (569).

I found participating via 'engaged listening' to be key in helping me gain an insider's perspective on the history and significance of the project under discussion.

1.5 My positionality

I find Conquergood's comment about ethnography being "an intensely sensuous way of knowing" to be accurate (xi). As a Black American woman and a part of the African diaspora conducting research in a city whose history and contemporary remembrances of that history are intricately linked to the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people, I frequently experienced unease in the city. I became friends with a woman from Catalonia who was working in Bristol and she and I went on walking excursions to explore the city. She often remarked on Bristol's beauty when walking near the harbor or in Clifton, which is an affluent neighborhood located on a hill. Logically I understood the aesthetic appeal of certain areas yet I viewed and experienced the city quite differently.

On my second day in Bristol, I saw signage that immediately made me uncomfortable in my new surroundings. The street Whiteladies Road and building Whiteladies House disoriented me (see fig. 1). In twenty-first century Britain, I felt excluded. Within minutes, I learned the name of yet another location, Black Boys' Hill and saw a pub bearing the same name (see fig. 2). While the history or contemporary use of these names is not the focus of my research, I became keenly aware of the power of public naming, be it streets, buildings, parks, or gardens. The psychological connection people have with place names will be examined in section 2.4.

Figure 1 Street name | Image by D. Banks (2018)

Figure 2 pub name | Image by D. Banks (2018)

I also had to be reflexive and not negatively judge the city and its residents for continuing to have what I considered offensive naming. I have traveled throughout the Americas, Europe, Asia, and Australia but on my second day in Bristol, I felt a sense of not belonging that I had never before experienced. For the remainder of my stay, whenever I saw those names, I had a physical reaction. My heart rate increased. I felt as if by being on the street, I was complicit in the city's, at best racism and at worst, collective dismissal of non-White Britons. Bristol was my very own 'zone[s] of difference' and I immediately wondered if the non-White Britons in Bristol had similar feelings (Conquergood 184).

In a posthumously published essay, *On Fieldwork*, the late Erving Goffman emphasized the corporeal nature of fieldwork which involves subjecting one's body,

personality, and social situation "to the set of contingencies that play upon a set of individuals" in order to "physically and ecologically penetrate their circle of response to their social situation, or their work situation, or their ethnic situation, or whatever" (125). Prior to this, my UK experience was limited to London and I believed the UK to be much like my own country and possibly more progressive in some ways. For one thing, the UK has universal healthcare and in the US people have literally gone bankrupt because of medical expenses. Second, though not based on any concrete proof but on the commonly held belief among Black Americans, I held the view that racism is less in the UK and Europe. Now in Bristol, my perception was continuously challenged and I began to understand that the bodily nature of participant-observation is not solely about situating *my* body, but also in positioning myself to observe the "gestural, visual, [and] bodily response" of others as they react to their surroundings and experiences (Goffman 125). As James Clifford states, '[p]articipant-observation obliges its practitioners to experience, at a bodily as well as an intellectual level, the vicissitudes of translation' (qtd. in Conquergood 180). Situating myself in this way had unanticipated results as I will now develop.

My positionality while in Bristol was quite interesting. While I felt this sense of isolation and thus was able to empathize with non-White Britons living in Bristol, I was never able to reposition myself, as Renato Rosaldo (1993) did, to actually have the same experiences as non-White Britons. Rosaldo, an anthropologist who studied the Ilongot culture, learned of a mourning practice he was unable to fully comprehend until he himself experienced a devastating loss. In the Ilongot culture, when a loved one dies, older men literally engage in headhunting as this is the only act that serves as an outlet for their grief and rage. Fourteen years after learning of this ritual, Rosaldo's wife and fellow anthropologist Michelle Rosaldo, fell to her

death while engaged in fieldwork. Upon finding her lifeless body, Rosaldo was enraged. It was this experience that allowed him to understand, on a more intimate level, the grief rituals of the Ilongot people. Rosaldo's positionality had changed; however, in my case, I could not reposition myself. As soon as I spoke, people immediately knew I was from the United States and I am certain this influenced the ways in which I was treated.

In using the term reflexivity, I am aware of Philip Carl Salzman's (2002) critique that it has been adopted "too cavalierly and uncritically" (812). Yet, I believe it is important in acknowledging one's biases. This is not to say that my research is objective; I believe all research is subjective. I however did not take my feelings as fact for all Black and Brown Britons and conducted further research not fully knowing what I would uncover. As Salzman says, "insights and impressions are not knowledge; they are paths of investigation" which cannot be privileged as "authoritative" (808). He goes on to state that "we must measure our ideas against people's lives" (808) and this is what I sought to do through my research which included interviews, conversations, and attendance at events .

Reflecting on my feelings and physiological responses led me to examine the link between creative placemaking and mental health as will be explored in chapter four. As a psychiatrist and activist, Martiniquan Frantz Fanon famously examined the psychological effects of imperialism and its relation to mental health for the oppressed as well as the oppressor. While British imperialism has technically ended, its effects live on. In *Arts, Culture, and Community Mental Health*, Jamie Hand and Tasha Golden emphasize the ability of art and culture to "nurture cultural identity and social connection" (47). They state, "[p]ositive cultural identity has been shown to 'protect against mental health symptoms and buffer distress prompted by

discrimination,' particularly among populations that have historically been marginalized or oppressed" (47). On the contrary, lack of positive representation has a negative effect on one's mental health and can evoke feelings of dis-belonging.

1.6 Structure of the dissertation

This dissertation is an investigation into a creative placemaking project in the port-city of Bristol, England to measure its social, cultural, and political benefits. As stated above, history is key in such projects so the following chapters cover the history of the UK and Bristol and how it has influenced the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*. I agree with Robertson and Hall's critique that projects claiming to have positive social impacts should be tested; as such, this dissertation examines the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* project to see if it has improved the social, cultural, and political health of St. Pauls and/or Bristol. In addition to the history and efficacy of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* project, this dissertation also examines the social, political, and cultural power of representation and community-engaged murals.

This work is divided into seven chapters. This first chapter serves as an introduction in which I position myself by explaining my research interest and the methodologies employed for this dissertation. This chapter also introduces the artist Michele Curtis and the impetus for the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*. The second chapter, "Marking Spaces", aims to provide historical context in order to better understand the significance of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*. One must keep in mind that creative placemaking practitioners are intimately aware of the cultural, social, and political heartbeat of the community. The second chapter, "Marking Spaces", is so titled because it explores Bristol's public

memory of its historical links to the system of enslavement and the trafficking of enslaved Africans. I argue that Bristol is visually marked with this history, but in a way that pays homage to this past instead of examining it honestly and critically. This chapter begins with a macro approach of the UK's history of enslavement and then narrows the focus to the city of Bristol to examine place naming and public memorialization.

Chapter three, "Universal Britishness", interrogates the concept of universal Britishness and explores what this meant for non-White British subjects. This chapter goes into more detail on the Windrush generation referenced in the introduction such as their reasons for relocating to the UK, the environment they found themselves in once in the Motherland, and how the reality of living in Britain conflicted with their avowed identity. While chapter two looks at historical events prior to the twentieth-century, chapter three provides a brief history of race relations in 1960s Bristol and explores the ways that the Windrush generation exerted their cultural identity, organized community organizations, and fought for civil rights. George Lipsitz's "white spatial imaginary" is used as a point of departure to interrogate spaces that are racialized and gendered. Lastly, chapter three shows how racialized spaces and the fight for civil rights continue to this day as over-policing and police brutality are a part of British life for Black and Brown Britons.

Following chapter three's discussion of identity, chapter four, "Establishing Community Identity and Political Agency" focuses on the ways that members of the Windrush generation preserved and strengthened a Caribbean identity through the formation of the Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee, renamed to the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association. This community organization is a Caribbean space as defined by Carol Boyce Davies (2013) and its existence, along

with diasporic Carnival, has been a source of unity and pride among those of Caribbean ancestry in Bristol.

Continuing the discussion of racialization and expanding it to include stigmatization, chapter five, “Taking and Claiming spaces”, focuses on the neighborhood of St. Pauls and how this area and its residents have been represented in media. This leads to a discussion on the importance of positive representation and how heritage trails have reshaped landscapes both literally and figuratively in the telling of Black stories. The title refers to the ability of artists who are part of marginalized groups to position themselves into spaces that were previously off-limits and in doing so they open up these public spaces making them more accessible for a wider audience. Chapter six is a case study of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail.* Because of Bristol’s historical links to enslavement and the ways in which the city memorializes its controversial past, the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* project stands as a unique and, for many, a welcomed addition to local historical discourse. In this chapter, each of the seven saints are introduced along with an image of each mural. Chapter seven, the concluding chapter, addresses the legacies of the Windrush generation noting a recent scandal that rocked the UK and once again brought systemic racism to the forefront. The chapter then draws attention to the lack of representation in media, politics, and education and offers suggestions for future research. The appendixes include a glossary of terms that are used throughout this dissertation that require a fuller explanation, interviews of the following people: Aldo Rinaldi, Senior Public Art Senior Public Art Officer at Art and the Public Realm Bristol which is part of the Bristol City Council public art program; Susan Pontious, Program Director, Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program of the San Francisco Arts Commission; and two interviews

with artist Michele Curtis whose creative placemaking project is at the center of this dissertation. The initial interview with Curtis occurred via email and includes my initial research questions. The second interview took place in person and was recorded. The full transcript of the recorded interview is included in the appendix.

1.7 Creative placemaking

This and the subsequent sections of this chapter contextualize creative placemaking first mentioned in section 1.0, examine how it differs from public art, and explains the inspiration for the creative placemaking project that Curtis initiated in Bristol, England. It is important to note that the concept of placemaking is not new; projects may originate within the public sector by philanthropists, real estate developers, non-arts businesses, or high-tech entrepreneurs or they can emerge from within the community through the efforts of artists, arts leaders, community activists, or community developers. There is not one set way or person to initiate a creative placemaking project, but to have one that is successful requires that it be rooted within the community. This is not to say that placemaking projects are not community driven; at times they are. The one aspect, however, that distinguishes creative placemaking is its focus on activating art and culture from within one's community as opposed to art and culture being transported into an area undergoing renewal which is often typical of placemaking projects. For example, there are placemaking organizations dedicated to building strong communities globally that go into select areas to activate the community by facilitating partnerships and providing locals with the tools needed to transform their public spaces.

There are also projects where artists travel within and between countries using art as a tool to enliven public spaces. In some of these cases, the public has a say in the proposed artwork while in others, the decision is made by an official

committee with minimal public consultation. Examples of the latter are many and can, at times, result in controversy such as that which surrounded Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* (1981) in New York City.

Serra's *Tilted Arc* was a commissioned work by the General Services Administration (GSA), Art in Architecture Program. The GSA is a federal agency of the U.S. government and its Art in Architecture Program "oversees the commissioning of artworks" for federal buildings that are either new or have undergone "major renovation" ("Richard Serra's"). It is a nationwide program with the aim of "enhanc[ing] the civic meaning of federal architecture and showcas[ing] the vibrancy of American visual arts" ("Richard Serra's"). The panel that selects artists includes GSA staff, arts professionals, and representatives from the community.[5]

In 1979, funds were allocated for Serra's public artwork at the Federal Plaza in New York City. The work was to be "adjacent to the U.S. Customs Court and Federal Building (now named for Senator Jacob K. Javitz)" ("Richard Serra's"). At the time of the commission, however, these buildings were not new. They had actually been constructed in 1968 during the Art in Architecture Program's suspension. The program was undergoing policy changes and had been suspended because of inflation so all new artwork had to be postponed.[6]

Two months after its installation, *Tilted Arc* had garnered so much opposition that nearly 1,300 federal employees who worked at the Federal Plaza had signed a petition demanding its removal. As time went on, thousands more added their

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[5] While this is the current policy, I was unable to verify whether a similar panel chose Serra's work. My repeated calls and voice messages were unanswered. I can only assume this department, like others within the US government, has reduced work hours because of the Covid-19 pandemic..

[6] In addition to inflation, Cher Krause Knight (2008) also notes that the GSA was embroiled within an arts controversy related to Robert Motherwell's abstract painting *New England Elegy*. Some believed, incorrectly, that this abstract painting depicted the murder of US President John F. Kennedy (7).

signatures. Serra argued that the commissioning body, the GSA Art in Architecture Program, knew what they were getting and should not be swayed by public opinion. Those who advocated for the sculpture's removal claimed that it was aesthetically unpleasant, and a "security hazard" which could serve as a shield for terrorists who might attack the federal buildings without passers-by on the street having knowledge of what was taking place ("Richard Serra's"). On the other side, however, were supporters of the work and perhaps more importantly of the artist's creative freedom. These maintained that the sculpture's "removal would constitute an act of censorship … and violate the rights of the artist" ("Richard Serra's"). Art professionals argued that removing the work would be "hasty and shortsighted" because "historically important, forward-looking art always challenges the society that produces it" ("Richard Serra's"). In the end however, a panel convened and voted four to one for the artwork's removal.

Some argued that *Tilted Arc* was an example of "insensitive Government bureaucrats and a condescending art establishment" ("Richard Serra's") imposing their will upon the public. It is true that the public had little knowledge of the scale of the completed work. As Cher Krause Knight (2008) notes:

> the GSA did little to enhance public receptivity . . . before its installation. A small scale model of the work that 'gave little real notion of the size and impact of the full piece' as placed in the GSA building's lobby, while a pole-and-string stakeout on the plaza offered 'no accurate impression of the mass and solidity of the artwork itself' (Knight 10).

To contrast the ways commissions were handled, we turn to an example of a municipal government's public art commission. Australian artists Susan Milne and

Greg Stonehouse were commissioned by the City of Sydney to create a public art piece in the largely Indigenous and immigrant community of Redfern. On their website, the artists boast that they have over twenty years experience, have "won numerous awards", and that their projects have "reached diverse audiences and communities" (milnestonehouse.com). Milne and Stonehouse do not live in Redfern as they are based approximately twenty-seven miles away, in Avalon; yet, one might think that such proximity gives the artists more of an insider perspective than a federal government agency resulting in a site-specific[7] work that is more in tune with the people who live with it. Such an assumption is not necessarily accurate.

Shortly after the installation of *Bower* (2007-2008) controversy ensued. At the time of its installation, Redfern was undergoing renewal and the sculpture was commissioned as part of this process. People were divided on whether *Bower* should be removed. Those who called for its removal found the sculpture socially and culturally inappropriate because *Bower's* spiky construction is reminiscent of the fence upon which seventeen-year-old Indigenous teenager Thomas 'TJ' Hickey was impaled in 2004. Others, however, welcomed the presence of a public artwork.

It is largely believed that Hickey's death was the result of racially motivated police harassment of Indigenous people. The police were in pursuit of Hickey, but the reasons for the chase are still unknown. According to Hickey's family, eyewitnesses report that Hickey's bike was clipped by a police car causing him to be thrown and then impaled on a fence. However, the police report that Hickey sustained injuries after colliding with a gutter and the officers were cleared of any wrongdoing. After Hickey's death, people took to the streets in protest (Armstrong).

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[7] Site-specific works are designed for a specific location and so if a work is removed from its site, meaning is lost.

A few years later, the *Bower* piece was selected from among four other proposals "for public exhibition" and the public's response to it has been mixed. *Bower* was chosen after "community feedback" was received which calls into question the identity of the 'community' and whose voices are heard when it comes to art commissions. After its installation, a Public Sculpture Opinion Poll was opened where members of the general public could share their thoughts and feelings. Below, is a sampling of the comments:

> I live in the local community and was surprised by this sculpture. While I applaud sculpture in public spaces and the work being undertaken to beautify the area this sculpture seemed tasteless and brutal considering the tragic death some time ago of the young boy on the railings. As most people will pass this sculpture in their car they will not be able to see it close up or work out its relevance. That corner is brutal enough. Plant some restorative natural sculpture like beautiful treees (sic).
>
> V.L. [May 16, 2009]
>
> I think the area needs some art work and sculpture around. I like it.
>
> Lisa [May 29, 2009]
>
> While I am in favour of public art works, from the first minute I saw this sculpture I was aghast. Aside from my low opinion of its aesthetic value (I find it hideous and ugly), it is beyond comprehension how anyone could think that such a piece is appropriate for Redfern. Are the people who agreed to this clueless? My first thought when I saw it was, "it reminds me of TJ Hickey's death. Why the hell did they put that there?!".
>
> Nic [May 29, 2009]

> Besides the fact that the sculpture is harsh, unresolved, too bulky and looks like clinical trash, it has been placed in the middle of a community which has been devastated not only by the untimely death of TJ Hickey, but also by intravenous drugs. I think the symbolism of the sculpture is very damaging for a community already down on its knees. … I definitely think the community should have been allowed more input as to what gets put in the middle of Redfern for the next twenty years. There are enough local artists around who could have set up a workshop and invited people to design the sculpture and the Council could have voted on the design and then got the artist to commission it. That way, everyone gets a say.
>
> C.B. [May 26, 2009]

> Please DO NOT REMOVE THIS SCUPLTURE..(sic) PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS SCUPLTURE.. (sic) PLEASE DON'T...Having recently moved into the Redfern area along with starting up a new retail business specializing in vintage design furniture … I fully support what the council have planned for Redfern, including the recent installing of an AMAZING sculpture ... It really adds to the area. … I truly believe that Redfern is changing for the better, and by placement of creative, innovative sculpture/s as the one in question sets Redfern a step head, which is a place where I want to live & work in.
>
> V.U. [May 20, 2009] (Public Sculpture Opinion Poll).

The controversy surrounding *Bower* does not reflect poorly on the artists' skills; yet, it does speak to the disconnect between the City of Sydney, the artists, the artwork, and the community it was meant to enhance. While, as noted above, some 'like it', others believe the sculpture is callous and inappropriate as a site-specific work because the commissioning body and artists failed to take into account

Redfern's history and social environment. We now turn our attention to a city that has taken a different approach to its commissioning of public art in that it actively works to have art that is culturally representative and has public approval.

San Francisco is well-known for its public art and the city's agency, the San Francisco Arts Commission, requires that all artwork "be relevant within the cultural, historical, social/political and environmental context of San Francisco and the Bay Area" (Pontious). Art commissions are not limited to Bay Area artists so if an out-of-State or international artist is commissioned, the person is "given an extensive site orientation and . . . provided opportunities to work closely with the client department and engage community stakeholders" (Pontious). Susan Pontious, the Program Director, Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program of the San Francisco Arts Commission states:

> Our collection is . . . representative of not only the diverse styles of artists in our region, it is also reflective of its cultural diversity. Cultural and gender equity is a deeply held value in our city, and the Arts Commission works to embody that value in its art collection.
>
> . . . during the artist selection phase, artist proposals are displayed in public areas near the project site with notebooks for written public comment. The proposals are also displayed on our website. Public response is collected and summarized and provided to the art selection panel as one of the factors to consider when selecting the winning proposal. All panel meetings are public (Pontious).

The processes in place for commissioning art in San Francisco seem as if they would prevent the type of public controversy witnessed in Redfern. Yet with

varied systems in place, San Francisco has still fallen short as will be explained later. Chapter three expands on Pontious' above comments, goes into a fuller discussion of debates surrounding commissioned public art, and essentially argues that such projects fall short in fulfilling their perceived societal benefits. This is not to say that public art is without value; however, I argue that the very nature of a local or federal government agency commissioning artwork and touting its supposed societal benefits is problematic. In the next section, I aim to show how the idea of public art being inherently beneficial began in the US.

1.8 Cities and art

Following the 1893 World's Fair held in Chicago, Illinois, there was a focus on "enhancing the aesthetic environment" of cities within the US (New York Preservation). Prior to this, US cities were largely viewed in terms of "economic development and industrialization" (New York Preservation). This new push, considered publicly beneficial, manifested in various ways through the City Beautiful Movement. War monuments were erected, art societies began, and there was an emphasis on preserving historic structures. Peterson (1976) dates the "formative years" of the movement as 1897 to 1902, and argues that during this period, "municipal art, civic improvement, and outdoor art" were key elements (416). The term, City Beautiful, however was not used. Peterson emphasizes that while these "three concepts" were at play prior to 1893, it was the Chicago World's Fair that "gave such work unprecedented recognition" (417). It should also be noted that the City Beautiful Movement did not begin in the US, rather Peter Hall (2014) situates its origin in nineteenth-century European capital cities (203).

In the 1960s, there was a shift as artists began creating public works that showed respect for and inspired their communities, and art became more embedded within the public's daily lived experience. Artist and scholar Suzanne Lacy states, "Art in public places was seen as a means of reclaiming and humanizing the urban environment" (21). It also became a way to bring new life into cities that were experiencing socio-economic problems and as the following Pittsburgh case shows, at times it also had the weighty aim of creating a sense of community.

Before delving into the Pittsburgh artwork, some context is needed. In 2015, Cecily Ferguson, a friend from graduate school and I started an online boutique art gallery. Both living in Europe, but in different countries and maintaining our ties to the U.S., our aim was to share and promote the art and artists we admire. As we both have an appreciation for public art and had accumulated a collection of photos from cities within the Americas, Europe, and the UK, we decided to have an annual online exhibition: *easy access: public art for all* and in 2017, our exhibition debuted. In the Editors' Notes, Cecily recalled that as a child growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, she was "completely mesmerized" by Dr. Virgil D. Cantini's *Joy of Life* (1969) sculpture (see fig. 3). While she describes how she experienced the sculpture and the lasting effect it had on her and her love for public art, I was most struck by the feeling of community the *Joy of Life* seemed to engender. She says, "I remember during the hot, humid summer months it was always the most popular stop because of the cool mist that bounced off the figures that sat on top of the pedestal" (Ferguson). Reading her words, I imagined a type of kumbaya moment[8] where

[8] The term Kumbaya originates from a Black American spiritual where the lyrics request God to "come by here." See www.dictionary.com/e/slang/kumbaya. Kumbaya refers to "an effort to get opposing interests to reconcile in the name of harmony." See merriam-webster.com.

groups of people from varying ages and backgrounds all gathered together for reprieve in one location.

Figure 3 ***Joy of Life*** **(1969) by Virgil Cantini |Photo courtesy of the City of Pittsburgh**

Dr. Cantini was from Italy and memories of the squares and fountains of his home town served as inspiration for the *Joy of Life* (PGH Murals). The 1960s were a tumultuous time in many cities throughout the US and UK and in 1968 after Martin Luther King's assassination in Memphis, Tennessee, riots broke out throughout the US including the city of Pittsburgh. According to Mary Ann Gaser, because of the "unrest and violence of the sixties," Cantini was motivated "to express an idea of unity" (PGH Murals). He said, "[n]o one lives to himself and what our divided society needs is an increasing sense of our oneness, our mutual dependence. These men with their arms locked together [represent] the strong and the weak, the affluent and

the poor, the educated and the underprivileged, this is one society and one community (qtd. in PGH Murals).

Dr. Cantini aimed to express a united citizenry not one rife in discord and disharmony. Using a “productionist” paradigm, it would be easy to focus on the reason Cantini created the sculpture and assume the artwork’s regenerative societal power. Yet, how accurate would this be? Despite the sculpture being a gathering spot for passers-by to shield from the sun, racism and socioeconomic disparities did not lessen in Pittsburgh after its installation.

While the 1960s brought about a change in subject matter, in the 1980s there was “a broader shift towards ‘cultural’ means to address the problematic legacies of deep-seated structural adjustment in cities” (Robertson and Hall 1). During this time an “extensive body of literature began to emerge” claiming various ways in which public art contributes to society (2). Specifically, the focus was on the “economic, social, environmental and psychological” benefits of public art (2) . Yet as Robertson and Hall state, “any project, art or otherwise, that is advocated, funded and sited on the basis of a set of supposed positive social or economic impacts should expect to have these claims tested” (5). Without clear and consistent processes to measure public art’s benefits, any claims are speculative.

1.9 Review of creative placemaking

Like public art, creative placemaking has also been critiqued for its supposed contributions to society which as previously mentioned are to improve the social, cultural, and economic health of cities and to improve a city’s livability of which developing a sense of community is a key part. Ian David Moss (2012), similar to Robertson and Hall, notes the “unfortunate tendency” of studies examining the

connection between the economy and the arts "to gloss over the details of exactly *how* creative activities are responsible for making neighbourhoods and communities . . . more valuable" (5). Additionally, those who speak of improving cities have, as Roberto Bedoyo notes, "a lack of awareness about the politics of belonging and dis-belonging that operate in civil society" and because of this, well-meaning intentions can result in maintaining the status quo or further disenfranchising groups (4). As such, the various partners involved in creative placemaking must have a clear understanding of the ways in which race, class, poverty, and discrimination intersect, shape a place, and shape the lives of its residents.

This intersectionality was discussed by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space* (1974). Lefebvre makes reference to three forces, the perceived, conceived, and everyday lived experiences, that work together to stop communities from disintegrating. Using this as a point of departure, Tom Borrup (2016) argues that creative placemaking "must commit to building holistic and sustainable places that are of, by, and for people – all people" (3). This push for emotional involvement and interconnectedness is shared by Sandercock. She refers to the need of a 'therapeutic' approach to planning wherein one would allow emotion into the process and not just reason in making decisions. To exclude emotion, according to Sandercock, "precludes the possibility of understanding the nature of much conflict in the city, conflict that is generated by fears and hopes, anxieties and desires, memory and loss, anger about and fear of change" (3). While not specifically referencing creative placemaking, the aspects Sandercock advocates for are contained within creative placemaking. She states, planning is "an always unfinished social project" and proposes "a different sensibility" for twenty-first century planners (Sandercock "Towards a Planning" 134), one that pays attention to the social, cultural, and

economic well-being of residents. In a word, one that pays attention to a city's livability.

When discussing urban planning, history is key. This history is not simply something one can read within a book; it includes knowing the lifeblood of a place. With urban regeneration projects, traditionally the focus has been on space-based approaches meaning a "geographically-designated" area, but creative placemaking emphasizes a "place-based' approach which is "made up of physical and psychological connections among people and their environment" (Vazquez 5). This place-based approach along with an asset-based approach, meaning the focus is on "activating" a community's creative potential not bringing it in, is what distinguishes creative placemaking from its predecessors (6). It is imperative that these projects be "rooted in social equity" and include "a process of emotional involvement" (Webb 35). A person from within the community is much more likely to have an emotional connection to the environment; this connection is key.

In Peter Hall's intellectual exploration of urban planning and design, he states, "[i]n practice, the planning of cities merges almost imperceptibly into the problems of cities, and those into the economics and sociology and politics of cities, and those in turn into the entire socio-economic-political-cultural life of the time" (Hall 5). Many have written on cities, the rate at which they are changing, the socio-economic problems within them, and how the prospect of national unity has diminished (Davis and Libertun de Duren 2011).

Castles and Davidson (2000) examine the complexities of citizenship in light of our ever-increasing globalized world. Yet, as they note, discrimination has always been a barrier to keep people from being full citizens. As such, they call for

citizenship to be examined in new ways and that instead of focusing on the nation-state, which they argue is now obsolete, attention should be paid to collective identities and intersectionality. There is a thread that connects the planning of cities to the socio-economic and political failures or achievements of cities which is why scholarship on urban planning has taken a more interdisciplinary approach.

Because of the problems of cities and the hope for more inclusive ones, creative placemaking has been growing in popularity on a global scale. The term creative placemaking came onto the scene with the research and publication of the National Endowment for the Arts' (NEA) 2010 white paper written by Markusen and Gadwa, which is based on 20 years of research and case studies. Creative placemaking refers to the use of the arts from within a community to improve the social, cultural, and economic health of cities. The key factor that separates this "decidedly 21st century-esque" (Salzman and Yerace 57) initiative from earlier ones is its focus on arts and culture. While other plans have included arts and cultural projects, typically these are not at the core and usually are transported into the community instead of being community initiated.

Creative placemaking is rooted in the idea that creativity can and does improve the economy so understandably, the basic argument for it is that creative places contribute to the national economy and that substantial contributions can be made to a city's economic development and livability. Included in the meaning of livability is community identity, public safety, and affordable housing. Ryan Salzman and Marisa Yerace (2018) note that creative placemaking is increasingly becoming the "preferred method for eliciting community development" (57) and because of this, it is important to interrogate it and make improvements where necessary instead of uncritically accepting and promoting its claims.

From the time Markusen and Gadwa coined the term creative placemaking, it has been largely well received and has advanced at a much quicker rate than similar initiatives (Gadwa Nicodemus 2013). One of the reasons for this is its cross-sector appeal. As noted previously, partnerships are a vital part of creative placemaking and this is a fact upon which all practitioners, advocates, and researchers agree (Markusen and Gadwa 2010). Partnerships include a wide array of diverse stakeholders including those who are not traditional funders of the arts. Gadwa Nicodemus argues that political will is forged by having cross-sector partnerships. According to Andrew Zitcer (2020) having partners from diverse sectors increases the likelihood of creating systemic change. At the same time, he notes the power imbalance that can exist between bottom-up and top-down processes.

Since 2010, a number of critiques have also emerged including the fact that there is not a universal definition for creative placemaking. The NEA defines it as follows:

> Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work - placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies. Creative placemaking supports local efforts to enhance quality of life and opportunity for existing residents, increase creative activity, and create a distinct sense of place. (National Endowment for the Arts)

Zitcer refers to the NEA's definition as "a baseline" (278) and advocates for a definition that finds common ground, is consistent, and acknowledges that creative

placemaking is made up of a range of practices and intentions. A more concise definition comes from the American Planning Association (APA) whose mission is to create great communities for everyone to live within. The APA defines creative placemaking as “a process where community members, artists, arts and culture organizations, community developers, and other stakeholders use arts and cultural strategies to implement community-led change” (American Planning Association).

Because of the lack of specificity, it can be difficult to know what projects fit and do not under creative placemaking’s wide umbrella. Anne Gadwa Nicodemus (2013) uses the term ‘fuzzy concepts’ to refer to creative placemaking’s lack of precision or what Zitcer refers to as its lack of institutionalization, which he argues can be both limiting and liberating. Gadwa Nicoldemus notes that practitioners define the term in several ways and argues that although creative placemaking, and therefore its projects, are not easily defined these are able to “flourish precisely because of their imprecision” (Gadwa Nicodemus 214). Yet, she acknowledges that this lack of clarity means that creative placemaking is open to critique because at times it is seen as vague. Additionally, despite claims of its ability to create social equity, it is viewed by some as socially problematic and one of the causes of gentrification.

Salzman and Yerace and Jamie Levine Daniel and Mirae Kim (2020) argue that creative placemaking should have a bottom-up execution allowing for contributions and perspectives of community members because each community is varied and has different needs. Yet, creative placemaking is not always the bottom-up cultural policy it purports to be at first look. While creative placemaking is always about activating or animating a public space the way this is done differs.

Some define creative placemaking as bringing “local arts and culture into the mix” while others define it as being artist-driven (Salzman and Yerace 58, 60).

The idea of creatives animating their communities and the neighborhoods in which they live is a satisfying story and one that drew me to this topic, but this perfunctory view does not take into account the financial difficulties such projects encounter and the need for external support to see the project to completion. Creative placemaking is just as often a top-down process despite claims to the contrary because funders are the ones that wield much of the power. This is evidenced in the very term ‘creative placemaking’ and the fact that it was coined by two researchers working on behalf of the NEA, a US government agency that provides funding in the form of grants to art projects it deems worthy. Additionally, the idea of developing or animating one’s community raises the question of what a community is to which Salzman and Yerace state, it “depends on who you ask” (58). In terms of creative placemaking, community can be the people, which is the most common usage, but it can also refer to the infrastructure.

Even though the act of creative placemaking has been going on for years, it was the naming of the term that gave it strength and legitimized it with funders, government agencies, and institutions on one hand while also calling it into question on the other. Some practitioners take issue with the idea of being ‘named’ by funders especially when their work predates the coining of creative placemaking (Zitcer 284). Additionally, the term itself implies that creativity needs to be brought into a place. Because of this, Zitcer questions whether ‘*placekeeping*’ put forth by Bedoya would be more appropriate as its implication is that creativity already exists within the place (286). According to Zitcer, creative placemaking is at a crossroads and either it will

succeed as an effective cultural policy and efficient community development strategy or it will fall to the wayside.

Despite the malleable quality of creative placemaking, the varied forms it takes, and the ways it is interpreted, all advocates agree that its projects have an arts-centered approach and place-based outcomes which tend to focus on the economic and social (Gadwa Nicodemus 213). These are key factors that distinguish it from other cultural policies and highlight the importance of artists who Daniel and Kim refer to as “valuable assets with entrepreneurial talents” (106). Webb points to the significance of working together, noting that artists “who are guided by a spirit of authentic collaboration can be significant change agents in their communities” (36). Artists are in a unique position because they are able to creatively give voice to different opinions in a way that traditional urban planners cannot. However, those engaged in placemaking projects are aware of the stories linking gentrification to areas where art has been used as part of the revitalization process (Zitcer 285- 286).

Arts-based economic development does not always benefit low-income communities and can actually harm the people it was trying to aid by further excluding or marginalizing certain groups, which is why some projects are seen as paternalistic and a form of neocolonialism (Vazquez 3; Gadwa Nicodemus 214; Zitcer; Wilbur).[39] Similarly, even though Webb posits that community arts are a way for immigrant communities to assert themselves and engage with their neighbors, this is not a guaranteed outcome of such projects. For this reason, Webb argues that creatives have a responsibility to “examine institutional racism, social inequities and cultural intolerances through arts-based civic engagement initiatives” (38-39). However, much of the literature on creative placemaking focuses on professional

planners, less on artists, more on urban areas, and less on rural or suburban ones (Daniel and Kim; Salzman and Yerace).

There are a number of case studies on creative placemaking ranging from US cities to New Zealand, Indonesia, and South Africa (Kiroff 2020; Mutero 2019; Prawata 2020) and all such projects are known for what they produce and/or their outcomes which include *livability, diversity, and economic revitalization* (Daniel and Kim 97). However, outcomes, especially ones that are not economic-driven, are difficult to quantify and measure. Additionally, Vazquez (2012) argues it is the work that goes into the final output that actually brings about the end goal of having a sustainable community along with “cultural and economic development” (Vazquez 4). Part of this work includes collaborations, negotiations, and the building of a solid working relationship.

Arroyo (2017) uses the term “creative democracy” to refer to plans that increase the individuals’ power to bring about changes in one’s community that are instrumental in creating a “just and cohesive society” (59). This should not be considered a one-off endeavor as real change involves an ongoing process that requires one to adapt to changing conditions (59). Arroyo notes however that while practitioners and advocates are working to develop and strengthen social justice strategies, insights that have been gained from analyzing successes at the local level have not been “translated vertically into systems-level policy change or to galvanize into a coherent ecosystem of social innovation” (58). As such, she argues for a “systems change framework”(70). Arroyo is not alone as there is a growing consensus that creative placemaking needs a new framework that does not center on economic growth but instead on belonging, empowerment, social equity, and systemic social change (Markusen, Webb 2013, Bedoya). Because of the

“complexities" of neighborhoods, Webb (2013) argues that a new model of creative placemaking is needed that “develops places of belonging for the collective good; measures empowerment, cultural stewardship and community attachment as indicators of success; and is committed to addressing the root causes of social inequity through artist-led civic engagement activities” (35). By addressing such social issues head-on, this approach would, ideally, contribute toward the creation of a holistic place as noted by Borrup.

To talk about the importance of creativity to a society, one would be remiss not to reference Richard Florida (2002) who famously linked the “creative class” which he says is an intellectual construct that includes “all forms of human potential” with economic development (Florida 4). His creative class thesis was accepted by civic leaders throughout the world and Moss (2012) argues that Florida’s thesis made the movement for creative placemaking possible. Alexandre Frenette (2017) argues that creative placemaking, as an arts-led initiative, is an alternative to Florida’s creative class thesis as it “proposes a broader set of outcomes, attempts to directly address issues of inequality, and expands the role of artists in society” (333). Yet, he also notes its challenges such as developing an outcomes metric, effectively and consistently addressing inequities while avoiding “unintended consequences” that harm the very community the project aims to assist (333). I agree with Frenette’s call for more research on creative placemaking. While I do not think it will fall to the wayside as Zitcer mused, I do believe there is a possibility of its social contributions becoming as academically muddled as those of public art.

1.10 The origin story

The *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* is the brainchild of artist Michele Curtis. Curtis, one of seven children born to Jamaican parents, was born in Bristol. When she reflects on her childhood, there are countless happy memories involving her family. At the same time, she recalls the pain of growing up in 1980s Bristol. Curtis says:

> I remember growing up so vividly. Going to school, and remembering how segregated everyone was. Some children would say their parents would not allow them to play with Black children.
>
> This memory has stuck with me my whole life, and throughout adulthood I have continued to experience these same prejudices. These experiences are the catalyst behind the concept of Iconic Black Bristolians, to dispel negative stereotypes by recording and documenting our history to ensure we leave a positive legacy of our stories and achievements for future generations (Iconic Black Bristolians 17).

Although a talented artist, Curtis had not drawn or painted in seventeen years; instead, she worked in mental health. After being laid off from her job, Curtis contemplated what her next steps would be. She missed drawing and felt inspired to create, but did not have a clear plan. With time off from work, Curtis drove to London to visit her brother. It was during this visit, while sitting on her brother's living room floor that the first seeds of an idea began to form.

October is Black History Month in the UK, so Curtis decided to have an exhibition. She got to work drawing and talking with fellow Bristolians. Two months later, her exhibition entitled Iconic Black Bristolians featuring six portraits of "some of

the most respected and influential" individuals opened to the public (Iconic Black Bristolians 8). She recalls that during the exhibition, there were "persistent requests for 'more'," and countless questions about the people featured in the portraits. Guests wanted to know who these people were and why she had chosen to portray their likeness. Since that initial exhibition, Curtis has been invited to a number of speaking engagements. She states, "there's a huge educational aspect to the work that I do and I think that's why I've been so popular within the school system. There isn't any information and if there is, it's hard to access" (Curtis).

Because of the public's response to the 2014 exhibition and her desire to help change the narrative of Black Bristolians, she began a three-year project entitled ARTival 2018: St. Pauls Carnival Heritage Initiative, under the name Iconic Black Bristolians with an aim of using art to celebrate Bristol's Black history. Included in this project was the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* exhibition in 2015 to bring attention to the "individual accomplishments and lives" of the seven individuals who founded the St. Pauls Carnival "and the ethos and purpose of the Carnival" (Iconic Black Bristolians 27). In 2016, she began developing the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* mural project. In partnership with the Royal West of England Academy (RWA), she led mural design workshops for youth while exploring culture, identity, and a Black British identity (Iconic Black Bristolians 27). Also in 2016, she exhibited Bristol Beats & Bass which explored "Bristol's sound system culture within the St. Pauls Carnival and its' (sic) social and cultural impact on the City of Bristol" (Iconic Black Bristolians 27). Later that year, the first mural of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* mural project was installed.

At the launch of *The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* in June 2019, there was an official name change from Iconic Black Bristolians to Iconic Black

Britons[9] (IBB) and the latter was incorporated as a Community Interest Company. The decision for the name change resulted from Curtis' desire to increase engagement and to extend heritage murals to other cities throughout the UK. She began to view Iconic Black Bristolians as a pilot project and hoped to collaborate and consult with other Black Britons after experiencing the success of her own creative placemaking project. Even prior to the official name change, steps were in place to make the transition. For example, the first mural includes the name Iconic Black Bristolians whereas the remaining six have Iconic Black Britons. Chapter six is a case study on *The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*.

[9] This term does not include Caribbeans of East Indian descent. I questioned Curtis about this exclusion and she stated that her focus is on the African diaspora.

Chapter 2 | marking spaces

> No city [Bristol] is more wilfully blind to its history. It should stop honouring the slave trader who gives the venue his name.
>
> - David Olusoga, historian

2.0 Introduction

Within the past year, increasing numbers of people from countries such as Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain, to name a few, have demanded the removal of public statues memorializing men who were dictators and those involved in a range of colonial activities (McEvoy). Bristol has its own public statue that also has been the cause of much contention within the city. To gain an understanding of present-day Bristol, this chapter examines its past, its public memory of this history, and the social and political power of place names and public statues. Before delving into Bristol, however, an overview of the UK's history in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and the language used to talk about this past will be covered.

During the early morning hours of 1 April 2019, four individuals donning masks of former French President Mitterrand pulled off a heist worthy of a Hollywood blockbuster. Brandishing tools, the individuals hacked a public statue from its base, loaded it into a van, and drove away. This was not a simple case of vandalism nor was it a theft for monetary gain. Throughout the years the statue, which was erected in 1895, had been on the receiving end of varied attacks dating back to at least the 1990s when it was graffitied. After each incident the statue was cleaned and restored to its original state. What has made this public statue so divisive?

The UK has a complex relationship with its past; while not revisionist, it is also not very forthcoming. Bristol, perhaps more than any other city within England, exemplifies this complexity. Yet, issues of race and racism are typically associated with other countries, like the United States, despite Britain having its own documented past of racial aggression including “socioeconomic and racial zoning” (Olusoga). Also, like the US, such redlining still exists today.[10] In an article for *The Guardian* on UK banks and racial discrimination, professor of Black Studies Kehinde Andrews wrote, “As far as we know Britain has never had overtly racist discrimination in mortgage lending as in the US, … However, there have long been complaints about lack of access to mortgages and credit from ethnic minority communities in the UK” (Andrews).

Discrimination is not limited to housing loans, but also includes business loans and other forms of credit. Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg notes that while thirty-five percent of Black Britons attempt to start a business, only six percent are successful in receiving credit to do so because of discriminatory lending practices (qtd. in Deku, Kara, and Molyneux 2). While Clegg’s evidence was “mostly anecdotal”, researchers have used such observations to explore discriminatory banking practices. One such study examining 59,477 British households and their access to consumer credit found that non-White households have a higher rate of exclusion from credit even when their credentials are comparable. According to the researchers’ findings, Asian households “are more likely to have less access to bank loans, whereas blacks are more likely to be excluded from the credit card market”

[10] Redlining as defined by the Federal Fair Lending Regulations and Statutes Fair Housing Act is “the practice of denying a creditworthy applicant a loan for housing in a certain neighbourhood even though the applicant may otherwise be eligible for the loan. The term refers to the presumed practice of mortgage lenders of drawing red lines around portions of a map to indicate areas or neighborhoods in which they do not want to make loans. Redlining on a racial basis has been held by the courts to be an illegal practice.” Consumer Compliance Handbook, FHAct p. 1

(Deku, Kara, and Molyneux 19).

In Bristol, it has been suggested that contemporary race problems can be attributed to a lack of acknowledgement of the city's past, specifically its involvement in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans (Wallace 2006). Prior to focusing on the city's role and historically positioning the country, this chapter examines the language used to talk about the past.

2.1 The language debate

In recent years, the language used to talk about enslavement and other aspects of historical discourse has increasingly come under scrutiny. This issue is not confined to academia, but is also addressed in popular media. In an article written for the *History News Network*, historian of US Antebellum and Civil War Eras, Michael Todd Landis lays out his argument to support his claim that scholars should not use certain words when talking about enslavement. He states the terms that were used in the twentieth century "no longer reflect the best evidence and arguments" as they "uphold a white supremacist, sexist interpretation of the past" (Landis). Landis argues that such words and phrases obscure the past by not accurately reflecting "our current understanding of phenomena." For these reasons, he urges historians, in all fields of research, to be careful and deliberate in their use of wording and cautions, "though we study the past, let us not be chained to it" (Landis). Yet, as will be shown later, not all historians agree with Landis' assessment; however, his view is shared by scholars and laypeople.

In the preface to the revised edition of *Ar'n't I a Woman?,* Deborah Gray White (1999) reflects on her use of language in the earlier work, noting that were she to write that book today, she "would use the verb 'enslaved' rather than the noun 'slave' to implicate the inhumane actions of white people. The noun 'slave' suggests

a state of mind and being that is absolute and unmediated by an enslaver. ‘Enslaved’ says more about what *happened* to black people without unwittingly describing the sum total of who they were” (8). Similarly, Edward Baptist (2014) has adapted his writing to more closely present contemporary understandings of the past. For example, he uses the term “enslavers” instead of slave-owners and has substituted the commonly used word “plantation” for “labor camps”.

In discussing language, it is not just the meaning of the words used but also their connotation that should be considered. In contemporary society, the stately homes and picturesque grounds of plantations are often romanticized (see fig. 4). Some have been converted into hotels, villas, and museums while others serve as wedding venues essentially “whitewashing” the history (Singleton). Recently, some wedding businesses have “pledged to stop promoting weddings” at plantations (Singleton). On reflection, one woman expressed regret at having chosen a plantation for her wedding, while others are careful not to include “slave quarters” in any of their photographs viewing this as disrespectful. However, as Emma Walcott-Wilson, notes, ‘There’s no way to separate the beauty and the violence of plantations,’ . . . ‘They are the same in many respects. The people who built that beauty were enslaved people’ (Lim) and to ignore this fact devalues the human beings who suffered countless brutalities and indignities.

Figure 4 Boone Hall, South Carolina | Image by zauberfrau_1962 Pixabay

As Trinidadian-Canadian Dionne Brand (2020) shows in her readings of literary works, there has been a history of referencing plantations in a way that hides the inextricably linked violence between the two which in effect negates not just the suffering, but the existence of generations of people who were on the receiving end of such acts. Colonial literature discusses plantation society as idyllic using words like 'enchanted', 'bewitched reality', and making reference to the 'eagerness' of those held in captivity to toll (25). Brand refers to such works as "fiction/fantasy" that was spread throughout the English-speaking world, "producing not only the way to live but also the way to imagine and the way to write" (25). She states:

> Narrative is not just the simple transportation of language but of ideas of the self, and ideas of the self that contain negations of other people. What is it, then, to adopt or be indoctrinated into these narrative structures, those ideas,

> to come to know those ideas as your own, when you are the negated other people. (28)

The phrase labor camps, however, presents a very different mental image. No one associates a beautiful landscape with such a place nor would anyone consider a labor camp as a wedding destination. The words have a very different connotation and one that is more representative to contemporary audiences of the physical, social, cultural, and psychological brutality that occurred within these spaces. While these changes may appear to be petty semantics, those on this side of the debate argue their appropriateness and importance. As noted above, historians are not the only ones who have adopted these terms. People within the media have also modified their language thereby evidencing that this is not simply an academic matter, but a cultural one as well. The language we use matters.[11]

The Tobagonian-Canadian poet Marlene Nourbese Philip uses verse to examine the relationship between language and the plantation system from a different perspective. In *Discourse on the Logic of Language* (2015) Philip, while not mentioning plantation society directly, highlights one of the key features that existed, namely the intentional sociolinguistic isolation which aimed to keep groups from communicating and fomenting any type of revolt. An excerpt of Philip's poem follows:

> English is my mother tongue. A mother tongue is not not a foreign lan lan lang language l/anguish anguish —a foreign anguish.
>
> English is my father tongue. A father tongue is a foreign language, therefore English is a foreign language not a mother tongue.

[11] See works by Nikole Hannah-Jones at *The New York Times Magazine*, Eric Zorn at the Chicago Tribune, and Katy Waldman previously of *Slade*, now of *The New Yorker*.

> What is my mother tongue my mammy tongue my mummy tongue my momsy tongue my modder tongue my ma tongue?
>
> I have no mother tongue no mother to tongue no tongue to mother to mother tongue me I must therefore be tongue dumb dumb-tongued dub-tongued damn dumb tongue
>
> . . .
>
> EDICT I
>
> Every owner of slaves shall, wherever possible, ensure that his slaves belong to as many ethnolinguistic groups as possible. If they cannot speak to each other, they cannot then foment rebellion and revolution. . . . (32).

In creating this separation, the plantation system did not simply keep people from planning an insurgency, but more devastatingly it removed a basic human need. D. McDonagh and J. Thomas (2013) note, “Communication and the ability to express ourselves satisfy one of our most basic human needs” and if it is removed or diminished, they argue that it “can seriously impact how we perceive others and ourselves” (46). Plantations were not just places of physical brutality; enslaved people experienced psychological, social, and cultural attacks as part of their day-to-day existence.

In his work on linguistic isolation caused by language barriers in prisons and detention centers, Peter Jan Honigsberg (2014) argues that just as isolation is considered a form of Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CID) under international law, so should linguistic isolation be regarded as such. Similar to McDonagh and Thomas’ argument that communication is a basic human need, Honigsberg references Atul Gawande who states, ‘Simply to exist as a normal

human being requires interaction with other people' (45). Although the term CID is modern, the psychology behind its use when discussing linguistic isolation is pointedly relevant.

In February 2010 historians from various universities debated the use of the term 'slave' versus 'enslaved' via the online discussion network *H-Net*.[12] While some viewed the change in term as historically inaccurate and a way of ignoring the "big questions" of history that should be examined, others noted that the discussion/debate is "not something that we can continue to ignore." According to Nicholas T. Rinehart (2016) the "efforts at developing a new glossary for the study of slavery seem not just convoluted and self-gratifying, but also profoundly ahistorical" (41). He essentially argues that instead of focusing on terminology, historians should be "more precise about what we talk about when we talk about slavery" (41). For example, in enslavement discourse, the word commodity is often used with the selling and purchasing of enslaved bodies. According to Rinehart, referring to people in this way dehumanizes them and is an "unproductive cliché" (29). Rinehart argues this specific vocabulary originated with the Anglophone abolitionists when in fact the entire system of enslavement rested upon the fact that the enslaved were humans and as such fragile, vulnerable, and susceptible to torture. The system operated on a psychological level wherein the aim was to "maximize that suffering without hitting the tipping point at which the slave ceases to suffer because it has died" (35). Ironically, he uses the terms enslavers and enslavement instead of 'slave-owners' and 'slavery' throughout this work and uses the pronoun 'it' to refer to an enslaved person thereby undercutting his own argument.

[12] "H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online (H-Net) is an independent, non-profit scholarly association that offers an open academic space for scholars, teachers, advanced students and related professionals." h-net.org/

To counter Rinehart's supposedly-abolitionist talking point and his argument that enslaved people were recognized as humans, it is important to note that the British legally defined Africans as "nonhuman" (Beckles 56). Barbadian historian Professor Sir Hilary Beckles states:

> Britain [was] the first European nation to declare, in constitution and law, that African people are not human beings - that African people are chattel, property, and real estate. This was a British legal invention that was developed specifically for the Caribbean and it was implemented in the Caribbean islands, Barbados, Jamaica, and St. Kitts as the epicenter of this business model. . . . It was this model that was transplanted into South Carolina and South Carolina became the first American colony that was built entirely on the enslavement of African people. (Beckles)

The dehumanization of enslaved people was not simply a topic for discussion by abolitionists as implied by Rinehart. Instead, legally categorizing enslaved Africans as nonhuman was an essential part of the British business model. While I take Rinehart's argument that enslavers knew Africans were human despite legal categorization, the fact that these humans were treated in degrading ways is the definition of dehumanizing. As such, referring to them as commodities simply reinforces a commonly held belief. This perspective is made clear by the ways in which plantation owners sought to remedy the low and non-existent birth rate among the enslaved in the British West Indies.

British colonies "experienced systemic population loss" over a period of nearly 200 years. There were many more deaths than live births so plantation owners had to import more Africans "to shore up the declining population" (Beckles 86). In time, a new policy went into force exempting pregnant women from physical labor "six

weeks before and after delivery" (Carrington 142). This policy resulted from a calculated decision based upon financial growth. Were enslaved women able to deliver healthy babies, plantation owners would save money by not having to purchase new Africans. Although it was essential for the enslaved population to grow through natural increase, as historian Selwyn Carrington notes, unhealthy bodies could not have healthy babies.[13] To that end, tasks deemed 'injurious to their breeding' were prohibited and done by either men or elderly women (Carrington 142).[14]

Britain was deeply invested in the trafficking of enslaved Africans even though enslavement never officially existed within its geographic boundaries. Britons did not live with the daily social reality of enslavement as did those in the Americas. Physical and social distance insulated the average Briton and because of this, the legacies of enslavement are less visible and perhaps less urgent in comparison to other countries. Beckles notes ironically, that while Britain benefited the most financially from the institution of enslavement, it has proven to be the nation that is "least prepared to speak honestly of the past" (7). Generally speaking, the country has remained sheltered from this formative part of its history which not only shaped the country's past, but continues to influence its present (Hall, et al. 250, 252). Perhaps this is also the reason why discussions surrounding the language used in reference to this past appear to be stronger in the US than Britain.

[13] Dr Selwyn Carrington was my history professor at Howard University; he often said this in class.

[14] As part of this new policy, pregnant women were also given a higher quantity of food. Carrington highlights that while the amount of food changed, the nutritional value of the food remained the same (Carrington 2002, 155).

2.2 Britain and the system of enslavement

One of the quintessential works on Britain's involvement in the system of enslavement is historian and first Prime Minister of independent Trinidad and Tobago Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944). In this study of English economic history, Williams puts forth three main theses. He argues that enslavement contributed to the development of the Industrial Revolution; those connected with enslavement, either directly or indirectly, amassed fortunes which went into the establishment of banks and other businesses within Britain and Europe; and abolition occurred because enslavement was no longer profitable. Supporting or refuting these three theses has been a cornerstone of British history as it relates to the system of enslavement.

Two of Williams' most prominent critics are Roger Anstey (1968) and Seymour Drescher (1977, 2010). Both take issue with Williams' decline thesis, namely that Britain's change of attitude to the system of enslavement was rooted in its economic interest. Anstey argues that the impetus for abolition was based on humanitarian grounds which "came from [a] newly awakened Christian conviction strengthened by the 'reasonableness' and philanthropy of the Enlightenment" (Anstey 308, 319). Drescher picks up where Anstey left off and argues that the system of enslavement was not in decline, but was still profitable and abolition came about through the mobilization of abolitionists.

David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (2002) contest two of Williams' assertions. To begin, they argue that although the system of enslavement was economically important, "it did not by itself cause the British Industrial Revolution. It certainly 'helped' that Revolution along, but its role was no greater than that of many other economic activities" (141). Their argument for this seems to be based on the

economic importance of sugar which they acknowledge was a contributing factor, but "unlikely to have been greater than that of other sectors" (136). They argue that coal, iron, various agricultural activities, and transportation were equally important to Britain's economic development. Williams, however, specifically states, "it must not be inferred that the triangular trade was solely and entirely responsible for the economic development" (Williams 105-106). Eltis and Engerman also reject the causal link between abolition and the economy. They assert free labour was the catalyst for abolition; however, by arguing free labour as a factor, they are actually supporting Williams' main point that abolition was linked with the British economy. Eltis and Engerman appear to fall victim to the very thing they warn against, "an overarching historical generalization" when it comes to their critiques of Williams. It stands to reason that since the publication of Williams' pioneering work in 1944, much has been uncovered by later historians (131). Yet, as Robin Blackburn notes, despite "new models and new evidence," there is no solid reason for dismissing Williams' argument (518).

There is a general consensus that money earned through the system of enslavement was reinvested in cities and companies throughout the UK. Beckles notes how merchants built large estates, funded institutions such as universities and churches, financed insurance companies, and "built up the financial infrastructures of cities" among other things (99). For the British the Caribbean represented power, prestige, and profits (86). By 1755, British West Indian plantations were valued at 50 million pounds and three years later, the value had gone up to 70 million pounds (91). Historians differ on the profits earned from the system of enslavement: Richard Sheridan argues that in 1770, the profits were 2.3 million pounds; J.R. Ward suggests 2.5 million pounds was the annual profit for production in the British West

Indies; and David Hancock suggests that both of these historians have underestimated the profits (103).

In the eighteenth-century, Bristol was one of the most important cities in Britain because of the wealth generated through enslavement. As we have seen, some critics of Williams have argued that sugar alone was not the cause of the Industrial Revolution, but Williams actually never argued that sugar alone was the cause. British involvement in the system of enslavement cannot be narrowed solely to its sugar production even though sugar's importance cannot be understated given that sugar was the first mass-produced product. Additionally, the sugar colonies contributed more than three million pounds each year to Britain (Blackburn qtd. in Adams). Yet, as an institution, enslavement had many different arms and in Bristol this included glassworks, copper and brass factories, ironworks, manufacturers of pots and pans, and ship building (Beckles 86, 95).

Robin Blackburn (1997) adds to the discourse and notes that while "slavery did not create the industrial revolution; it facilitated its rise and maturity. It nurtured it, enabling it to grow faster, become stronger" (100). Even though White indentured labourers were used to establish plantations, it was the large-scale enslavement of Africans and the wealth they generated that made the West Indies economically vital (Beckles 58-59). Beckles refers to Britain as "the first slave-trading superpower and the first industrial giant" (82). He notes that of all the Western European nations that participated in the trafficking of enslaved Africans, "the British reaped the lion's share and, more than any other European nation, perfected the economic and financial art of exploiting the African" (82). The system of enslavement was the driving force of the nation's wealth.

While historians have a long record of documenting the country's involvement

in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved people, it was not "until the latter decades of the twentieth century [that] the economic facts, the full repercussions, and, most of all, the human toll" of enslavement received attention in public forums that were "broadly accessible" (Wallace 207). Prior to this, such public remembrances were rare. Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace (2006) credits the breaking of this silence to those within the arts, specifically artists, filmmakers, novelists, and major cultural institutions that were committed to remembering Britain's past and engaging in discourse outside of academic circles (207).[15] Although committed, these individuals and institutions faced challenges and what Wallace refers to as "quandaries" in their efforts to commemorate a traumatic past (207). One dilemma faced is the way in which one educates the public about the "dehumanizing effects" of enslavement without presenting a stereotypical or exploitative image of the enslaved, namely trauma porn (207).[16] Another possible dilemma is that those who are urged to remember the system of enslavement resent the commemoration viewing it as a personal rebuke.

After surveying a range of commemorative sites, novels, films, and a play, Wallace believes the solutions lie in having "an ethnographic understanding of human subjectivity" meaning that we need to change the way we think about time and place, specifically the past and our relationship to it (208). She argues that instead of thinking "that we live 'after' those who came before us," we should realize that we "live *with* them on a historical continuum that links our behaviours to theirs

[15] This contrasts with public memories within the Americas as individuals within the arts have addressed these themes publicly. See Phillis Wheatley, George Moses Horton, Edmonia Lewis, specifically her sculpture *Forever Free*, Aaron Douglas, and the 1983 film La Rue Cases-Nègres/ Sugar Cane Alley by Euzhan Palcy which examines the tough realities of 1930s Martinique, where workers were still treated harshly.

[16] Trauma porn is a term that is used in US popular discourse to refer to the consumption of films, videos, or images of gratuitous depictions of pain, injustice, and/or suffering of a marginalized group such as people of color or women. Videos and images of trauma porn are typically shared via social media - an example of this is the video of George Floyd's murder.

and allows us to learn from them" (208). Rather than assuming guilt over the actions of one's ancestors, we can learn from their choices.

2.3 Bristol and its public memory

In the first half of the eighteenth century, Bristol was the most important trafficking port in the world while Liverpool dominated the period from 1750-1807. David Richardson provides what appears to be the foundational research on Bristol in the eighteenth century, and notes that Bristol merchants "provided most of the impetus behind the substantial expansion of British trade with Africa that occurred between 1713 and 1730" (Richardson xv). Historical records from Parliamentary papers, newspapers, private correspondence, shipping records, and others leave no doubt as to Bristol's deep involvement in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and the wealth accumulated from same.

Following in the footsteps of the Royal African Company, Bristol merchants trafficked the majority of enslaved Africans to the Caribbean and Richardson credits these merchants with "the substantial expansion of British trade with Africa that occurred between 1713 and 1730" (xv). It is estimated that human cargo accounted for more than 96% of all known Bristol voyages to Africa at that time (xvi). Individual families, as well as the city of Bristol, profited greatly from this lucrative business. Even though Bristol's dominance waned as the century progressed, and was superseded by Liverpool, Bristol merchants remained active until 1807 when trafficking was abolished by the British (Richardson viii).

While it has been established that Bristol's interest "in Africa lay primarily" (Richardson xv) in people, not products, Madge Dresser's (2001) contribution to the discourse is more specific. She emphasizes how valuable enslaved bodies were

noting that they were worth more than "gold or ivory" (*Slavery Obscured* 1). In addition, Dresser draws attention to Bristol's "prosperity" which was rooted within plantation societies in the Americas, not just in the Caribbean, but also in Virginia (*Slavery Obscured* 1). It was money earned from trafficking as well as the labour of enslaved Africans that bankrolled the city, which it benefited from throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Although trafficking and enslavement are firmly rooted in Bristol's history, public acknowledgment of this past is much more recent. Once trafficking was abolished and enslavement officially ended, the work of Bristol abolitionists came to an end, and the institution of enslavement was no longer part of the public discourse. The city's involvement was "virtually unrecognized in public account for nearly two hundred years" (Wallace 25). In speaking of Bristol's historical links to enslavement, Senior Curator at the Bristol City Museum & Art Gallery, Sue Giles (2001) states:

> There have been small exhibitions in the past at the Museum and in other venues, . . . that looked at the slave trade or related ideas. There have been many plans for museums of of slavery and monuments, but none of these have ever developed. Yet Bristol itself did nothing to address the desire for information: one of our advisors said that even very recently, when he telephoned the Council House[17] to ask about it, he was told by someone in the Council that Bristol had not been involved in the slave trade (15).

While the history had not been completely forgotten, the city did not officially acknowledge its role and because of this, public knowledge on the topic varied leaving at least one and undoubtedly others to believe that Bristol was free of the

[17] Council House is not to be confused with council housing. The former refers to the seat of local government whereas the latter denotes public housing.

stain of enslavement despite the well-documented truth.

In the eighteenth century, Bristol merchants imported more sugar produced by enslaved people than any other city within the country. Bristol thrived because of its involvement in the system of enslavement as did cities throughout the country. Sugar refineries were one of the staples of Bristol and in 1789 refiners petitioned Parliament against abolishing the trafficking of enslaved Africans as this would have had major negative financial implications for the city (Beckles 96).

Catherine Hall, et al.'s (2014) research into the legacies of enslavement in Britain highlights the ways in which "slave-ownership, …, permeated the British elites of the early nineteenth century and helped form the elites of the twentieth century" (2). Financial institutions such as Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds, and the Royal Bank of Scotland have intimate links to enslavement as all were founded with money received from the trafficking of enslaved people. Hall's work builds on and adds credibility to Williams' thesis that profits derived from the institution of enslavement became part of the British economy and helped reshape British society and culture in the nineteenth century (12). The term, "legacy strands" is used to refer to the commercial, political, cultural, historical, imperial, and physical continuities of enslavement (25). They draw attention to the ways social and cultural capital remain even when the money earned from enslavement is gone thereby resulting in generational reverberations that can be witnessed today.

The work of Hall, et al. contributes to public memory through the creation of a free online database in which they are writing "slave-ownership" back into the history of Britain and shedding light on some 'legacy strands'. This database is important because as Beckles notes, "The concept of criminal enrichment from slavery that applies to Britain's elite commercial families and institutions has not taken root in the

public's imagination, though members of ruling class society are aware, at varying levels of clarity, of their own ancestral links to these crimes" (Beckles 5). One institution that has undertaken the task of investigating its legacy[18] is the University of Bristol.

Typically, the term legacy is used within universities to refer to a student or potential student whose family members attended the university. Varying degrees of preferential treatment in admissions consideration is given to those with legacy status. At the University of Bristol, it is not its admissions policy that is under investigation, but rather its historical links to the system of enslavement.[19] It has been estimated that "85% of the wealth used to found the university … depended on slave labour" (Savage). In addition to this, the Wills Memorial Building which houses the School of Law and the School of Earth Sciences is named after Henry Overton Wills III, the university's first chancellor. The Wills' family earned their money through the tobacco industry, one of the many industries that used enslaved labor (Savage; University of Bristol).

The University of Bristol's coat of arms also serves as a reminder of its connection to the institution of enslavement (see fig. 5). The dolphin, horse, and sun represent the Colston, Fry, and Willis families respectively. Each family was involved in varying ways with enslavement and was able to build social, cultural, and financial

[18] Commonly used within US universities, legacy admissions have been critiqued for benefitting White, affluent families over others. At least five of the top universities do not allow legacy to influence their admissions policies. These include: Oxford and Cambridge in the UK and MIT, Caltech, and the University of California, Berkeley in the US. See .npr.org/2018/11/04/663629750/legacy-admissions-offer-an-advantage-and-not-just-at-schools-like-harvard

[19] As of 1 January 2020, Professor Olivette Otele, the UK's first female Black history professor took up her new role as Professor of the History of Slavery. A press release dated 30 October 2019 states "One of her first tasks in her role as Professor of the History of Slavery will be to undertake a two-year research project on the University of Bristol's and the wider city's involvement in the transatlantic slave trade." http://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2019/october/professor-of-the-history-of-slavery-.html Cambridge University is also investigating its links. (Savage 2019)

capital that remains to date and each is immortalized within the university's coat of arms.[20] This raises the question on how not just aspects of Bristol's history are publicly remembered, but also how individuals are remembered.

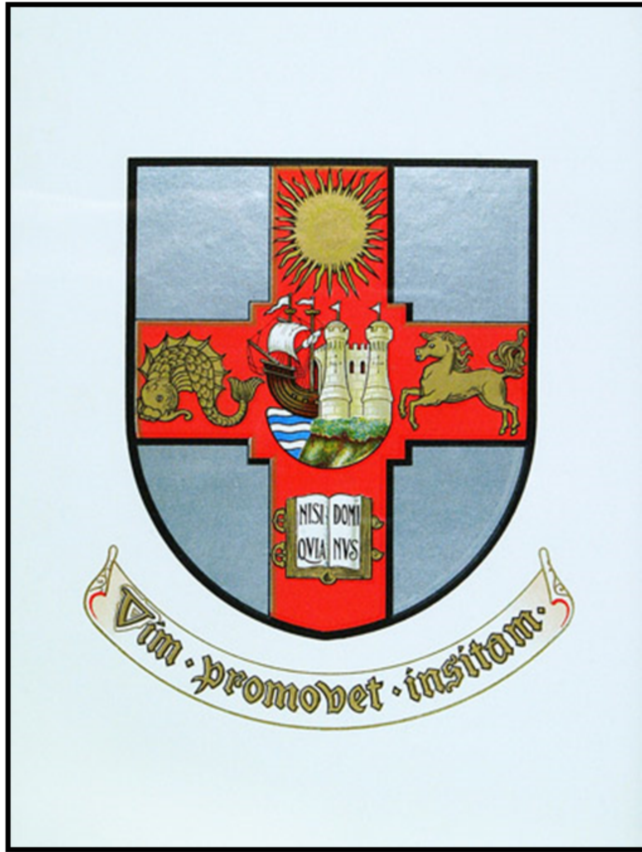

Figure 5 University of Bristol Coat of Arms | Photographer: Ann Pethers, Copyright: University of Bristol, www.bristol.ac.uk/centenary/look/cabinet/

Any visitor to Bristol will immediately notice that Edward Colston's legacy looms large. He was a philanthropist whose many donations to charities and educational institutions in the city of his birth are recognized today. Schools, businesses, an almshouse, and streets bear his name. Colston Hall is a music venue located in the center of Bristol, and musical legends like Bob Dylan, Ella Fitzgerald,

[20] An open book for learning, as well as the ship and castle from the medieval seal of the City of Bristol. The Latin motto beneath the shield translates as '[Learning] promotes one's innate power.' The Fry family were chocolate makers and were involved in the institution of enslavement; however "[b]y the 1760s, . . . the Quakers were the first religious body to oppose the slave trade" (Independent). As such, one can assume the Fry family ended their involvement, but since this is beyond the scope of my research, I cannot state for certain.

Elton John, the Beatles, David Bowie, Louis Armstrong, and Bob Marley and The Wailers have played there (Morris). Yet, the award-winning Bristol band Massive Attack, who have played venues all over the world, refuse to play Colston Hall. Their decision has nothing to do with the venue itself; rather, it is a social and political one based on the history of their city and the venue's contentious name.

There have been public debates about buildings bearing Colston's name and whether these names should be changed. While a philanthropist, Colston was also directly involved in the trafficking of enslaved Africans. As such, people have mixed feelings on how to publicly remember him. For example, the principal of Colston's Girls' School stated the school would not change its name because they did not see any "benefit in denying the school's financial origin and obscuring history"[21] (Turner). Another school, Colston's Primary School, dropped the name and as of September 2018 has been known as Cotham Gardens Primary School (Turner).

In 2017, Bristol Music Trust, the organization that runs Colston Hall, announced that the venue would change its name. This decision was reached after prolonged talks and extensive feedback from community members. I tried, unsuccessfully, to gain access to the Trust's data which included survey responses from the general public and audience members. They also held "Community consultation days" wherein the public were invited to talk with representatives face-to-face and share their opinions on the re-naming (Colstonhall.org). On April 5, 2019, I received the following message from the Communications and Special Projects Director, "I'm afraid that we don't feel comfortable sharing this data or the reports with you. The data was created on the assurance that it would just be used

[21] A BBC article dated 6 November 2020 states that the school decided to change its name following the protests sparked by George Floyd's murder on May 25, 2020.

for this research and for no other purpose so we would be breaking that trust in providing you with the data" (Robertson).

I then found an archived BBC page, *Talk Bristol* with the subject "Have your Say: Colston Hall. A group in Bristol says the name of concert venue Colston Hall should be changed – we want to know what you think" (BBC). This public forum was closed on March 9, 2007, but while it was open it garnered over 170 posts from individuals many of whom believed the venue's name should remain unchanged. Such comments referenced the fact that enslavement ended years ago, and that no one currently living in Bristol had been involved. Some spoke angrily about political correctness, while others believed that changing the name would alter the city's history. Below are some of the comments:

> I think the idea of apologising and changing the name of many things in Bristol associated with Edward Colston is politically correct madness. No amount of apologies can errase [sic] the atrocities of the past, it is just a patronising waste of words. The slave trade is part of history, it should not be forgotten. Bristol was built on the slave trade if the crazies had their way perhaps they would erase the City all together!!
>
> - Carole

> Yet another example of political correctness gone wild. These people who start these pointless campaigns should focus their energy on changing the world for the better in 2007, not harping on about something that happened 200 years ago.
>
> - John R

> It has become almost, laughable [sic] that this campaign group, along with others, has time and resources to squander on such a totally 'worthless' mission. Surely by now Bristolians have had a gut-full of this politically correct nonsense. If you don't like it then move to another city that doesn't have a history you disapprove of. I for one will continue to refer to it as Colston Hall. It's not far from Merchants Quarter![13]
>
> - Richard

Without contributing to the specific debate on whether places like Colston Hall should be renamed, it is important to acknowledge the strong emotions on both sides of the issue and examine the power of place names which arouse such feelings.[14] The varied comments by the public on the name change evidence the influence of naming, which Lawrence D. Berg and Robin A. Kearns refer to as "a form of *norming*" (99). For these individuals, the thought of changing the name proves socially and emotionally disorienting**.** Some of the comments evidence resentment to, as Wallace noted, a perceived "collective guilt' (Wallace 207). In general, however, such comments indicate the importance of naming and the strong connection individuals and groups have to places.

2.4 The psychological connection of place names

Robert Venturi, et al. state, "All cities communicate messages—functional, symbolic, and persuasive—to people as they move about" (qtd. in Vanguri 13). Names are a key and yet complicated part of this messaging, as in the case of Colston whose name conveys different meanings and recalls different aspects of the city's history. On one hand, he was directly involved in and profited from the system of enslavement; on the other, he was a benevolent figure whose financial contributions

to the city are many. Yet, and this refers back to the strands of legacy mentioned earlier, his contributions to the city and his link to enslavement are intertwined.

A study of names is also a study of people and the ways in which dominant groups “exert and maintain power” through naming (Vanguri 2). Various disciplines have contributed to research on naming from philosophy to cultural geography, but it was onomastics’ ‘critical turn’ that influenced anthropology in the 1970s to examine the power dynamics that are inherent within place names (Vanguri 2). Since this time, more fields have critically examined the politics of naming.

In the case of Colston Hall, a reductionist approach would categorize the numerous comments opposed to the name change as solely racist or tone-deaf, but it is much more complex. The connections people have to place names are more psychological than one may realize. People are personally and culturally invested in place names and as such, any change has the power to negatively affect one’s sense of place and identity (Helleland, “Place Names and Identities” 106).

Place names are “social signals of belonging to a group” and are “part of the spirit of community” (Helleland, “Place Names and Identities” 96). As individuals navigate their neighborhoods on a daily basis, the one constant that exists, despite the numerous changes that occur in one’s life, are place names. Because of this, place names become part of one’s “individual and collective memory” and aid in forming a group’s “collective identity” (Helleland, “Place Names and Identities” 96). Helleland uses the term “*mental landscape*” to describe the feelings a landscape or place evokes in a person and argues that place names contribute to one’s sense of belonging to a specific social group in a particular area and provides a sense of consistency and permanence (Helleland, “Place Names as Identity Markers” 502;

Helleland, “Place Names and Identities” 98). As such, it is not surprising that any proposal to change something that is viewed in such a manner would be met with strong reactions.

This psychological connection however must be recognized for all members within a community and the idea that place names can strengthen one’s identity needs to be contextualized from a racial and gendered perspective. Emphasizing the socio-emotional relationship does not account for the experiences of marginalized populations wherein place names lessen their feelings of attachment and sense of belonging and call into question their identity and place in society. For those with “positive experiences … the name will tend to awake[n] positive connotations, and conversely negative connotations will tend to emerge if he or she has had negative experiences with a place” (Helleland, “Place Names and Identities” 100). Using this as a point of departure, and while I agree with Helleland, I argue that the connotations he references are not based solely on personal experiences, but are also connected to history and past experiences that affect one’s present lived reality.

Naming is a social and political act which not only “orders the world,” but also “constructs its inhabitants through the circulation of power, ideology, and memory” (Alexis et al. 2). Let us begin with Colston who is repeatedly referred to in history books and contemporary media as a “merchant”. It is true that Colston was a member of Bristol’s Society of Merchant Venturers which was founded in 1552, and whose members were involved in maritime trade. Yet, in addition to this organization, Colston was “an official in the Royal African Company” which held the British monopoly on transatlantic trafficking (Dresser “Slavery Obscured” 3). As a member of this organization, he was, as documentation shows, present at meetings where the sale and trafficking of enslaved Africans was discussed and approved (Dresser

“Slavery Obscured” 3). Normally, one involved in this business would be given the commonly recognized name, “slave trader”; in this case, the chosen name speaks volumes regarding the public discourse or lack thereof surrounding this controversial figure.

It has been argued that part of naming’s political power is its appropriation of space. If this is correct, naming can never be neutral because even if “the maintenance of hegemony happens invisibly and implicitly, it is transmitted through names to a visible public” (Vanguri 4). Place-naming is an issue that is receiving increasing attention especially in relation to gendered power structures wherein “masculine control” is viewed as the norm (Berg and Kearns 99). A 2018 survey shows that streets that are named after individuals in three major cities (Paris, Brussels, and Amsterdam) are predominantly male (Franssen). No doubt, these three cities are not alone in this classification.

Berg and Kearns link the “ideological processes” that go into naming places to Benedict Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ (100). These communities are “*imaginary*” because they are spoken of as universal when they actually ignore various specificities among which ethnicity is particularly key in multi-ethnic societies (100). ‘Affixing’ a name is ‘inextricably linked to nation-building and state formation’ (100). As such, place names are “some of the most durable of national symbols” (Saparove 179). Bearing this in mind, those who do not belong to the “hegemonic class” defined as “‘white’, European, bourgeois, and masculine”, inhabit a liminal space, “betwixt and between” where they hold an ambiguous position (Berg and Kearns 100-101; Turner 359). Changing place names that are alienating to sections of the population would contribute to the transition from a liminal space to one where all within the community can have a sense of belonging.

Names are "performative" as they can injure, and also bestow a "social existence" (Butler 3). The conferring of a name, often done by a dominant power, brings one into existence by validating one's worth with a name. As such, naming provides context for existence and without it one simply does not exist. The same holds true for places. Naming a place gives it an identity, often a political one. Even though place names are often taken for granted, naming is both a social and political act and therefore has consequences. Vuolteenaho and Berg (2017) point out that scholarship focusing on naming has often been remiss in properly situating politics, culture, and history within its discourse. This has led to theoretically-focused research that fails to examine the negative effects of place naming on marginalized groups.

In exploring naming there are two points that should be acknowledged. Naming can either attract or repel. The repellant power of naming does not simply refer to the actual name such as Blood Point Road in Lake George, NY, but can be extended to include historical connections that are repellent to passers-by which are often not recognized by the majority group. While in Bristol, I commented on certain street names to a few people, none of whom had previously given it a second thought. However, when I mentioned these to people who were not of the dominant group, each person expressed their unease with the names. Butler notes that when injured by speech, one suffers "a loss of context, that is, not to know where you are" (4). While she is referencing the use of names as a weapon to demean or demoralize, injuries can be expanded to include those that result from a lack of naming. To be deemed unworthy of a name essentially disregards one's existence.

This was precisely one of the critiques of the Colston statue and its accompanying plaque which read: '*Erected by citizens of Bristol as a memorial of*

one of the most virtuous and wise sons of their city' (Cork). Prior to the statue being stolen, there were plans to replace the plaque with one that was more forthcoming in describing this son of Bristol. Some advocated for Colston and his contributions to the city to be contextualized, because to paraphrase Ralph Ellison in his seminal work *Invisible Man* (1952), thousands of individuals were made invisible simply because people refused to acknowledge them (3). Having a group's existence ignored to the extent that they are unnamed is perhaps a greater injury than being called a demeaning name. To rectify this issue, a new plaque was proposed, but ultimately not used because it was deemed politically biased. A second rewriting was ordered by Bristol's mayor, but the theft of the statue, as noted in the outset of this chapter, occurred before the plaque was affixed.

Additionally and specifically related to place names, it is important to reflect on the ways space is socially constructed and the daily lived experiences of those who use the space. The French philosopher Michel de Certeau (1984) calls attention to this by pointing out that our "everyday rituals" such as walking, are "in fact determined by semantic tropisms". When navigating a city or neighbourhood, individuals do not instinctively think that their direction is being controlled by a "technocratic power"; yet, this is what de Certeau argues (103). Through place names, the human experience is spatialized, meaning that our social relations and social practices are located within social spaces (Low 861). Such spatialization is embedded within our lives, and as such is not something from which we can easily extract ourselves (de Certeau 108).

Whether the change of name is of a building or a street, the proposal or slight hint is often met with opposition. Regarding the 2018 survey referenced earlier, some critics argued that instead of fighting for street names to include women, the larger

issue is the harassment that women experience while walking these streets. Yet, these two issues are connected. Franssen notes that throughout history, women have been "tied to the home – through laws, social codes, the threat of sexual violence or impractical clothing. To some extent, they still are." She argues that a lack of representation of women in public spaces "confirms the idea that women are less important than men and can be treated as such" (Franssen). In this case, representation affects not only a woman's sense of belonging in public spaces, but also their right to inhabit these spaces. Yet, this is complicated even more when the focus is on women of color as will be discussed in chapter six.

2.5 Place, names, and identity

David Seamon argues there are three dimensions to understanding "the people-place relationship": "*geographical ensemble"* which is the material environment, "*people-in-place"* which includes individual and group actions, intentions and meanings, and "*genius loci"* which is spirit of place (4). One's sense of place, Seamon argues "refers to a sensibility that radiates from the experiencer toward the place, whereas *genius loci* is a lived quality that radiates from the physical environment toward the experiencer" (Seamon 11). The people-place relationship is complicated even more when names enter the discussion.

Having a name and a place signifies one's embeddedness in society; whereas not having these results in a lack of social identity, sense of place, and "personhood" as is often the case with marginalized populations and hyphenated citizens (Low 66). As noted by Setha Low, there is a cultural and personal loss that accompanies a "loss of place" (67). This raises the question about the sense of emptiness of those who never had a place to lose – those who never felt as if they belonged to a place – and highlights another strand of legacy rooted in Britain's

history.

The discourse on naming and on place while referencing marginalized populations, does not seem to fully delve into their experiences. Examining the issue from the point of view that trauma is brought by losing one's name and/or place or having it brought into question, is not the same as not having had these in the first place. Low provides a word of warning by saying, "If we do not provide supportive environments or at the very least allow them to exist, we can actually eliminate the social and cultural diversity we are trying to preserve" (67). The first step, however, is to acknowledge the diversity, the inequality, and White privilege.

In 2014, feminist activist and journalist, Reni Eddo-Lodge published a blog post, *Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race* which served as the catalyst for an award-winning book of the same title published in 2017. Eddo-Lodge describes what it is like to be on the receiving end of the dominant group's denial of the experiences of people of color. Following are excerpts from Eddo-Lodge's original blog post:

> I'm no longer engaging with white people on the topic of race. Not all white people, just the vast majority who refuse to accept the legitimacy of structural racism and its symptoms. I can no longer engage with the gulf of an emotional disconnect that white people display when a person of colour articulates our experiences. You can see their eyes shut down and harden. It's like treacle is poured into their ears, blocking up their ear canals like they can no longer hear us.
>
> . . . I just can't engage with the bewilderment and the defensiveness as they try to grapple with the fact that not everyone experiences the world in the way

> that they do. They've never had to think about what it means, in power terms, to be white- so any time they're vaguely reminded of this fact; they interpret it as an affront. The journey towards understanding structural racism still requires people of colour to prioritise white feelings . . .
>
> . . . I can't have a conversation with them (white Britons) about the details of a problem if they don't even recognise that the problem exists. Worse still is the white person who might be willing to entertain the possibility of said racism, but still thinks we enter this conversation as equals. We don't . . . (Eddo-Lodge).

While history, culture, and place names "give us our sense of identity," these cannot be examined without also taking into account the structural racism that Eddo-Lodge references (Jordan and Weedon 4). If a dominant group denies or marginalizes the history or culture of another group this profoundly impacts the marginalized group's identity and subjectivity. Such marginalization can occur in various forms, including as has been noted, in place names. As Glenn Jordan and Chris Weedon (1995) argue, social inequality is linked to cultural politics, and is in fact "*legitimated* through culture" (5). Over time, this legitimization is seen as "logical, acceptable, 'natural'," as in the case of those on the forum who were against the name change (5). From their perspective, renaming Colston Hall is illogical as it disrupts the 'natural' order of things.

Henri Lefebvre (1974), a French philosopher who is well-regarded for his research on the concept of social space and the power that exists in socio-spatial relations, notes that history leaves its "inscriptions upon the writing-tablet, … of space" (110). The traces left by events form a "conceptual triad" made up of "*spatial practice", "representations of space",* and "*representational spaces"* (33). *Spatial*

practice, according to Lefebvre, “ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion,” which is essentially rooted within social relations (33). The second concept, *representations of space*, refers to the ‘order’ imposed by dominating forces and the signs and codes used to enforce hierarchical relationships (33). In social spaces such as cities, these forces would include planners, architects, developers, and others who are in a position to alter the physical landscape to “express and represent society’s dominant discourse” (Simonsen 503). The final concept, *representational spaces*, embodies complex symbolisms related to everyday life (Lefebvre 33).

Kirsten Simonsen (1996) builds on Lefebvre and highlights that social relations are key in understanding social spatiality, which she argues is intertwined with social understanding. Lefebvre’s work has served as inspiration for many including Derek Gregory (1994) who looks to feminist work to examine the links between gender and space; whereas Doreen Massey (1991) argues that any discourse that does not include race and gender would be insufficient.

2.6 Changing the discourse

Bristolians, like people in countless cities, are surrounded by “markers of history” via monuments, public statues, museums, and place names (Jordan and Weedon 4). In Bristol, like in other cities, its contentious history and place names are the catalyst for much controversy. Although Bristol is a multi-ethnic city, positive representation of “ethnic-minority” groups is lacking, which is one of the reasons why Bristol artist Michele Curtis developed the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*. During the initial stages of my research, I googled the term ‘creative placemaking’ and came across a blog highlighting “5 of the world’s most creative placemaking projects”. One

of the projects featured was Curtis'*.* Through this work, Curtis firmly situates herself within the cadre of artists and other creatives referenced by Wallace. Curtis' heritage project has transformed both the physical and cultural landscape of the city by changing the discourse on place naming. While groups were organizing in support of and in opposition to the renaming of Colston Hall, Curtis did not wait to be "'given the right to speak"; instead, she appropriated her own space (Wilson 13).

The *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* heritage project changes the discourse surrounding blackness from a circumscribed monolithic perspective of British history, Black history, and Britons. While engaging in participant-observation at a local primary school during Black History Month, I observed the dearth of knowledge surrounding Black history and British history within the UK. Curtis was asked to deliver a presentation on the seven individuals of the Windrush generation that make up the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail*. She talked about their contributions to Bristol and the UK, the civil rights movement within Bristol, and encouraged the students to follow in the footsteps of these local heroes by becoming change agents within their communities.

Upon entering the venue, I noticed a lone African mask set upon a table to the left of where Curtis was going to present. My initial thought was that another speaker had been invited and the mask was related to this person's presentation. The assembly began and Curtis was quickly introduced. I scanned the room looking for another potential presenter, but did not see anyone. Once Curtis' presentation was completed, the assembly ended, and the students were escorted back to their rooms. The solitary African mask remained on the table without context, a name, or a mention. For an educational institution to display an African mask, essentially as a prop, for Black History Month for a talk that highlighted the socio-political

accomplishments of people from the Caribbean in 1960s Britain, exemplifies the complex relationship the UK has with 'race' in general, and racism in particular.

Having a background in art history, I was left with many questions about the mask. Who was the artist? What is its provenance? Why was it placed on the table and by whom? Was this lone, unnamed African mask supposed to represent the second largest continent in the world, its entire diaspora, and more specifically the seven individuals from the Windrush generation? This seemed to me a very tall and historically, politically, socially, and culturally impossible order. Since these seven individuals founded the St. Pauls' Carnival, it would have been much more relevant for the school to display a Carnival costume or headpiece or simply not have had any display since Curtis brought portraits for students to view. Sonja K. Foss (1988) argues that in order for those who belong to a "submerged group" to have "their voices heard in a discursive formation or the dominant culture," they need to develop their own authentic voice. "They must develop knowledge and discourse out of their own experiences and interpret and label these experiences in their own terms. Perhaps even more important, they must come to see their experiences and discourse as legitimate and valuable" (10). Through the creative placemaking project, Curtis is expressing and representing what Foss urges. Yet, without malice, Curtis' expression of empowerment was undercut by calling into question her identity, experiences, and authentic voice by the presence of a lone African mask.

The creative placemaking project in Bristol is one of many 'Black Heritage' projects taking place around the world. These have "ballooned into a multi-million-dollar tourist industry" as people seek to preserve key historical events in the "struggle for equality" (Wilson 12). Within the UK, however, the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* is the first and only one of its kind to date. Through

it, Curtis has transcended the societal hierarchy and unspoken, but ever-present restrictions placed on her gender, “race”, and physical ability as a person with spina bifida.[22] With this heritage project, Curtis has not simply brought into public discourse the lives and accomplishments of seven individuals, she has indelibly marked a space and named a place. In so doing, she has created a social, cultural, and political identity for a marginalized community. As Jordan and Weedon note, constructing “new and resistant identities is a key dimension of a wider political struggle to transform society” (5-6). Keith Basso (1990) notes that place names can be a source of healing for community members (16). As such, Curtis' creative placemaking project should also be viewed as a tool for mental and emotional healing as will be discussed in chapter five.

[22] In this dissertation, while reference is made to Curtis' spina bifida, the focus is on ”race” and gender.

Chapter 3 |Universal Britishness

> We are here, because you were there.
>
> - Stuart Hall

3.0 Introduction

As noted in the introduction to this dissertation, varied art forms have been used to express one's identity. From Appalachian bluegrass to Colombian cumbia, musical genres reflect the artist's cultural identity and provide commentary on social, cultural, and political matters. Throughout this chapter, song lyrics and poetry are used to navigate the thoughts and experiences of Black Britons. The following also provides historical context to the concept of universal Britishness and ultimately shows that this view fell short when applied to non-White Britons.

In 1948, the *Empire Windrush* arrived at Tilbury Docks. Onboard were 492 individuals from the West Indies, one of whom, Lord Kitchener (sobriquet for Aldwyn Roberts), was a calypsonian. Kitchener's iconic song *London Is the Place for Me*, written while en route from the West Indies to England, expresses his optimism and excitement about England which he refers to as the "Mother Country".

> London is the place for me
> London this lovely city
> You can go to France or America,
> India, Asia or Australia
> But you must come back to London city
> Well believe me I am speaking broadmindedly
> I am glad to know my Mother Country

I have been travelling to countries years ago

But this is the place I wanted to know

London that is the place for me

To live in London you are really comfortable

Because the English people are very much sociable

They take you here and they take you there

And they make you feel like a millionaire

London that's the place for me

At night when you have nothing to do

You can take a walk down Shaftesbury Avenue

There you will laugh and talk and enjoy the breeze

And admire the beautiful scenery

Of London that's the place for me

Yes, I cannot complain of the time I have spent

I mean my life in London is really magnificent

I have every comfort and every sport

And my residence is Hampton Court

So London, that's the place for me (Lord Kitchener).

Lord Kitchener was not alone in viewing England this way. Generations of West Indians were conditioned to believe that they were part of a "universal British nationality" which meant that they, like all other British subjects, had certain inalienable rights which included freedom of movement and equal opportunity.

The essence of the official stance on Britishness is summarized by Kathleen Paul; whether "born in Kingston, Ontario; Kingston, Jamaica; or Kingston-upon-Thames, one was a British subject of the imperial Crown and shared

a universal British nationality" (10). Not having lived within England, these emigrants from the Commonwealth did not fully understand the "competing definitions and communities of Britishness"; yet, upon arrival they discovered that there were limits to the rights they held (13).

This chapter provides a brief history of Britishness and race relations in twentieth-century England, explores the ways marginalized individuals of the Windrush generation negotiated themselves within dominant power structures, and examines creative placemaking as a means of representation.

3.1 Contextualizing universal Britishness

Why did people from the West Indies refer to England as the Mother Country? What accounts for their seeming affinity to the British Empire? In what ways did their loyalty manifest? As noted in the previous chapter, Britain was heavily involved in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans. This trafficking "produced a far-flung African Diaspora" (Costello 69). There have been debates over the existence of a cultural identity amongst enslaved Africans fueled by Orlando Patterson's (1982) social death thesis wherein he argues that the enslaved person's lack of power and cultural isolation was equivalent to a death (5). 'Seasoning' was part of this process as newly enslaved people underwent an acclimation process.[23] While the 'seasoning' of enslaved people is undisputed, Patterson's social death thesis has, on one hand been well-received and on another largely critiqued.[24]

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[23] 'Seasoning' is a term commonly used in discourse on enslavement. It refers to the period when the enslaved person was conditioned to a new life of servitude. Seasoning had both psychological and physical aspects including the changing of one's name and branding of one's body.

[24] I agree with those who critique Patterson's thesis. There is ample evidence, in my opinion, to disprove the idea of social death among enslaved people in the Americas, but one of the quintessential works is: Thompson, Robert Farris. *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy*. 1st ed., Random House, 1983.

A similar discussion is held regarding the diaspora which is made up of the descendants of enslaved people. Ray Costello (2015) refers to this diaspora as having undergone “a cultural ‘brainwashing’” that occurred during the period of enslavement and even after their emancipation which encouraged the belief that they too were Englishmen (69). Individuals of the diaspora experienced a concentrated seasoning which largely took place within the educational system. Not only did the educational system within the British West Indies adhere to the British model in terms of instruction, but students were also acculturated in varying ways. Songs such as “God Save the Queen”; nursery rhymes like “London Bridge is Falling Down”; celebrations as the King and/or Queen’s Jubilee; and cultural traditions for example, afternoon tea were, and still are, part of British Caribbean society.

While a person’s nationality is often tied to one’s country of birth, in the case of Britishness this was not the case. The British Empire was vast and included people of diverse languages, cultures, and religions. Yet despite these differences, all were united through Britain’s “common code” which centered on allegiance to the crown (Karatani 4). Being ‘bound’ to the British crown made one part of an extended family, a British subject, and therefore a sharer in a universal British nationality (Paul 237). This messaging was expressed in 1947 by then Princess Elizabeth who on her 21st birthday made the following declaration to Commonwealth[25] countries: ”I declare before you all that my whole life whether it be long or short shall be devoted to your service and the service of our great imperial family to which we all belong” (royal.uk). Loyalty to the crown and viewing England as the Mother Country was deeply ingrained in people throughout the Empire. In theory, the concept was clear and all

[25] There are fifty four countries in the Commonwealth. For a list, see: thecommonwealth.org/member-countries

British subjects were treated equally in accordance with the code; yet, despite the idea of universal Britishness, there existed "a general climate of hostility toward the prospect of colonial migration" (Paul 127). There were not any official laws that equated to those of Jim Crow[26] in the United States; however, this approach to belonging to Britain became 'fuzzy', 'vague', and 'malleable' as successive governments attempted to both control emigration from some territories and extend "formal membership" to those from other areas (Katarani 3).

In theory all British subjects shared a universal nationality and rights which included the right of free entry into the Mother Country, the right to vote for Parliament, and the right to work. Paul argues that British nationality was divided into separate spheres: the formal inclusive nationality policy and the lived informal exclusive national identity which held greater sway in daily interactions. Groups were separated based on gender, class, and skin color (12).

Women "were in effect subsidiary subjects" belonging to the Empire only through marriage to a British man (12). For example, a British woman's nationality was relative and depended on the nationality of her husband. British women who married foreigners lost their nationality; however, foreign women who married British men became British. When working-class women had a higher birth rate than the middle class, politicians raised alarm that the 'British race' was endangered (13). It was not enough to be White one also had to be middle class. British subjects of color faced "a rigid system of discrimination and prejudice" that essentially produced

[26] "The segregation and disenfranchisement laws known as 'Jim Crow' represented a formal, codified system of racial apartheid that dominated the American South for three quarters of a century beginning in the 1890s." *Jim Crow Laws* www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/freedom-riders-jim-crow-laws/. See also Lewis, Catherine M., and J. Richard Lewis. *Jim Crow America : a Documentary History*. University of Arkansas Press, 2009.

"white governors and black governed" (13). White men were the only group whose Britishness was never questioned.

When the *Empire Windrush* docked in 1948, it marked the first wave of emigrants from the West Indies, and over the next five years, approximately two thousand West Indians relocated to Britain each year (Paul 119). According to Fred R. van Hartesveldt (1983), this first wave of workers did not cause "major concern" among the majority of Britons (126). Their arrival coincided with a period of "postwar labor shortage" when workers were in demand (126). Yet those on the "fringe" objected to the immigrants and in time, through fear mongering, spread their racist ideology to a larger portion of the population (126). The press was useful in the dissemination of racist messaging.

On 8 November 1954, *The Times* published an article entitled "West Indian Settlers, First Signs of a British Colour Problem" (appendix B). One of the major public concerns was over the numbers of West Indians who were arriving. Although there was already a West Indian presence in the UK, one of the concerns was over the increased numbers which the writer referred to as "a mass exodus" from the West Indies. A second concern was over housing and not just where West Indians would live, but also the maintenance of the property in which they resided. The article specifically mentions concern over the development of slums. Loaded language is dispersed throughout the text to create a sense of imminent danger. For example, referring to West Indians as a "battalion" (7) in a country that was still in the process of recovering from war was calculating.

The Prime Minister at that time, Clement Attlee held a complicated view toward this group of British subjects. Before the ship arrived, there was talk of

possibly diverting it to East Africa, so that the blood of White Britons would not be contaminated by the immigrants. Attlee used the word 'incursion' to refer to their arrival which calls to mind the work of Paul Gilroy (2003) where he argues that there exists a "dominant view" that Black people are "an illegitimate intrusion into a vision of authentic British national life" (7). While intrusions can be uncomfortable and unwanted, I would argue that they were and possibly still are also viewed as threatening to legitimate Britishness by some Britons.

Shortly after the docking of the *Empire Windrush*, a group of Ministers of Parliament sent a letter to Attlee expressing the need to control Commonwealth immigration which they saw as a threat to the British 'way of life' (Paul 127). On 5 July 1948, Attlee responded in part:

> It is traditional that British subjects, whether of Dominion or Colonial origin (and of whatever race or Colour), should be freely admissible to the United Kingdom. That tradition is not, in my view, to be lightly discarded, particularly at this time when we are importing foreign labour in large numbers. It would be fiercely resented in the Colonies themselves, and it would be a great mistake to take any measure which would tend to weaken the goodwill and loyalty of the Colonies towards Great Britain. If our policy were to result in a great influx of undesirables, we might, however unwillingly, have to consider modifying it. But I should not be willing to consider that except on really compelling evidence, which I do not think exists at the present time (nationalarchives.gov.uk).

Although Attlee had proven that he was not in favor of West Indian migration, he held to the tradition of universal British nationality despite dissenting voices.

However, racism did affect British policies. In van Hartesveldt's examination of British politics from 1954-1965, he outlines the varied ways that racism was linked to policies put forth by politicians from both major parties, Conservative and Labour. Parliamentary seats were lost and gained based on one's perceived stance on immigration.[27] Media continued to play a large role in spreading racist propaganda. There were warnings, despite evidence to the contrary, of immigrants spreading venereal diseases and of large numbers of unemployed immigrants who were a drain on social services. No longer holding to the tradition of universal Britishness, skin pigmentation was used to denote "fixed mental and physical capacities" (Paul 124). Immigrants of color were positioned as inferior, violent, sexually promiscuous, and not belonging to British society.

In discussing racism, Peter Fryer (2010, 1984) differentiates it from race prejudice. The latter he argues "is relatively scrappy and self-contradictory" and is largely transmitted through verbal means; whereas racism "is relatively systematic and internally consistent. In time it acquires a pseudo-scientific veneer that glosses over its irrationalities and enables it to claim intellectual respectability (134). And it is transmitted largely through the printed word". Fryer goes on to distinguish between the "primary functions" (134) of each which he argues is cultural and psychological for race prejudice and political and economic for racism.

Studies of postwar migration from Asia and the Caribbean evidence that these British subjects were "largely confined to low-paid manual work" regardless of their skills and qualifications. Also, and in direct contradiction to universal Britishness, they were on the receiving end of racial discrimination in hiring practices (Modood

[27] Conservatives were successful in using "racial innuendo" to attack Labour candidates in the elections of 1959 and 1965 (van Hartesveldt 129, 132-133)

60). In July 1960, the government's official freedom of movement policy was still intact; however, as increasing numbers of people from the Commonwealth emigrated, the British government began pressuring the governments of the Commonwealth, namely India, Pakistan, and the West Indies to control the number of people who were leaving.

In 1961, the Commonwealth Immigrants Bill was introduced and debated. The official reason for the Bill was that Britain could not accommodate the increasing numbers of people entering the country. In a parliamentary meeting dated 16 November 1961, Labour leader Hugh Gaitskell, in no uncertain terms, stated his opposition to the Bill. Gaitskell called out the hypocrisy of those in favor of the Bill and commented that it was a "very sad day for the Commonwealth" (Commonwealth Immigrants Bill). Noting the exclusion of the Irish, Gordon Walker referred to the Bill as a color bar because it only affected Black and Brown British subjects whereas no restrictions were placed on the Irish who were predominantly White (Commonwealth Immigrants Bill).

The Bill became law and the Commonwealth Immigrants Act went into effect in 1962, thereby effectively changing what had been England's public stance on equality. As Paul states, "despite an imperial nationality and the façade of equality, the policy-making elite perceived emigrating UK residents, immigrating continental and Irish aliens, and migrating subjects of color as belonging to different communities of Britishness" (Paul xii). The Commonwealth Immigrants Act made this very clear. It granted immigration officers the power to refuse admission, grant conditional admission, and place restrictions upon a Commonwealth citizen's employment. The Act ended free movement and the automatic right to live within Britain for British subjects.

Ironically, as van Hartesveldt notes, had the Conservative and Labour parties held to their political traditions, they might have welcomed the non-White people from the Commonwealth. Instead, by sponsoring and supporting the Commonwealth Immigration Act, both parties turned their backs on what had been their historical positions, bowed "to the demands of the racists to 'keep Britain white'" (van Hartesveldt 126, 134), and effectively answered the query raised by the Jamaican poet and activist the Rt Hon Dr Louise Bennett Coverley in her 1966 poem, Colonization in Reverse, an excerpt of which follows:

> Wat a devilment a Englan!
>
> Dem face war an brave de worse,
>
> But me wonderin how dem gwine stan
>
> Colonizin in reverse.

Nearly twenty years had passed from the time when Lord Kitchner had written *London Is the Place for Me* and through bi-partisan legislation, it appeared that neither London nor the whole of the UK was as welcoming as had been advertised.

3.2 Britain's whiteness

In October 2018, I attended a talk by historian David Olusoga at the University of Bristol. The main thesis was that despite the commonly held beliefs that position people of color as new or hyphenated citizens,[28] they are a crucial and historically relevant aspect of British history. Olusoga argued that Britain has never been an insular country. Instead, migration and interactions with people from other parts of the world is part of its origin story.

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[28] In Meer's analysis of Du Bois' work, he argues that instead of advocating for assimilation, Du Bois strongly endorses "a view that cultural and/or moral diversity may be captured within hyphenated identities" (55).

In October 2016, Radio 4 aired the series 'Britain's Black Past' which inspired the presenter, Gretchen H. Gerzina to bring all the stories in the series along with additional research together in a book with the same name. The series focused on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries whereas the book goes back further in time. Gerzina states that Black British history "is not a stagnant area of research; … the past continues to expand" and various forms of media are used to share this past (3). She notes that a wider audience is reached because of the various media used from blogs and websites to art exhibitions, radio, and television (3).

The fact that period dramas often ignore the Black presence in England makes episode two in the third season of *Doctor Who* stand out. *Doctor Who* is a British television series that holds the unique position of being the longest running science fiction series in the world (Orthia 3). It originally ran from 1963 to 1989 and after a sixteen year break, returned in 2005 and has been running ever since.The show "is watched in over fifty countries and routinely garners millions of viewers for each episode" (3). In the episode, titled "The Shakespeare Code", the Doctor and his companion Martha travel back in time to 1599. When Martha realizes "when" they are, she asks the Doctor, an alien whose human form is a White man, if she is in danger of being captured and enslaved because she is "not exactly white". The Doctor responds, "I'm not even human. Just walk about like you own the place; it works for me. Besides, you'll be surprised, Elizabethan England [is] not so different from your time". At that moment, the camera pans from the main characters to two Black women walking and talking unencumbered by fear of what may befall them because of their skin color. This acknowledgement, in popular culture, of the Black presence during the Elizabethan period is rare (Kaufmann).

However, this scene has also been critiqued for its dismissal of Martha's concerns. As Fire Fly (2013) states:

> This exchange betrays the ignorance of the writers about both historical racial violence and contemporary white privilege. The episode is set in 1599, while Portugal and Spain were transporting African slaves to the Americas, and Britain was establishing its colonies. Black slaves were present in London since early in the sixteenth century, making it entirely reasonable for Martha to feel anxious about her security. Furthermore, by implying that anyone could "walk about like [they] own the place" the role of whiteness is normalized – nobody else could "own the place" (18).

Although this episode attempts to be inclusive, diverse, and acknowledge the long history of Black people within Britain, it unfortunately trivialized the experiences of non-White people during that time and now. The Doctor's flippant response that there are similarities between Elizabethan and contemporary London so Martha need not worry indicates a lack of understanding of what life is like for present-day non-White Britons as will be discussed later in this chapter.

While historical records are often lacking when it comes to visual representations of the Black presence in Britain, Michael Ohajuru (2020) notes "John Blanke, the Black trumpeter to the Tudor court, is the first person of African descent for whom we have both an identifiable image and documentation" (8) (see fig. 6 & 7). Blanke served during the reign of Henry VII (1485-1509) and Henry VIII (1509-1547) and his likeness was captured "twice in the *Great Tournament Roll of Westminster"* (9). There is also evidence of a Black people living in Britain during the Roman Empire which further supports Olusoga's argument.

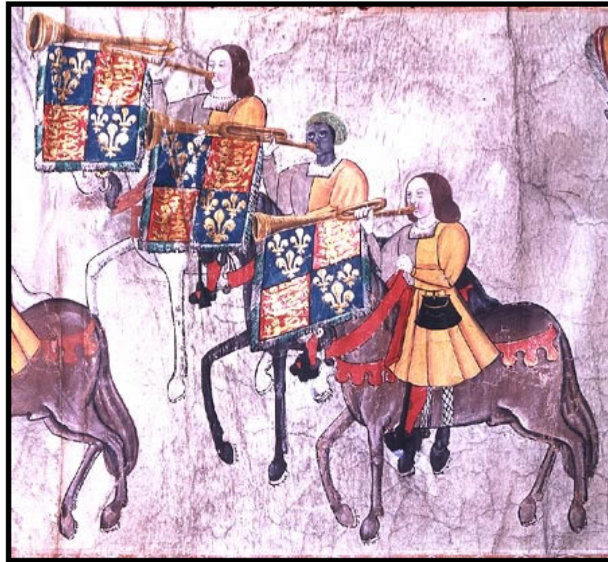
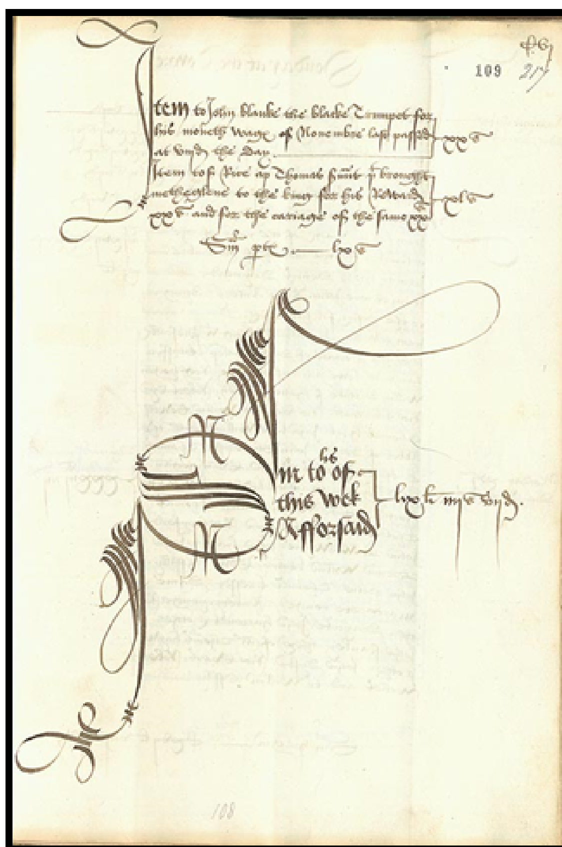


Figure 6 Black Trumpeter at Henry VIII's | This is a faithful photographic reproduction of a two-dimensional, public domain work of art.



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Item to John blanke the blacke Trumpet for his monethe wage of Novembre last passed at viijd the day

Figure 7 Pay day for John Blanke, the Black Trumpeter at Henry VIII's Tournament | This work is in the public domain in its country of origin and other countries and areas where the copyright term is the author's life plus 70 years or fewer.

Linda Colley (2005, 1992) states that for most of Briton's "early modern and modern history, they have had more contact with more parts of the world than almost any other nation" (8). Fryer draws attention to the fact that people of color and their descendants have been living within Britain since the sixteenth century. While some were enslaved and forcibly brought to Britain to work as domestics, others freely chose to settle within Britain, while still others lived there for a specific period and then returned to their home country. Ohajuru notes, "Africans and Asians and their descendants – have been … born in Britain since about the years 1505" (xiii). Yet, the lives and accomplishments of these individuals have been largely forgotten or "more insultingly, [they are] remembered as curiosities or objects of condescension" (Fryer xiii). This has contributed to the belief that Black and Brown Britons are a more recent part of British history when in fact, the opposite is true.

Stephen Bourne (2019) documents through first-hand accounts and photographs the experiences of Black people living within Britain during the First World War. In Bourne's earlier work (2010), he examines the contributions of Black soldiers and civilians, both men and women, during the Second World War. This population is routinely either ignored or dealt with superficially by historians. The average British documentary, movie, and book do not, in any way, even hint that people of color were active in the war efforts. This absence is particularly striking because of the common code and the idea of universal Britishness. It was heartfelt belief in this ideology or perhaps 'cultural brainwashing' that led many in the West Indies to volunteer their services in the war effort.

Bourne's focus is mainly on the contributions of civilians; however, Costello examines those who served as soldiers. Britain called upon its dominion troops from the African diaspora. Men from Canada, Bermuda, the British West Indies, and

British controlled African territories as well as those who were British-born and those residing in Britain all took part.[29] They all showed allegiance to the crown by volunteering to fight for it including the complex and controversial leader Marcus Garvey (Costello 68).

While Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. are recognizable names even though their political stances are less understood, Garvey's name and his positions are far less well-known. Yet, the Jamaican-born Garvey was an early twentieth-century activist, entrepreneur, and Black nationalist. He founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, "a fraternal order of Black nationalists" and started the Black Star Line, a shipping company, which was to move Black diasporic people to Africa (Abdelfatah). Garvey believed in self-determination and self-sufficiency; yet, even he answered Britain's call and encouraged others to follow suit as stated below:

> That we the members of the Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities League, assembled in general meeting at Kingston, Jamaica, being mindful of the great protecting and civilizing influence of the English nation and people of whom we are subjects, and their Justice to all men, and especially to their Negro Subjects scattered all over the world, hereby beg to express our loyalty and devotion to His Majesty the King, and Empire and our sympathy with those of the people who are in any way grieved and in difficulty (qtd. in Costello 71).

[29] During the First World War, the BWIR arrived in 1915; the Black contingent from Bermuda arrived in March 1916; the South African Native Labour Contingent arrived in France in October 1916; and Black Canadians arrived in Britain in March 1917 and were then shipped to France. See Costello.

It should be noted however, that while a number of people from Britain's colonies voluntarily showed loyalty to the 'Mother Country', some of whom traveled to England "through their own efforts," their reasons for doing so differed along political and economic lines (68). In speaking of "middle-class Caribbean blacks" (68) Costello states, "[t]heir protestations of patriotism and their support for the war effort was linked to the grant of the reforms they desired and, increasingly, pressure by the local media and a vocal population caused island governors to petition the British government for participation in the war" (68). A possible reason why this part of British history is not well known especially outside academia is because Black recruits that were British born or were resident in Britain were absorbed into the colonial Caribbean forces, the British West Indies Regiment (BWIR) thereby making them an 'invisible army' (Costello 69). Initially there was not a clear policy on how to handle Black recruits so while some West Indians were able to join the British regiments, others were rejected because of their skin color. Costello suggests that this might have led to "the formulation of a policy of enlisting black soldiers into the BWIR" (69). In addition to this population's invisibility in the First and Second World Wars, their absorption also made acknowledgement of a Black British presence within the public discourse much more difficult. It is a whitewashing of history that continues to this day resulting in the lack of recognition of the Black British presence that predates Empire Windrush.

3.3 The fight for civil rights

Although the civil rights movement began years earlier, during the 1960s things came to a head politically both in the US and the UK. In the US this happened with the passing of legislation such as the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act in 1965 which were the culmination of decades of political actions taken by

everyday individuals who mobilized to create change. Similarly, in the UK, people began organizing to improve the lives of non-White Britons in the late 1800s. Then, in 1931, Dr Harold A Moody, Jamaican-born and London-based, established the League of Coloured Peoples, a multi-racial organization whose members were "deeply disturbed by the presence of racial prejudice in Great Britain" (Macdonald 292). Despite the early grassroots efforts of emigrants from the Commonwealth, as well as those who were British born, in the 1960s, neither Conservative nor Labour governments passed antidiscrimination legislation. This is when individuals of the Windrush generation in Bristol took up the mantle, formed community associations, and fought against racism and discrimination in their city.[30]

Archon Fung (2003) highlights the importance of community organizations on a "psychological and individual level" noting that such associations are an "intrinsic component of democracy" as they inculcate civic dispositions and teach the skills necessary for political action (516). The word "democracy," as noted by Stephen Castles and Alastair Davidson (2000), "implies the *active* as opposed to the *passive* citizen. A *passive citizen* has rights, but only bears these rights; whereas the *active citizen*, participates fully "in the exercise of political power" (x). Associations add to a group's "democratic belonging" and typically, groups form because a particular community is experiencing "exclusion from mainstream society" (ix, xi). Community formation "consists of processes of home-building and place making, . . . and the assertion of national identities" (xi). As such, community associations "form a principal part of the structure of civil society" and members are encouraged to be

[30] It is important to note that Bristol is not alone in Caribbean led community organizations. There are multiple such organizations throughout Britain. Researching these organizations is part of a future project that has come out of this one.

active citizens by engaging in political discourse, forming opinions on policies, and taking action to improve areas they deem lacking (Fung 516).

While those of the Windrush generation may not have shared in all the rights of other British subjects, they took advantage of the fact that they lived in a liberal democracy and had the freedom and legal protection to create an association to advance their purposes. In Bristol, community associations were key to bringing much needed public attention to the plight of minority groups, changing a discriminatory policy, and uniting those who desired equality for all Britons. Due to the ongoing discrimination experienced by the Black and Brown communities, in 1962 Roy Hackett, along with Owen Henry and Clifford Drummond, formed the Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee (CCC) now known as the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association. In fact, all seven of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* were members of this charitable organization which was founded with three main social aims: to relieve poverty, to advance education, and to promote racial harmony. To that end, one of its first missions was to challenge the racist policies that existed within the city.

The CCC is most known for its role in the 1963 Bristol Bus Boycott. Members of other community groups joined in solidarity with the CCC. In time, realizing they were stronger together, the West Indian Development Council (WIDC) and the West Indian Dramatic Society (WIDS) united under the Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee's name. Inspired by the 1950s Montgomery Bus Boycott in the United States, Londoner Paul Stevenson and West Indians in Bristol initiated the Bristol Bus Boycott. While non-White drivers were a common occurrence in London, Bristol held fast in their discriminatory hiring practices. As evidenced by newspapers of the day, video footage, and photos, the boycott was supported across racial and ethnic lines.

On 28 August 1963, Martin Luther King delivered his *I have a dream* speech in Washington, DC. That same day, Ian Patey, the general manager of the bus company, announced there would be "complete integration" (Kelly). After four months of boycotting, the color bar was lifted and soon after, Bristol's first non-White bus conductor, Raghbir Singh, was hired.

During my fieldwork, I frequently heard that the Bristol Bus Boycott led to the passing of the 1965 Race Relations Act; yet, I was skeptical. The information seemed strictly anecdotal as I could not find any proof of a direct correlation. While anecdotal evidence has a part to play in researching culture and history, especially that of marginalized communities, this particular assertion is related to public policy, and therefore, I believed, should have been supported by physical evidence. As anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) notes, when conducting cultural analyses, "guessing at meanings, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses" is part of the process (20). Also, the timeline does not fully support the claim. The Race Relations Act of 1965 did not address discrimination in employment which was the very thing the Bristol Bus Boycott was protesting against. Instead, the Act addressed discrimination in public places. It was not until three years later, with the Race Relations Act of 1968, that Parliament addressed employment. Dresser (2013) posits, and I agree, that it might be more accurate to say that the boycott was an important factor that led to the passing of the Race Relations Act, but it was not the only factor (*Black and White* 57).

Despite its questionable direct causal relationship to the Race Relations Acts of the 1960s, the Bristol Bus Boycott is an important part of the fight for civil rights in Bristol specifically and the UK in general. It changed a discriminatory policy, and brought people of different ethnicities, "races", classes, and backgrounds together

toward a common goal. Yet, the new legislation was not a welcomed change for all. Toward the end of the decade, in 1968, Enoch Powell gave his infamous address henceforth dubbed the 'Rivers of Blood' speech wherein he warned of the dangers of increasing numbers of Commonwealth immigrants and their descendants. Powell argued that since the 1930s, there had been attempts to "blind this country to the rising peril" (Speech to London Rotary) .He argued that those focusing on anti-discrimination legislation that favored immigrants had it "exactly and diametrically wrong." The real cause for alarm, according to Powell, "lies not with the immigrant population but with those among whom they have come and are still coming." His speech ended with a sense of foreboding:

> For these dangerous and divisive elements the legislation proposed in the Race Relations Bill is the very pabulum they need to flourish. Here is the means of showing that the immigrant communities can organize to consolidate their members, to agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens, and to overawe and dominate the rest with the legal weapons which the ignorant the ill-informed have provided. As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding; like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood' (Speech to London Rotary).

From attacks by "Teddy Boys"[31] in Notting Hill in 1958 to the racially motivated murder of Stephen Lawrence on 22 April 1993, and the police shooting of unarmed Marcus Duggan in 2011,[32] Britain has a long tradition of both institutional and popular racism that legitimates harsh treatment of those who are not perceived as "native"

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[31] Teddy Boys were a British subculture known for their style of dress and violence.

[32] The police shooting of Duggan was the catalyst for the 2011 riot or "insurrection" that began in London and swept through the country. BBC News Interview Anchor Fiona Armstrong and Darcus Howe, 10 August 2011, youtube.com/watch?v=Xdjr64bBosg.

(Dawson 7). The 1999 report written on Stephen Lawrence's inquiry states the following:

> Stephen Lawrence's murder was simply and solely and unequivocally motivated by racism. It was the deepest tragedy for his family. It was an affront to society, and especially to the local black community in Greenwich. Nobody has been convicted of this awful crime. That also is an affront both to the Lawrence family and the community at large (Cook, Tom, et al.).

In the case of Duggan, despite eyewitness testimony and physical evidence that contradicted police reports, the shooting was deemed lawful (Prodger). In an April 2020 interview, British rapper Che Lingo states the 'driving force' of his song "My Block" was his friend Julian Cole whose neck was broken by police in 2013. The officers involved in the incident lied in official statements and consequently were fired, but to date, no criminal charges have been brought against them (Gayle; Trendell).

> Feds literally broke my bredrins neck
> Then lied on one of their statements
> Bro, how can you call that justice?
> When the blues see red there's greyness
> King of this castle you're looking at greatness. Watch me. (Che Lingo)

London-based, Jamaican-born dub poet and 2020 PEN Pinter Prize recipient, Linton Kwesi Johnson has spent his career creating poetry with social and political messages. In the 1970s he began writing about the Black British experience, from feelings of displacement and economic woes to police brutality. Johnson's 1980 poem "Sonny's Lettah", in appendix C, is not prescient in its detailing of harassment

and brutality at the hands of the police. In an August 2020 interview, Johnson states "with the benefit of hindsight I can say that what I've been doing over the years is to chronicle aspects of the black experience in Britain … I am recording history as it's being made". He states that despite the advancements that have been made such as an emerging Black middle class and Black members of Parliament, "our relationship with the police is one thing that has not changed one iota". Johnson remarks that his grandson experiences the same type of harassment he experienced while growing up in Britain. Racism, even if no longer overt as during the times of the color bar, is ingrained in Britain's "cultural DNA" making Sonny's Lettah still applicable forty years later as the following verses evidence (Johnson).

Mi an Jim stan up waitin pon a bus

Not causin no fuss

When all of a sudden a police van pull up

Out jump tree policemen

De whole a dem carryin baton

Dem walk straight up to me and Jim

. . .

Dem thump him him in him belly and it turn to jelly

Dem lick 'I'm pon 'I'm back and 'I'm rib get pop

Dem thump him pon him head but it tough like lead

Dem kick 'I'm in 'I'm seed and it started to bleed (Johnson)

Fryer critiques the complacent assumption that Black British people receive equal treatment in every respect as their White counterparts. Interestingly, in 1968 Enoch Powell stated: "The West Indian or Asian does not, by being born in England, become an Englishman. In law he becomes a United Kingdom citizen by birth; in fact

he is a West Indian or an Asian still" (Speech to London Rotary).

While the average British person may condemn Powell's words and the sentiment behind them, the daily lived experiences of people of color in Britain suggest his words still ring true. Fryer, for example, notes that inequality in housing, education, and employment still exists today as it did for early immigrants (387). To these categories, I would add inequality in policing.

Fryer states in the preface that when he uses the term Black people, he is referring to "Africans and Asians and their descendants" (xiii). It would be remiss were I not to acknowledge that much of the work on racism within Britain is "Atlantocentric" and often either excludes Asians or groups them under the label Black (Modood 6). Gilroy (2003) points out that in the 1970s, the word 'black' became synonymous with 'immigrant' (46). This speaks to the larger issue of privileging whiteness and grouping other "racialized or cultural groups" into a single category of 'other'. Seeing Britain "in terms of a black-white dualism" excludes the myriad voices that do not fit within these two categories (Modood 5).

Using Goodenough's discussion of culture as a point of reference, Geertz describes culture as "the writing out of systematic rules, an ethnographic algorithm, which, if followed, would make it possible to operate, to pass (physical appearance aside) for a native" (11). Passing for o being 'native' has not simply been knowing and following 'systematic rules'; it has also been, contrary to Geertz's summation, based on one's 'physical appearance' (11). Within the US, there are common initialisms such as DWB and WWB which stand for driving while Black/Brown and walking while Black/Brown. In these cases, skin color is the signifier of difference and the catalyst for unfair, illegal, and harsh treatment by police.

Language is another signifier of difference and has been used to impose an identity of non-belonging. David Evans (2015) refers to language as a ‘double-edged sword’ which “can both liberate and constrain identities" (4). Where “looks proverbially deceive”, language is viewed as a way to know “that ‘deep’ identity … – more satisfactorily than when we only see … and have no linguistic contact” (Joseph 3). In the UK, Polish immigrants generally benefited from their skin color as their whiteness served as a protective shield against racist attacks; however, their native tongue signified difference. Alina Rzepnikowska (2019) examines the “interplay between race, whiteness, politics and the media" by capturing the experiences of Poles in Britain (62). While much attention has been given to their experiences post-Brexit, Rzepnikowska’s work examines conditions of Polish women pre-Brexit and notes the racism and xenophobia they experienced.

Chapter 4 | establishing community identity and political agency

if you are the big tree, we are the small axe

~ Bob Marley & The Wailers

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapters have demonstrated how place naming contributes to feelings of belonging and dis-belonging. This chapter differentiates between belonging and the politics of belonging and examines how these relate to Lipsitz's (2007) "white spatial imaginary" as evidenced within the art world (13). My use of the term art world refers to traditional art institutions such as museums and galleries, alternative spaces meaning unconventional venues, academia, and public spaces. The following aims to show how the racialization and gendering of these spaces have become normalized even by those who are seemingly allies as I will argue is the case of the Guerilla Girls. Finally, the chapter focuses on the ways that marginalized groups have used art to construct and assert their identity as is shown in the Bristol case through diasporic Carnival and in other cities through community-engaged murals.

Nira Yuval-Davis (2011) defines belonging as a "dynamic process" that is both "multi-layered and … multi-territorial" (12). These layers are constructed by one's social position, political values, and the groups with which one identifies. Belonging also includes an emotional attachment to one's home; however, such feelings are not always "warm and fuzzy" (10). This complexity is encapsulated by James Baldwin in *Notes of a Native Son* when he states, "I love America more than any other country in this world, and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize

her perpetually" (6). While one's attachment may be positive in some respects, it can also include feelings of resentfulness and indignation.

Because belonging is multi-layered, the politics of belonging has to take into account how different social positions interact. The politics of belonging is made up of "political projects" that are rooted in power and include a two-step process which involves the power to construct boundaries and the ability to include or exclude people within those boundaries (Yuval-Davis 10, 18). While Yuval-Davis asserts that questions related to belonging and the politics of belonging are "some of the most difficult issues that are confronting all of us these days," these have been complex issues for people of the Caribbean diaspora in the US, England, and other countries since at least the 1880s when they began emigrating from the Caribbean to other parts of the world, so this is not solely a contemporary issue (2).

Discourse on diaspora and belonging is directly related to the complexities and fluidities of racial and cultural identity, especially among those of Caribbean heritage. This has been a theme within literature from Samuel Selvon's *The Lonely Londoners* (1956) and Paule Marshall's *Brown Girl, Brownstones* (1959) to Julia Álvarez's *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents* (1991), Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* (2000), and Maxine Beneba Clarke's *Foreign Soil* (2014), among many others. A key aspect of immigration is that the individual undergoes a change of identity and consequently of consciousness. The impetus for this ideological shift varies. George Lamming, one of the early writers of the genre now known as Caribbean literature, addresses this topic in his first novel. Lamming alongside Wilson Harris, Derek Walcott, Una Marson, Edgar Mittleholzer, and others were those who are now identified as pioneering Caribbean literature and each, with the exception of Walcott,

lived in England for a time. These began writing in the "boom period" (1950-1965) of Caribbean literature and have inspired many others.

Lamming's *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953) presents one reason for the change as seen through the character Trumper who left his Barbadian village and immigrated to the US. It was during this period that he, like many others before and after him, underwent a shift: "If there be one thing I thank America for, she teach me who my race wus. Now I'm never goin' to lose it. Never never" (296).The study of "race" is inherently complicated because it is a social construction and as such is variable. As noted by H. Hoetnik (1967), "one and the same person may be considered white in the Dominican Republic or Puerto Rico, and 'coloured' in Jamaica, Martinique or Curaçao; … called a 'Negro' in Georgia" (xii). "Race" is a key distinguishing fact between the Caribbean and the countries where many have relocated and are a racial minority group among a White majority population (Mintz 316). Migrating to a society where "'race' and racism are salient features," causes new identities to emerge (James 7). The cultural identity theory, specifically the avowal (how I see myself) and ascription (how others see me) constructs, is relevant when talking about racial identities among diasporic populations (Moss 375). Differences among minority groups, while "carefully registered within the group itself," are not perceived or deemed relevant by the majority population (Kessner and Caroli 186).

The fluidity of identity and how the racial, ethnic, and political consciousness of early West Indian immigrants changed at different periods in the twentieth century has been a consistent topic in Caribbean scholarship (Kasinitz 1992; Basch 1993; Cohen 1993; Owens 1996; Stephens 2005; Murdoch 2007; Reid-Salmon 2008; Davies 2013; Pulitano 2017; Roopnarine 2018). During the US civil rights movement,

political activists such as Shirley Chisholm, Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, and others, chose to emphasize their racial over their ethnic identity. Social and political changes in race relations in the 1960s made it easier for Black Caribbeans to have a politically and culturally distinctive identity from Black Americans. This is not to say that ethnic consciousness did not exist with early immigrants. The exact opposite is true as proven by the existence of numerous Caribbean community associations and cultural events such as diasporic Carnivals. The different stance, however, is directly related to the political climate in which Caribbean immigrants found themselves.

In referring to a Caribbean diaspora, I am aware that the Caribbean is viewed as a diaspora in and of itself since a large portion of its population are descendants of enslaved and indentured people. Because of this, the appropriateness of the term Caribbean diaspora has been questioned. Does the Caribbean have its own history and culture? Does a Caribbean diaspora exist? V.S. Naipaul has been critiqued for his seeming disdain of the region and its people. In *The Middle Passage* (1969) he comments on the lack of creativity, innovation, and history in the region stating in part, “[h]istory is built around achievement and creation; and nothing was created in the West Indies” (Naipaul 30). Naipaul’s comments seem to support the view that the Caribbean’s history and culture are essentially derivative.

The concept of the creolisation thesis credited to Kamau Brathwaite (1971) takes direct aim at Naipaul’s assertion and argues that such claims are an “old imperialist viewpoint” (Bolland 3). Creolisation, as defined by Braithwaite, is:

> a cultural process … which … may be divided into two aspects of itself-, ac/culturation, which is the yoking (by force and example, deriving from power/prestige) of one culture to another (in this case the slave/African to the

European); and inter/culturation, which is an unplanned, unstructured but osmotic relationship proceeding from this yoke. The creolisation which results (and it is a process not a product), becomes the tentative cultural norm of the society . . . (qtd. in Shephard and Richards vi)[33]

Caribbean social history is not solely one of "unilateral imposition of European culture"; as such, and as argued by O. Nigel Bolland (1998), the creolisation thesis gives agency to the Caribbean allowing for the analysis of social and cultural exchanges (Bolland 4). Verene Shepherd and Glen Richards (1998) note that Mary Louise Paratt's use of the term 'transculturation' and Homi Bhaba's 'hybridity' share the same "spirit" as Braithwaite's creolisation, but that the latter "is most clearly recognised in the field of Caribbean studies" (viii). Others have also drawn attention to the Caribbean's uniqueness. For example, Goldburne and Solomos (2004) argue the Caribbean, more so than any other region in our contemporary world, has been at the forefront of modernity in terms of capitalism and industrialism, plural identities, transnationality, and cultural border crossings (534).

Bearing in mind these multiplicities and the un-fixed nature of identity, I turn to Chambers who argues that there is power in writing and through this art form one can reveal their gaps, and the world and environment in which they live (10). Writing is but one of the "signs and symbols" that "operate as a *representational system*," with music, images, and objects being others (Hall 1). As such, I argue that visual art can likewise reveal the experiences that Black Caribbean artists encounter and the duality they feel as being both Black and British.

[33] It should be noted that the term Creole is also used as a signifier for people from Louisiana who are of mixed-ancestry which can include African, French, Indigenous, and Spanish.

4.1 Visual politics

An analysis of visual representation cannot be had without including visual politics which bell hooks (1995) defines as “the way race, gender and class shape art practices (who makes art, how it sells, who values it, who writes about it)” (xii). Art institutions, specifically museums, have been critiqued for their lack of diversity and Maura Reilly (2015) points out that even though the situation is better than it was when Linda Nochlin (1971) wrote “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?”, inequality still exists. For example, artists who are women earn about $20,000 less than their male counterparts in the US (Kaplan; Lindemann, et al. 337). Institutions such as the Royal Academy of Arts (RA) have begun to address these disparities. The RA, for example, is working on a plan to close its fourteen percent gender pay gap by 2023 (Rea). Curator and arts writer Maura Reilly comments, “[d]iscrimination against women at the top trickles down into every aspect of the art world—gallery representation, auction price differentials, press coverage, and inclusion in permanent-collection displays and solo-exhibition programs” (Reilly).

The Guerrilla Girls, a New York based feminist activist group that began in 1985, has brought much attention to the unequal treatment given to artists who are women through posters, talks, performances, and exhibitions (see fig.9).

Figure 9 Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have to be Naked to Get Into the Met. Museum?* 1989 | Copyright © Guerrilla Girls, courtesy guerrillagirls.com

Members of the group don gorilla masks and take on the names of famous dead artists such as Käthe Kollwitz and Frida Kahlo to maintain anonymity while keeping the focus on the issues they wish to have exposed and addressed namely, "gender and ethnic bias as well as corruption in politics, art, film, and pop culture" (Guerilla Girls). A message from their workshop reads as follows:

> We undermine the idea of a mainstream narrative by revealing the understory, the subtext, the overlooked, and the downright unfair. We believe in an intersectional feminism that fights discrimination and supports human rights for all people and all genders. (Guerilla Girls)

Yet, the group has been critiqued by the mujeres of the Electric Machete art collective. While the mujeres respect the Guerilla Girls for their efforts and accomplishments, they believe the Guerilla Girls' messaging often "miss[es] the mark … in terms of whom they're representing" (Mugo). Latina artists are either "missing" or "misappropriated" in the art world so the mujeres speak of the ways

gender and ethnicity intersect (Mugo). One of the mujeres, Jessica Lopez Lyman states:

> I think what's hard is we have these contradictions when we have multiple identities. One half is like, "Okay they're women and we have to support this," but at the same time you've got some white woman calling herself Frida Kahlo. One of my home girls got an opportunity to interview the Guerrilla Girls and she asked them about the name of Frida Kahlo and the woman responded, "Well, I don't know, maybe my grandmother's Latina or something, I need to look into that." … What the Guerrilla Girls do brilliantly is to open up the conversation. Where I think they can go a little bit further is in actually giving a platform to communities to speak from their own voices. (qtd. in Mugo)

While Lipsitz's work on whiteness is not specific to visual representation, it does provide insight into the visual politics of race within the art world and public spaces in general. His argument that communities of color experience "social subordination in the form of spatial regulation" is evident within the canon of art history and mirrored in museums (17). On one of my visits to the Brooklyn Museum of Art in 2019, I joined a gallery tour in which the docent directed the group's attention to *A Storm in the Rocky Mountains, Mt. Rosalie* (see fig. 10). The large size of the painting along with the artist's manipulation of colors to create dramatic lighting draws the viewer into the scene. The landscape is presented as vast and uncultivated.

Figure 10 Albert Bierstadt. ***A Storm in the Rocky Mountains, Mt. Rosalie*****, 1866.**
Oil on canvas. |Photo: Brooklyn Museum

Upon closer look at the seemingly uninhabited terrain, one sees an Indigenous man and perhaps his two children with their horses and a dog in the valley. Their size pales in comparison to the backdrop, and it is as if they are being engulfed by their surroundings. Paintings such as these were used to encourage westward expansion while reinforcing the belief in the “moral geography” of White settlers (15). Lipsitz explains as follows:

> …in order to have pure and homogenous spaces, impure populations had to be removed. … Rather than sharing North American space with Indians as common ground, the moral geography of the colonists required conquest, genocide, and Indian removal to produce the sacred ground that the Europeans felt would recreate the biblical idea of a city on a hill. The creation

> of homogenous polities living in free spaces required the exclusion of others deemed different, deficient, and non-normative. (15)

One can also witness the “racialization of space and the spatialization of race” in portraitures (Lipsitz 16). Starting with the Renaissance, portraits have held a special place in art history. Drawing or painting someone’s likeness was not just a way to record the person’s features, but it also provided a narrative of the person’s life. Portraits give insight into one’s profession, hobbies, character, and/or family. Historically, the Black figure has been portrayed in the background and as a literal or figurative servant to emphasize the social status of the White figure. One exception to this is David Martin’s double portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay and her cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray (see fig. 11).[34]

[34] Positioning Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsey in a non-servile role is so unique that this painting inspired a movie.

Figure 11 David Martin. *Portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle Lindsay (1761-1804) and her cousin Lady Elizabeth Murray (1760-1825),* 1778. Oil on canvas. | This is a faithful photographic reproduction of a two-dimensional, public domain work of art.

In Titus Kaphar's (2017) TED Talk, the artist focuses on the positioning of the Black figure in art history recalling that in his art history class little or no mention was made of these images. Kaphar states:

> Painting is a visual language where everything in the painting is meaningful, is important. It's coded. But sometimes, because of the compositional structure, because of compositional hierarchy, it's hard to see other things. … There's more written about dogs in art history than there are [sic] about this other character [a young black male] here. Historically speaking, in research on these kinds of paintings, I can find out more about the lace that the woman is wearing in this painting - - the manufacturer of the lace - - than I can about this character here… .(TED Talk)

Art museums are not the only institutions that need to re-examine their content. Academia and the canon of art history also need to adjust their gaze. I can relate to Kaphar's story because my undergraduate art history classes typically followed the same pattern. The one class available that did not focus almost entirely on White artists was a Native American art class. This class, however, was not offered within the art department, but instead through anthropology. While largely centered on the art produced by White artists, the few exceptions were: the conceptual artist Adrian Piper, interdisciplinary artist Coco Fusco, performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña, painter Frida Kahlo, and painter Diego Rivera. Wanting to be introduced to a greater number of Black and Brown artists, I chose to do my graduate study at one of the U.S.' historically Black colleges and universities (HBCU). The work of figurative artists such as Henry Ossawa Tanner (1859-1937), Augusta Savage (1892-1962), Elizabeth Catlett (1915-2012), Charles White (1918-1979), John Biggers (1924-2001), and others accomplished two major things. First, they presented Black people as well as other racial and ethnic minorities in non-submissive positions making them central figures and not just props. In doing so, identities that are socially subordinated were given "agency and humanity" (Carroll). The fact remains that artists such as these are often left out or nominally mentioned in art historical discourse at predominantly White institutions.

Today, there is a resurgence of portraiture and two of the artists leading this charge are Kehinde Wiley and Amy Sherald, both of whom were commissioned to paint the portraits of President Barack and First Lady Michelle Obama respectively. While such artists contribute to filling the gap in visual representation, as hooks noted twenty-five years ago, the "white-supremacist capitalist patriarchal" system still exists and while things have improved, equity has not been fully achieved (xii).

Art institutions such as museums have the power to “control many aspects of representation” through exhibitions and programming (Moss 375). This is not a call for the “eradication” of art that highlights moral geography or spatializes “race” rather, exhibitions and programming that allow for the shifting of one’s gaze, even “momentarily” (Kaphar). Joni Boyd Acuff and Laura Evans are friends who “shared a deep, abiding love for art and for education” yet they held contrasting views on museums rooted in memories of their first visits (xi). Evans states, “[w]here Joni stuck out, I fit in. Where she felt 'Othered,' I felt welcomed. Where she felt alone, I felt part of a community. It was many years later, while attending college, that these contrasting frameworks were revealed to me, and consequently, I became disturbed by this disparity” (xvii). Strongly believing in the power of museums to “initiate critical inquiry” and to educate, Acuff and Evans began collaborating on a text to provide museum educators with tools to engage in multicultural programming (xviii).

In London, the Victoria and Albert Museum has been trying to attract a wider, more diverse audience so they have organized specific programming to appeal to Black and Brown communities. Their efforts have been met with mixed results which have impressed upon them the importance of not relying upon a single approach to achieve their goals as multi-racial communities are not static nor are they individual monoliths (Nightingale 79-89).

The Boston Museum of Fine Art (MFA) began acquiring art by Black artists in 1969 and today is said to hold “one of the most significant collections of art” in the US of Black American and diasporic artists (Museum of Fine Arts). However, simply displaying works or implementing programming that is more representative of society does not necessarily change the dynamics of White moral geography within the space of a museum. For example, in 2019, a group of Black and Brown

seventh-grade students visited the MFA as part of a school trip. Their teacher reported that upon leaving the museum some of the children were in tears as they had been racially profiled, and subsequently followed, and harassed by staff (Guerra). Despite the MFA's curatorial attempts to be inclusive, these students left with a feeling of dis-belonging because of the racialization of space and the spatialization of race.

Although there are laws to the contrary, "race" is a "key variable" in the politics of belonging and therefore in determining which spaces one can occupy from homes and jobs to public streets. Lipsitz uses the term "white spatial imaginary" to refer to systems that are "based on exclusivity and … function[s] as a central mechanism for skewing opportunities and life chances … along racial line[s]" (Lipsitz 13). Bedoya (2014) expands on this by pointing out that the white spatial imaginary is in direct contrast to spatial justice. He states, "if you're a person of color standing on a corner, beware. You are perceived as a threat because your color challenges the white spatial imaginary of that street" (*Creative Time Reports*). This is evidenced by policies such as carding in Canada, stop and search in the UK, and stop and frisk in the US all of which target people from Black and Brown communities who are occupying public spaces. Whether in the enclosed spaces of an art museum or public streets of a city, spatial injustices that are rooted in moral geography and enforced through the white spatial imaginary are used to exploit and shape the lives of those considered "racial subordinates" (Lipsitz 16). Yet, Bedoya argues that the dominant white spatial imaginary can be disrupted thereby leading to public spaces that are reflective of the diverse communities in which we live.

Bedoya draws attention to the "Rasquache spatial imaginary" (*Creative Time Reports*) and notes that Rasquache is thought of as a Chicano aesthetic, but

Katherine Cooper states it is actually a more global and intercultural aesthetic and sensibility (*Architectural Digest*). It is “an aesthetic of intensity” that essentially challenges racial subordination with “ultravisibility”, but as Ybarra-Frausto notes it is ‘first … an attitude and a sensibility’ (*Creative Time Reports*; *Smithsonian Insider*). Shaheen Hughes, Chief Executive Officer at the Museum of Freedom and Tolerance in Perth, Australia states:

> The need to see yourself, and your history is visceral for voices that have been erased. It’s an act of deep agency. I exist, I am here. Visibility is the crucial weapon in the war for hearts and minds. We need visibility to create the conditions of empathy and compassion that humanize those around us, and prompt understanding and social change. (Hughes)

One way marginalized communities are able to intervene and make themselves socially, culturally, and politically visible is by taking space literally. As noted in chapter two, creatives have been instrumental in bringing Britain’s past into public discourse. Michael V. Angrosino (1975) states, “The value in studying the work of an artist, … is that a deeper level of understanding might be revealed” (9). While he is specifically referring to literature, I hold the same is true for all art forms. Castles and Davidson point to minority communities and consciousness as “breeding grounds for political associations and movements, which affect political institutions and political culture” (xi). Some of these movements include art, specifically murals. During the 1960s and 1970s, an increasing number of murals began appearing on exterior buildings in “ethnically diverse, and oftentimes neglected neighborhoods” within the US (Webster and Rhor 87). In 1967, a group of artists came together to create the *Wall of Respect* in Chicago, Illinois (see fig. 8).

Figure 8 ***The Wall of Respect*** **| Photo by Robert A. Sengstacke | Courtesy of Myiti Sengstacke-Rice**

This mural, with its vibrant colors highlighting "pivotal black figures and leaders" such as W.E.B. DuBois, Malcolm X, and Nina Simone, is credited with starting the mural movement within the US and beginning a movement in cities across the country highlighting the contributions made by Black, Brown, and Asian Americans (Webster and Rhor 88). What separates this mural from earlier ones is that it originated from within the community and had the support of community members. Community engaged public art began in the latter part of the 1960s. In discussing murals, the art critic and activist Lucy Lippard speaks of their 'long-term social impact' and says that they are 'a uniquely democratic public form of art' (qtd. in Webster and Rohr 87).

Since the 1960s, artists have created public works that show respect for and inspire their communities. However, street art has also inadvertently contributed "to the development of the 'creative city', where the public space is monetized and transformed into high-priced trendy areas" (Martinique). It is seen as "providing an

‘edge’ and a sense of ‘authenticity’ to the neighbourhood” and is used as a tool in the gentrification process (Martinique). The result is that the artists and other long-time residents are being priced out of their neighborhoods.

This brings us back to the city of Bristol. As noted in the previous chapter, Bristol has a complex relationship with its past and how best to acknowledge it. On 27 February 2019, I attended a meeting of community members, educators, and activists. The purpose of said meeting was to discuss ways in which primary and secondary school curriculum could be diversified. Currently there is a growing movement within the UK to “decolonise the curriculum”. While this began with students at the university level with #decolonisingthecurriculum, it has also become a topic of discussion for primary and secondary education.

At the meeting, I was taken aback when one of the educators had no prior knowledge of the Bristol Bus Boycott and asked if it had been successful. While written about in newspaper articles and in select blogs, the story of the Bristol Bus Boycott and its effect on the city and the country is not commonly taught in schools.[35] Select leaders of the US civil rights movement such as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Jr, and Malcolm X are included within the curriculum and are household names within the larger community. A ten-minute walk from where I was based in Bristol is a community center named after Malcolm X. While it is important for students to be educated about the wider world, there is a lack of educational resources that engages with the civil rights movement within the UK itself. This, as noted previously, fuels the false idea that racial injustice is something that occurs in other countries, but not the UK.

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[35] Inspired by the Seven Saints of St. Pauls© project, local schools in Bristol are now talking about this part of the city’s history.

In Robin Bunce and Paul Field's (2015) biography of Darcus Howe, an activist, journalist, and the nephew of Trinidadian CLR James, they state "there has been a resurgence of outright denial, linked to a romantic dumbed-down 'whiggish' view of history that suggests that racism was *always* someone else's problem" (8). They refer to the 'abolitionist myth' wherein Britain is seen as heroic and moral because of the British abolitionist movement (9). In 2010, Prime Minister David Cameron reinforced this idea:

> . . . we have the values – national values that swept slavery from the seas, that stood up to both fascism and communism and that helped to spread democracy and human rights around the planet – that will drive us to do good around the world. (9)

Just as the *Wall of Respect* honored those worthy of note within the US, *The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* does so for seven leaders within Britain. As a creative placemaking project, not only does it serve an educational purpose, it also meets a social and cultural need. There are two options for those interested in taking a tour of the trail. One is a guided tour and the other is self-guided via an accompanying app. Both options provide background on the people within the murals, their contributions to the city, and surrounding points of interests. An interactive performance is also included in the guided tour as visitors are given lyrics to specific Caribbean folk songs and are encouraged to sing along with the tour guide. There is an accompanying lesson plan provided to teachers for use prior to and after the tour.

This educational component is what Markusen and Gadwa (2010) refer to as an instrumental effect of creative placemaking; whereas intrinsic is related to the beauty, emotional insight, innovation, and social and political critique. In a

conference presentation, stated that there is a danger in focusing on the instrumental ends of arts and culture (Markusen 2015). One of the attendees, and I agree, referred to this as “false dichotomy[y]” noting that instrumental and intrinsic factors are not in conflict as both contribute to the creation of place (Markusen).

The St. Pauls’ neighborhood is currently undergoing gentrification. One resident of the area is quoted as saying, ‘With gentrification you lose the personality of the place’ (Glaister). While another referred to the neighborhood’s regeneration as a “social cleansing” and commented that it destroys communities (Glaister). Generally speaking, street artists respond in different ways to gentrification; some remove their works while others make an effort to “reflect the history and context of the neighborhoods” (Martinique). *The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* does the latter by preserving the heritage of this neighborhood and the legacy of seven unique individuals.

Public art that is centered on cultural heritage provides needed representation, a sense of belonging, and a communal feeling. It has the ability to promote trust and build social capital in areas that are politically and financially disenfranchised. Murals help define physical spaces while defining and presenting a community’s identity; yet, these are not the only art form that encompasses the dynamic of social, cultural, and political visibility. Carnival celebrations also play a key role.

4.2 Diasporic Carnival

Cohen’s (1997) contribution to the discourse on Caribbean diasporic identities and the politics of belonging is the application of the term “cultural diaspora”. Cohen believes that Caribbean people, regardless of where they live in the diaspora, are “an exemplary case of a cultural diaspora” (144). He states, “[t]he social behaviour of

Caribbean people in their places of sojourn and settlement provides telling evidence of the creation of a cultural diaspora, but more sustained empirical work needs to be undertaken on this issue" (144). Cohen points to Carnival and the Hindu festival of Phagwa also known as Holi as cultural examples of this diaspora.

Carnival is one of the most notable expressions of the Caribbean diaspora being ultra-visible and literally taking place. Although it is arguably 'the world's most popular transnational celebration,' it is one of the "least known major festivals" (Riggio 241; Mason 7, 165; Manning 36; Nurse 246). Manning notes that while Third World countries are known for importing popular culture, 'the reverse process' receives less attention (qtd. in Nurse 662). A possible reason for this is that diasporic Carnivals have typically been viewed as crowded, frivolous, and unstructured street parties undeserving of serious study (Turner 372).

Trinidad Carnival is one of the most photographed street festivals in the world, and with immigration, it has spread to faraway places influencing over sixty diasporic Carnivals throughout Europe and North America. However, Carnival is not formulaic; instead, it continues to evolve with each iteration having its unique differences. The innate transnationalism within this Carnival has been highlighted by scholars such as Constance Sutton, et al. (1987), Philip Kasinitz (1992), Philip Scher (2003), Connor Geraldine, et al. (2004), and others.

In the UK alone, there are at least thirty diasporic Carnivals, making it a central feature of Black British identity and "a resource for cultural resistance and for social progress" (Marshall, et al. 34; Nurse 247). Diasporic Carnivals have evolved largely due to the participation of groups from diverse cultures. Amoamo's (2011) research of Maori performance and tourism critiques the assumed "inherent purity and originality of cultures" and notes that 'the 'signs' of culture can be appropriated,

translated, re-historicized and read anew' (Amoamo 1257). She highlights the transformative power of hybridity which allows for diversity and creativity. This work is relevant because like people from the Caribbean, Maoris have also been homogenized as a single group when in reality, they are ethnically different and performances of the haka reflect these differences. Similarly, diasporic Carnival performances also reflect cultural differences.

The term diasporic Carnival refers to celebrations modeled on Trinidad Carnival and while the term 'clones' (Mason 165) has been used, this is misleading because even though diasporic Carnivals incorporate elements of Trinidad Carnival, they are not beholden to a "primordial unity or fixity" (Bhabha 37). Each performance is "produced in the articulation of cultural differences" and reflects the socio-cultural and inter-cultural identity of the people and their location (Bhabha 1). Neither are diasporic Carnivals passive nostalgic reminders of life within the Caribbean; rather, they serve as a means "of taking and claiming space," negotiating identity, and expressing creativity, not "homogenizing the history of the present" (Riggio 243; Bhabha 9). This lack of fixity allows for creativity and agency over the socio-cultural identity of individual Carnivals (Bhabha 1-2, 37). At the same time, however, diasporic Carnivals are part of a whole and contain specific elements present in Trinidad Carnival. Mason (1998) points to steelpan, calypso, and masquerade as the three essential elements of any diasporic Carnival. Expanding upon Mason, Nurse states that street parade or theater is also necessary (Nurse 246-247).

In July 1968, two months after Powell's 'River of Blood Speech', Bristol experienced its first diasporic Carnival. It is commonly said that St. Pauls' Carnival, formerly known as St. Pauls' Festival was established as a thank you from the Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee (CCC) to Bristolians for their support in the

Bristol Bus Boycott and to share Caribbean culture with the city. However, this account greatly diminishes the power of this community association, its “collective resistance” against inequality, and its struggle for socio-political parity (Gilroy 321). It also fails to address the socio-political importance of diasporic Carnival.

“Caribbean spaces” as defined by Davies (2013), “are locations that preserve certain versions of Caribbean culture as they provide community support in migration” (Davies 2). The CCC is an example of such a space that had both a civic and a political mission (Fung 516). The founders of the CCC extended their Caribbean space in the years after the successful boycott. They assisted in the development of the Bristol Racial Equality Council in 1965, set up various committees to provide support for people within St. Pauls’ and neighboring communities, and in 1968 established a Carnival celebration that is still in existence to date. Far from being simply a street party or expression of gratitude to fellow Bristolians, St. Pauls’ Carnival was established to interrupt the status quo and to assert the cultural identity of the Windrush generation on their terms (Riggio 26). Carnival is not apolitical; on the contrary, it is very political and has been likened to “the aesthetic equivalent of social protest” because it takes claim over city spaces, “affirms its right to those streets,” and demands to be seen (24). In being visible, there is an urging of acknowledgment not just on a cultural level, but also a political one.

Barbara Bender posits that the landscape is ‘never inert’, but rather cultivated and shaped by ‘people [who] engage with it, rework it, appropriate it and contest it’ (qtd. in Taucar 81). In Jacqueline Taucar’s article on Toronto’s Caribbean Carnival, she states that Carnival temporarily transforms the landscape “through movement, sensation, and emotion” and “physically, emotionally, and sensually unite[s] the

community of mas players in the shared ‘experience of a moment, a pulse, a movement’” (Taucar 81-82). This is not unique to Toronto as a similar transformation occurs in each city where diasporic Carnivals are performed. Additionally, the women, specifically the women of color, are in an important position that is often overlooked in scholarship. Studies centered on women in diasporic Carnival often examine their sexuality; however, their presence, unencumbered movement, and sexuality work together and separately to temporarily interrupt the racialized and gendered streets upon which they play mas. This is an area deserving of a fuller exploration.

The first years of St. Pauls’ Festival were a more “toned down” version of what now exists (Curtis). It had the essential elements of a diasporic Carnival: steelpans, masquerade, and calypso, but the celebration “was more like a fête or a fair” (Curtis). Instead of a street procession, it was confined to enclosed areas such as parks as was similar to a fête meaning a celebratory party. By the mid-1970s, this had changed and today it is a fully formed event with its own procession route (see fig. 12). The evolution of St. Pauls’ Carnival speaks to some of the socio-political advances made in the city by those of Caribbean heritage and is a physical example of how a specific Caribbean space has expanded.

Figure 12 St. Pauls Carnival procession route | St Pauls Carnival (Bristol) CIC

Because of the large number of Bristolians of Jamaican heritage, St. Pauls' Carnival has taken on aspects of Jamaican culture, specifically its sound system. Initially not part of the public celebration, sound systems were introduced in the mid to late 1970s. The addition of the sound system speaks to the diversity of diasporic Carnival and also to its transnationalism. As in New York, where the transnational flow between New York and Trinidad is evident, the same interaction occurs between Bristol and Jamaica (Kasinitz). Diasporic Carnival and its transnational nature aid in constructing and expressing cultural identities within the diaspora and, as argued by Philip Scher (2003), has an effect on the home society as well.

In addition to being a 'Caribbean space', St. Pauls' Carnival is also a 'third space' as defined by Bhaba (1994) where one experiences "the performative nature

of differential identities" and "where difference is neither One nor the Other but, *something else besides, in-between"* (219). With diasporic Carnivals, we experience the dramatic encounter of cultural differences, the "hybrid hyphenations", and "stubborn chunks" that not only mark, but are "the basis of cultural identifications" (Bhabha 219, 224). This is precisely why, as stated above, the use of the word 'clones' is misleading and therefore problematic.

Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque is typically applied in Carnival discourse. Bakhtin argues:

> Carnival festivities and the comic spectacles and ritual connected with them had an important place in the life of medieval man. . . . All these forms of protocol and ritual based on laughter and consecrated by tradition existed in all the countries of medieval Europe; they were sharply distinct from the serious official, ecclesiastical, feudal, and political cult forms and ceremonials. They offered a completely different, nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical aspect of the world, of man, and of human relations; they built a second world and a second life outside officialdom, a world in which all medieval people participated more or less, in which they lived during a given time of the year. (5-6)

During this time, people experienced a "temporary liberation from the prevailing truth and from established order" (10). They were not beholden to any social constraints as hierarchy was suspended and everyone was on an equal social footing. This resulted in "a consecration of inequality" (10). Bakhtin also draws attention to Carnival's importance by stating that one cannot understand the culture of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, or the historical development of Europe's

culture without realizing the importance of Carnival. Even though Bakhtin is often referenced in Carnival discourse, Schechner (2004) argues against his relevance to diasporic Carnivals noting that Bakhtin's notions of Carnival are rooted in a "stratified" and "non-democratic" system; whereas diasporic Carnivals are celebrated in places where there is a social 'baseline' or "illusion of democracy" (3). As such, revelers are "collectively sovereign" and therefore have nothing from which to rebel or to seek temporary relief (3).

While diasporic Carnivals are celebrated in countries that are democratic, the rights and privileges held by people within these democracies are not equal. In Bristol, for example, Carnival is a temporary relief from anonymity. During the first weekend in July, those of Caribbean heritage are free to exist, to express their cultural identity, to assert their political opinions, and to feel a sense of belonging in a city with numerous public markers that exclude Black and Brown residents. This is not insignificant nor is it isolated to Bristol.

Karina Smith's (2017) examination of Australia's Caribbean community's participation in the Moomba festival provides a similar perspective. Although Victoria does not have its own diasporic Carnival, the community's Carnival entry into the city's Moomba parade "has drawn attention to the existence of a Caribbean community" (116-117). Smith describes this as "a strategic move for the community" allowing it to become known to the dominant population and take its rightful place in "a state-sanctioned expression of multiculturalism" (117). In being "a signifying practice" and creating a highly visible "Black space … in what is still a predominantly white society," the Carnival entry has created a space for "discussions about multi-racialism in Australia" and establishes the Caribbean community as a political player by making the community visible via its display of culture (Hall, "Introduction"

5; Smith 117). Additionally, “taking space” allows for the passing down of cultural traditions to family members born in Australia (Davies 167). As Stephanie Anne Johnson (2019) notes, “We live in a culture that prioritizes the sense of sight. If something is not seen, it does not exist” (43). This is precisely why diasporic Carnival has been performed in cities throughout the world to express not only one’s cultural identity, but also one’s existence and with that existence a political voice.

Looking around the crowded procession route of St. Pauls’ Carnival, Bristolians of Caribbean heritage feel much like the character Aldrick in Earl Lovelace’s novel *The Dragon Can’t Dance* (1979).

> This is people taller than cathedrals; this is people more beautiful than avenues with trees.’ And full to brimming with furious tears, Aldrick felt again the fierce love and hope that he had doubted in himself, felt again a sense of mission; felt that yes, there was a place here for him, that there was something to say yes to, and people before whom and on whose behalf he could dance the dragon. (122-123)

During my fieldwork, I talked with people who participated in the St. Pauls Festival and/or St. Pauls Carnival as children and as adults. The same sense of wonderment and pride in oneself and cultural identity that Lovelace expressed in words, I witnessed in the faces and voices of those with whom I spoke. For Aldrick, the dragon did not simply symbolize Carnival time; it was a signifier of his masculinity and his place in the world. Likewise, for Bristolians, Carnival is not a mere street party, rather it is a visual representation of cultural identity and a way to take space in a city where one is part of a marginalized group.

Carnival is not easily categorized into a specific field of study such as art history or performing arts, and without such categorization establishing and implementing a framework to analyze it is also problematic (Tancons 2012; Nunley and Bettleheim 1988; Hill 1972). While both of these issues are beyond the scope of my research, Carnival is the 'living heritage' of Caribbean communities and as such is a manifestation of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), which includes: rituals and festive events, oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, and social practices (Marshall 489; van der Hoeven 232; unesco.org). Organizers and those who play mas' are in effect safeguarding this ICH and ensuring its future. Just as Carnival is a visible signifier that marks the presence of Caribbean communities, murals have a history of accomplishing the same for marginalized communities.

4.3 Public art

Current president of the Ford Foundation and previous vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation,[36] Darren Walker, summed up public art's societal importance in six words: "[p]ublic art is a public good" (qtd. in *Forbes*i). Public art's social and psychological benefits are promoted by public art advocates and administrators in various cities and countries throughout the world. As previously mentioned, in the 1980s advocacy for public art emphasized its cultural benefits. Even today, there is a consensus that a city's public art is indicative of its economic, social, and cultural health. Public art advocates may be correct in their claims; yet, to date, there remains a scholarly gap in critically analyzing such assertions. Most research employs a 'productionist' or 'semiotic' paradigm meaning there is either a focus on

[36] Both foundations have similar philanthropic missions. The Ford Foundation aims to "reduce poverty and injustice, strengthen democratic values, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement" and The Rockefeller Foundation's mission is to "promote the well-being of humanity throughout the world". See: www.fordfoundation.org/about/about-ford/ and rockefellerfoundation.org/about-us/.

the artist's intent or the symbolism of the artwork (Hall and Robertson 18-19). Such research has led to two critiques of public art, the first of which is that "too much advocacy aspires to myths of harmony based around essentialist concepts" (19). I agree with this critique; yet, this is only one aspect of public art discourse that has yet to be resolved.

The scholarly debate on public art ranges from defining it to its style, content, and function. Cameron Cartiere and Martin Zebracki (2016) acknowledge that although a "single-sentence definition of public art may never be attainable," there are signifiers within the field that allow for a "working definition" as detailed below:

> *Public art is art outside of museums and galleries and must fit within at least one of the following categories:*
>
> 1. in a place freely accessible or visible to the public: *in public*
> 2. concerned with, or affecting the community or individuals: *public interest*
> 3. maintained for or used by the community or individuals: *public place*
> 4. paid for by the public: *publicly funded* (2-3).

Knight argues that public art is not merely art within the public domain; yet as stated above, a "definitive interpretation" which all can agree upon remains elusive (1) .

When it comes to style, the term "public art" has been used as an umbrella under which varied forms of temporary, permanent, and site-specific art forms have been placed. Murals are sometimes referred to as public art and other times as street art which is said to be "a democratic form of popular public art probably best understood by seeing it in situ" (Art Radar Asia). Works given the street art label are often dubbed 'unofficial' due to the legality of the work and whether or not funding

was received to create it (Baldini iii). However, not all street art fits comfortably into this categorization. For example, street artists have been commissioned to produce murals on buildings to increase the property value. Because of public arts' wide scope, Cartiere and Zebracki note that it "has crept into every corner of our society and perhaps, in part, that is why it is one of the most controversial and misinterpreted art disciplines and subjects of study today" (2-3). As with defining public art when it comes to discourse on public art's function and value, scholars are not in agreement.

Casanovas (1997) argues that public art should take on social responsibility and not solely be artistic. Referencing Langlois and Sabelli, Cartiere and Zebracki note that while public art may not bring about any "tangible social change" it has the ability "to harness a political imagination" allowing people to see and put into practice "different ways to be in the world together" (8). Others also believe in public art's political value. According to Baldini, public art's "essential value" is "to promote political participation and to encourage tolerance" (3). While Diana Boros posits that it is "inherently of positive political value" (xii-xiii) and "create(s) a desire to care—about yourself, and others, to participate—in public spaces and debates, and ultimately, to initiate change in individuals" (xi). In addition to claims of public art's social and political value are its supposed economic benefits specifically in regards to regeneration projects (Bach 153; Hein 14).

Although there are challenges in analyzing public art's economic value in urban regeneration, cities desiring to become more attractive and appealing to tourists, business owners, and residents with higher incomes, have used public art as part of their overall branding strategy. This has led to the development of art programs that espouse the many benefits of public art for the city and communities.

However, part of the reason public art is controversial is because of its use as a tool of neoliberalism to transform urban areas. Joanne Sharp et al. (2005) problematize public art arguing that when public art intersects with urban restructuring, the effects can be inclusionary and exclusionary. We can see how this plays out by examining Bristol which is a leading city in the UK when it comes to commissioning public art. Application of the city's official public art policy aims to, among other things:

1. create a unique identity
2. enhance community involvement
3. enhance empowerment (*Public Art Strategy* 6)

Bristol is the eighth-largest city in England and since 2002 it has experienced "unprecedented population growth" resulting from migration, an increase in births, and a decrease in deaths (*The Population* 1). In 2011, Bristol's estimated population was 428,100. Of this number, 15% of the people living in Bristol were born in another country. This amounts to 19,686 who were born in an EU country and 40,540 who originate from a non-EU country (28). In total, Bristol is home to people from 50 countries who speak 91 languages, and practice 45 different religions (40). These figures speak to Bristol's diversity and raise the complicated issue of how the city can create a unique identity that also enhances community involvement and empowerment without members of its society feeling excluded.

I interviewed Aldo Rinaldi (appendix D), the Senior Public Art Officer at Art and the Public Realm Bristol regarding the three claims stated in its policy. Since Bristol is home to a diverse population, the difficulty of establishing a 'unique identity' can be assumed. When I asked Rinaldi to define Bristol's identity, he responded as follows:

Bristol has its own identity like other cities have a distinctive identity. For instance people think of Bristol as having urban art, a free spirit, green outlook, a good music scene, and a heritage environment, so identity is about the character of the city. But that is different for everyone but some aspects all agree with (green, liberal, etc).

Rinaldi directed my attention to the temporary site-specific art installation *The Black Cloud* which addresses climate change as an example of the type of public art that reflects Bristol's identity as an environmentally conscious city (see fig.13). The commission was given to STUDIO MORISON, an "artist led creative practice" that is based in the United Kingdom (Morison). They engage in collaborative work with community members and make a point of including locals in the installation of their works.

Figure 13 Heather & Ivan Morison. *The Black Cloud* (2019) | Photo courtesy of Wig Worland

Enhancing community involvement and having a social and political structure in place that allows for and encourages empowerment are worthwhile goals. Yet, a

problem emerges when the conversation turns to execution. I asked Rinaldi how artists and communities that have been excluded from public art are now included. He states:

> Public art is publicly accessible, if they are excluded it is because they don't know about it or don't engage with it. We work across the whole city and across many contexts (health care, schools, offices, public spaces, landscape, temporay [sic], and with partners such as Arnolfini[37] and others) so we think it is largely accessible. Be nice to do more publicity and marketing but that is expensive.

The belief that 'public art is publicly accessible' has been thoroughly critiqued. While it is true, "public art is a genre that provides the same kind of 24-hour access that defines the Internet" (Johnson 42), simply being within the public does not make the art accessible to everyone. One cannot "opt out" of public places, but a person can either be drawn to a place or repelled by it (Visconti et al 512). In writing on the population growth of cities, Charlie Harman notes that there is "little consideration for the well-being of those living in them" (*Calvium*). When it comes to public art programs, studies have shown that "not all members of a given public are satisfied with the results, especially those from ethnic minority groups" (Moss 373). In regards to Bristol, this may initially seem like an unfair critique because a city that has a green outlook, provides entertainment options, and is open to new opinions seems to qualify as being concerned with the residents' well-being. Yet, a clear understanding of well-being helps put things into perspective.

[37] Arnolfini is the name of an International Centre for Contemporary Arts located in Bristol. See arnolfini.org.uk.

There are five major types of well-being: emotional, physical, social, workplace, and societal, and each of these needs to function to some extent. Social refers to a person's "ability to communicate, develop meaningful relationships with others, and maintain a support network that helps . . . overcome loneliness"; whereas societal is the "ability to actively participate in a thriving community, culture, and environment" (Davis 11). So while Bristol may provide some amenities for societal well-being, it is the social, emotional, and physical aspects that are often points of contention.

Moss notes that public art programs assume all audiences will agree with the "universal notions" of what "good art" is and this consensus will then "encourage harmony among those with different cultural identifications" (373). Tepper points out that many public art officials and advocates look to abstract art as being the "best alternative for today's public spaces. Stripped of all recognizable symbols, it becomes immune to groups seeking visual cues for which they can take offense. Moreover, abstract art allows for a diversity of interpretations and meanings -- a perfect fit for a post-modern world" (13). Yet, as noted in the introduction, the public's reaction to Serra's *Tilted Arc* is evidence that this line of reasoning is problematic. However, even critics agree that ''great'' art has some kind of universal appeal to ideas and emotions shared by humanity, but in reality, such social agreement does not happen and this is especially evident with minority groups.

Moss points to two main reasons for this which once again draws our attention to the white spatial imaginary. She comments that "historically the dominant culture assumed and promoted an elite White version of what was considered good art" and secondly "equality of access to and participation in the arts have rarely been realized in multicultural societies" because programs fail to account for the politics of

belonging and the varied ways in which different groups engage with and participate in the arts (373).

Antoni Remesar (2005) notes that while many cities implement an "art and culture investment scheme … its effectiveness is almost impossible to evaluate because of the newness" (8). Bristol's public art strategy began in 2000; however, the San Francisco Arts Commission's (SFAC) program dates back to 1932 and is one of the largest and most diverse public art collections in the United States. It has become the model for public art programs throughout the US and in other countries. For these reasons it is a worthwhile program to examine. First, as noted in the introduction, SFAC's public art program takes inclusivity seriously and has systems in place to aid in this regard. In my interview with Pontious (appendix E), I explored their procedure for selecting work and whether they are successfully achieving their goal of having a collection that is culturally representative of San Francisco. Pontious stated:

> Historically, approximately 70% of our commissions go to San Francisco and Bay Area artists. Most of the major artists and art movements in our region are represented in the collection. Our collection is also representative of not only the diverse styles of artists in our region, it is also reflective of its cultural diversity. Cultural and gender equity is a deeply held value in our city, and the Arts Commission works to embody that value in its art collection.

I also asked about the mechanisms put in place to monitor the public's responses to art and Pontious responded as follows:

> At present, we have no formal system for monitoring public feedback once artwork is installed. We are in the process of developing an evaluation tool to

> capture feedback in terms of responses to the projects we get from individuals, press coverage, etc. We actually have very few complaints about artwork; most of the response we receive is very positive.
>
> However, during the artist selection phase, artist proposals are displayed in public areas near the project site with notebooks for written public comment. The proposals are also displayed on our website. Public response is collected and summarized and provided to the art selection panel as one of the factors to consider when selecting the winning proposal. All panel meetings are public.

According to the art critic Arthur C Danto 'One of the greatest failures in public art programs … is that the public has been radically under-involved and all decisions have been left to a panel of authorities' (qtd. in Tepper 8-9). SFAC's efforts to engage the public through displaying the proposals and having notebooks available for comment is a way to encourage community involvement and consequently ownership; however, unless one is already tuned in to the arts, the likelihood that a person would visit their website and attend a panel meeting are slim. In fact, Pontious acknowledged that panel meetings are not well attended.

Since SFAC's program is not restricted to local artists, but is open nationally and internationally to artists whose art is "within the cultural, historical, social/political and environmental context of San Francisco and the Bay Area," I asked what measures are in place to assist non-locals and ensure the work is appropriate for their audience. Pontious replied:

> Commissioned artists are given an extensive site orientation and are provided opportunities to work closely with the client department and engage

community stakeholders. All artists are selected based on their judged ability to respond to the site, the architecture, and its social context. It has been my experience that the out of area artists we select have been well able to do this.

While seemingly covering all bases, Nicole C. Meldahl has been critical of SFAC for "being biased towards the arts at the expense of humanities work" (50). With the ever-increasing growth of the tech industry, the city is "in flux" and there is concern that its history is not being protected because much of the funding goes to the arts (4). As such, she calls for the creation of a San Francisco Department of Culture that would place the History Commission alongside SFAC. Meldahl cites other cities that have successfully married art and history under the cultural umbrella.

Despite the competing discourse on meaning, style, and function, the belief in the transformative and regenerative power of public art is part of the guiding force in numerous cities that have developed public art programs and invested millions of dollars in their collection. Public art is believed to have the power to turn "spaces into places" (Tepper 8-9). Visconti et al. differentiate between *space* and *place* noting that anonymity is typically associated with the former, whereas the latter is 'consumed space' where "fusions of human and natural order" are experienced (512). Unfortunately, public art programs rarely problematize "the notion of place" (Hall and Robertson 20). To do so, would require an awareness of intersectionality as it relates to "race," class, gender, ethnicity, history, and politics and how these play out in political projects that make up the politics of belonging. These two aspects, intersectionality and the politics of belonging, are often lacking in public art programming.

Additionally, since a clear definition of public art does not exist it is nearly impossible to speak with any authority on its function or accomplishments. Creative placemaking distinguishes itself from the aforementioned because the art projects originate from and are firmly rooted within the community. As such artists are aware of the cultural, social, historical, and political heartbeat of the community without needing to be oriented to the area; the history of the place is inseparable from the art.

4.4 Murals & creative placemaking

While museums are in the process of reassessing their collection, acquiring works, and developing programming to be more inclusive, and public art programs are investing millions of dollars in trying to fashion an identity in which all residents can feel included, local artists in neighborhoods in many countries have been using community murals "as a form of . . . counter-hegemonic neighborhood representation" (Sieber, et al. 264). As Juan Pablo Garnham (2017) explains, "The city's walls have been one of the few places for minorities to tell their side of history" (*Bloomberg CityLab*). Community murals serve a social, historical, and political purpose; for this reason, I argue their importance as a key strategy in creative placemaking projects.

Much of the discourse on creative placemaking focuses on spatial planning and economic development. Vazquez, however, emphasizes that, "Public art, cultural districts and performing arts centers are not the outcomes of creative placemaking – they are strategies. The success of these strategies depends on their ability to improve quality of life, improve standards of living and enhance the environment for cultural expression throughout a place" (6). Yet, case studies have highlighted aspects of "the built environment" such as the ones mentioned by Vazquez along

with landscapes and artists' live-work spaces without addressing issues of social and racial injustices or interrogating the politics of belonging that are continuously at play. These are key omissions. As Bedoya (2013) argues, for a creative placemaking project to be authentic and not just bear a superficial label, it has to be grounded in the ethos of civic and cultural belonging which requires an understanding of "history, critical racial theory, and politics" (*GIA Reader*). Community murals more so than any other public art form are perfectly matched with the aims of creative placemaking.

The Mural Arts Program (MAP) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania is a successful creative placemaking project and a model to follow. The city is home to over 3,000 murals that reflect the cultures of its various neighborhoods. MAP began when the mayor sought a way to remedy what was seen as the city's "growing graffiti problem" (Markusen and Gadwa 49). Realizing the artistic abilities of graffiti writers, the goal was to elevate their voices and share their stories by collaborating on mural projects. Partnerships have been established with various community services such as behavioral health and restorative justice programs. In addition to providing employment for artists, "more than 20,000 underserved youth" have received an arts education (50). Hundreds of inmates and ex-offenders have been provided "social and basic education skills, and … an opportunity to make amends by restoring their communities" (50). Other vulnerable people within the city, such as those who are homeless, or those with developmental disabilities, mental illness, or addictions have also been included in creating the city's murals. The murals have been a uniting and healing force within the city.

MAP has established partnerships to ensure its projects are rooted within the community and allow community members to have a sense of belonging and ownership of the murals. In "*Barrio* art: Telling the story of Latino Philadelphia

through murals," Stacey Van Dahm situates the Philadelphia murals within the long history of Latino/a and Chicano/a communities[38] in the US noting that these empower youth, create ethnic pride, build pan-Latino relationships, and contribute to the revitalization of neighborhoods (431). For this reason, they are more than a tourist attraction, they have real social and political value. MAP is an example of how murals are used as a strategy to build civic and cultural belonging among those on the margins, not just racial and ethnic minorities, but a cross-section of people from various backgrounds.

Community murals differ from other murals; for example, they are “highly localized” as they originate from within one’s community (Van Dahm 429-431). Usually these are communities of working-class people or minorities and the murals are reflective of the community so they have different styles and subject matter (Sieber et al 265). While community murals are as individual as the people who create them, an analysis of Latino/a murals has uncovered seven key themes which I posit are not just limited to this population: symbols of ethnic and racial pride, religious symbols, issues related to social justice, decorative symbols, homages to national and local heroes, memorials commissioned by local residents, and symbolic locations (Delgado and Barton 348).

Murals have been likened to “newspapers on walls” because they contain “a wealth of information” (Delgado & Barton 346). For this reason, murals can be a huge draw for tourists who are interested in not only their visual aesthetics, but also the history of a place. This is evident in Belfast, Northern Ireland where their political murals are considered one of the best reflections of the “city[’s] narrative” (Belfast

[38] I am aware that Latinx is inclusive of all gender identities; yet, I have chosen to use the gendered form “o/a” when the author(s) I am referencing use these forms.

Tourism 13). Bolivian muralist Gonzalo “Gonz” Jove equates murals to “storytellers that reflect a lot of the local culture” (*The Intelligencer*). I would, however, argue that muralists are the storytellers and murals are their stories that not only reflect the community, but also connect with the people who make up the community. Some people are intimidated by art within museums and even some forms of public art, specifically abstract art, feeling they lack the specialized education to understand it. From this perspective, community murals are similar to murals created by *Los Tres Grandes*, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and José Clemente Orozco during the Mexican muralism movement.

In an effort to reach a larger population some of whom were not literate, the murals created by *Los Tres Grandes* were visually explicit in their social and political message. This was a calculated action so that all people would be able to understand the murals regardless of one’s education level. Siqueiros states:

> Let’s abandon the literary motifs. Let us do pure visual arts. Let us discard the theories based on the relativity of ‘national art’. Let us universalize art! Our natural ethnic and local physiognomy will inevitably appear in our work. Our free schools are outdoor academies (as dangerous as the official academies, where at least the classics were taught), substandard communities in which there are professors driven by profit, destroying emerging personalities ... Let us reject the critical dictate of our poets, which produced beautiful literary articles completely severed from the real value of our works. (qtd. in Orozco 258)

Community murals allow a form of engagement that is impossible with other public art forms. For this reason, as Moss notes, community murals act as a bridge

between ‘fine art’/’high art’ in that they are part of the canon of art history and ‘community art’/‘low art’ (Moss 374) because of their accessibility both in location and content.

The murals created by Rivera, Siqueiros, and Orozco inspired artists in the US as seen in the murals of artists involved in the Works Progress Administration Federal Arts Project (WPA/FAP). Elected to office during the Great Depression, US president Franklin D Roosevelt aimed to bring about economic relief to the millions of Americans who were suffering. He instituted a series of programs to achieve this goal, one of which, the WPA/FAP, provided employment for thousands of people within the arts from visual artists to writers, actors, and musicians. Roosevelt promised opportunities for everyone and while inequalities persisted, women and other minority groups did receive employment. From this program, over 2,000 murals were created. David Conrad (1995) notes that some of these were deemed controversial as individuals “found the social and political messages conveyed too disturbing” (99). These murals appeared in post offices throughout the country and at some HBCU which were “one of the few institutions outside government supporting muralism” (98). Aaron Douglas, one of the artists of the Harlem Renaissance[39], painted murals that were allegories of Black life. Douglas founded the art department at Fisk University and painted murals at this institution as well as other HBCU throughout the US.

The Mexican muralism movement began during the postwar era and as part of Mexico’s reconstruction. The WPA/FAP began during an economic crisis.

[39] The Harlem Renaissance was an early twentieth century creative and intellectual movement centered in the Harlem neighborhood of Manhattan in New York that engaged all art forms and presented an image of Black people (heritage and daily life) that was not shaped by White stereotypes. A few notable names are: Arturo Schomburg, Josephine Baker, Zora Neale Hurston, Alain Lock, and many others.

Community murals often appear after some type of civic unrest or social crisis which explains why these types of murals began in the 1960s. Unlike the aforementioned and in addition to originating from within the community, community murals literally alter the landscape. Sieber et al. note that in "the 1960s and 70s, murals were often fashioned as a self-conscious alternative, and resistance, to traditional venues of art-making and display that communities of color are usually excluded from, leading to the transformation of streets into galleries" (266). Although community murals are 'highly localized' they can also bridge the gap between the local and the transnational in the "design and painting processes" or more directly as in the collaborative project *Aqui y Allá* (2012) where panels painted by Mexican children were transported to the US and installed alongside the panels of American children of Mexican heritage (Van Dahm 429-431; Ortiz).

In addition to developing "sites of imagination", creative placemaking projects "build spatial justice" and allow for those who typically "lack input into mainstream discourse" to be seen and heard" (Bedoya; Foss 9). Media, overwhelmingly dominated by White men, has the power to impose not only an identity over marginalized or subordinated groups, but also to categorize these into a single group despite the differences that exist (Bourdieu 223). I argue that community murals exist in another fundamental "domain" and that their presence is proof that "order *exists*" outside of the mainstream hierarchical order (Foucault xx). Community murals, and those who paint them, disrupt the status quo and in doing so push themselves into the "social world" by defying defined "power relations" (Bourdieu 266).

The "struggle over representations," is not just how ones are perceived externally, but also as Bourdieu notes "in the sense of mental images" (223). Fanon begins *Black Skin, White Masks* with a quote from Aimé Césaire where he states in

part, ‘millions of men …. have been skillfully injected with … inferiority complexes … abasement” (qtd. in Fanon 1). Fanon goes on to state that if an inferiority complex exists, one of the ways it has been achieved is through “the internalization--or, better, the epidermalization--of this inferiority” (4). Yet, when “submerged group[s]” develop their own authentic voice, and realize that their experiences and discourse surrounding these experiences are “legitimate and valuable”, they are empowered and this aids in creating a sense of identity as well as belonging (Foss 10).

Visual representation is “a contested terrain”; yet, communities who seemingly lack any control over the means of cultural production have exerted agency through the creation of community murals where they are able to tell their own stories, represent their truths, and honor local heroes (Sieber 263; Hesmondhalgh and Saha). As such, community murals aid in “building community solidarity and identity” and are another form of the rasquache spatial imaginary disrupting the white spatial imaginary in size and subject matter and making the community ultra-visible (Sieber 276). Just as diasporic Carnival is a visual signifier of a community’s presence, so are murals. Johnson states that art “in public view is a tool for education, cultural cohesion, and political organizing” (44). To this, I would add agency and empowerment.

Community murals are a source of pride and reflect the identity of the neighborhood while also acknowledging that it is part of the whole. They contribute to the community’s intellectual health and cultural preservation which has been a struggle in communities that are undergoing gentrification. Research undertaken to examine the ways art and culture add substantively to marginalized communities reveals that creative placemaking has a positive effect on public health in four key areas: “stigma; trauma; community-level stress, depression, and substance use

disorders; and cultural identity" (Hand and Golden 42). This, however, does not mean that such positive results are a given. If one aims to contribute positively, community involvement is essential.

A number of people have written on the democratic nature of community murals. Perhaps cities with diverse populations should financially support city-wide community murals instead of aiming to develop a single identity for all. Walker states:

> Our murals will continue to speak of the liberation struggles of black and Third World peoples; they will record history, speak of today, and project toward the future. They will speak of an end to war, racism, and repression; of love, of beauty, of life. We want to restore an image of full humanity to the people, to place art into its true context—into life. (qtd. in Conrad 99)

Visual representation is more than a symbolic gesture; it is, to paraphrase Hall, a way to say something meaningful (15).

Chapter 5 | taking and claiming spaces

Media perception is forced down the
throats of closed minds.

~ H.E.R.

5.0 Introduction

This chapter delves further into the racialization of space by focusing on the neighborhood of St. Pauls and the ways the media have promulgated a negative and racialized narrative thereby contributing to the stigmatization of this neighborhood and those who live within it. After differentiating between history and heritage, the latter half of the chapter offers examples put in place by community members who took the lead in researching and sharing their local history through the creation of heritage trails which increased the livability of these areas by adding “race” into the discourse.

5.1 The racialization of St. Pauls, Bristol

When I decided to go to St. Pauls, a White British acquaintance raised concern and warned me to be cautious stating that it was not a nice place. As a Black American, I am keenly aware of media misrepresentation of people of color, the neighborhoods in which they live, and the social and political protests they stage, so I was unswayed by the comment. Upon arrival in St. Pauls, I was surprised that the area, which has a reputation for being a dangerous place, was quite unassuming. The neighborhood consists of only two through streets and can be walked from one end to the other in less than fifteen minutes. It is geographically and hierarchically situated below the nearby affluent neighborhoods of Clifton, Redland, and Cotham.

Interestingly, despite St. Pauls' link to the Bristol Bus Boycott it is perhaps best known for the Black and White Café and the events of April 2, 1980 which made international news and contributed to the racialization and stigmatization of the area. The café is infamous for being the most raided premises in the UK. Media portrayed it as a "drug den" and a place that housed other illegal activities (Thompson). Yet, the Black and White Café was considered a haven for many. The café was a popular spot for traditional Jamaican fare and provided meals for homeless youth in the community. It was a place frequented by people of all ethnicities and socio-economic backgrounds including the playwright, poet, and actor Alfred Fagon.[40] Perfectly situated for footfall, the café attracted large crowds especially during the St. Pauls' Carnival. Carnival-goers who never normally visited St. Pauls, entered the café as part of their cultural experience, ate Jamaican food, listened to music, and shared in the celebratory atmosphere. On Friday, April 2, 1980, the police raided the café looking for drugs and the illegal sale of alcohol. Even though raids were a common occurrence, this time the situation escalated. While the catalyst of the clash is debated, most agree the confrontation resulted in one of the city's "bloodiest riots" (Churchill)[41] and it is still very much a part of St. Pauls' history and has influenced the way the neighborhood and its residents are viewed.

Many unjust practices, from discrimination in housing and employment to over-policing, had transpired through the years and on April 2nd the proverbial final

[40] The annual Alfred Fagon award named after Alfred Fagon is awarded to playwrights of Caribbean and/or African descent who reside in the UK. Fagon's first play focused on West Indians adjusting to life in the UK whereas subsequent works such as *Death of a Black Man (1975)* centered on Black Power politics. Additionally, Fagon's likeness has been memorialized in the form of a bust located in a small park in St. Pauls. (Pearce 78; alfredfagonaward.co.uk)

[41] After numerous raids for alleged criminal activities, the Black and White Café was closed by police under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act in 2004. The property was demolished in 2005 and replaced with houses approximately a year later. Information received from Jayne Whittlestone, United Housing 12 March 2019.

straw seems to have broken. Various media outlets reported that “black hostility” had led to a “race riot” and at least one reporter attempted to put forth the narrative that Black people in St. Pauls were “trying to overthrow the government” (BBC Radio 4). Because of such hyperbole, members of the community prefer the term “uprising” to “riots" because the former encapsulates the feelings of those within the community who experienced oppression on a daily basis. While some national and international media outlets centered their reports on fear mongering and race baiting, other reporting portrayed a different and more complex story. First, it was not just young Black men involved in the unrest. Eyewitnesses recalled seeing “a mixture of white and black” people in the crowds while others reported seeing “white teens" looting shops (BBC Radio 4). Despite such on-the-ground testimony, the term race riot was bandied about and the root cause of the unrest was not addressed and consequently never resolved. Property destruction and the economic loss that accompanied the uprising contributed to the discourse of St. Pauls as a dangerous, ‘no-go’ area because of the Black people who live there (Slater and Anderson 538, 543).

Typically, a public inquiry is held by a government minister when there is ‘public concern’ over a specific event. The minister is expected to thoroughly investigate the matter and is given the power to compel testimony and obtain any and all evidence required to analyze the occurrence. A public inquiry addresses three main questions:

1. What happened?
2. Why did it happen and who is to blame?
3. What can be done to prevent this (from) happening again? (*Institute for Government*)

After April 2nd, there were numerous requests from community leaders and the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association for a public inquiry; yet none was ever convened. Recently, researchers from Exeter University discovered "a direct connection" between the St. Pauls' uprising and others that followed in other cities throughout the UK. Police in Lewisham and Brixton reported that during uprisings in these areas, they heard crowds shouting 'Remember Bristol!' and in South London, graffiti expressed similar sentiment, 'Bristol now, Brixton next?' and 'Bristol yesterday, Brixton today' (Exeter University). It is believed that had a public inquiry been held after the uprising in St. Pauls, positive changes could have been implemented to prevent similar happenings from taking place the following year in Birmingham, Brixton, Leeds, Liverpool, and Manchester (Cork). Of course, there is no way of knowing this for sure, but it does speak to the socio-political significance of the event in St. Pauls.

5.2 The stigmatization of St Pauls, Bristol

In his seminal work, Goffman (1963) references three types of stigma: "physical deformities," "blemishes of individual character", and "race, nation, and religion" (4). St. Pauls' Black residents were stigmatized based on race and this manifested in ways that ostracized this group from others within the city. Adding to the stigmas put forth by Goffman, Loic Wacquant (2007) draws attention to the "*blemish of place*" or "territorial stigma" which is comparable to racial, national, and religious stigmas because it can be passed down from generation to generation (67). This is not to say that one can never physically escape the blemish of place. Such can be done through "geographic mobility," but this can be challenging especially when other intersecting stigmas are at play (67). It is important to note that St. Pauls bore a

territorial stigma prior to the events of April 2, 1980 because of its non-White residents and the larger racial stigma associated with Black and Brown Britons.

Tom Slater and Ntsiki Anderson (2011) refer to St. Pauls as a 'reputational ghetto' because even though it does not meet the criteria of a ghetto, it is often framed as one (531). Wacquant defines a ghetto as:

> essentially a sociospatial device that enables a dominant status group in an urban setting simultaneously to ostracize and exploit a subordinate group endowed with negative symbolic capital . . . The resulting formation is a distinct space, containing an ethnically homogenous population, which finds itself forced to develop within it a set of interlinked institutions that duplicates the organizational framework of the broader society from which that group is banished. (qtd. in Slater and Anderson 533)

While there was some "clustering and concentration" of West Indians in St. Pauls largely because of racial discrimination in housing, according to Pryce (1979), who conducted an extensive study on the area, the majority of West Indians in Bristol did not live in St. Pauls. According to the index of dissimilarity which is used to measure whether an area can be classified as a ghetto based on population density, even today St. Pauls still does not meet the criteria of a ghetto or more specifically of a "black ghetto" because its residents are heterogeneous, not homogenous (Slater and Anderson, BBC Radio 4, Wacquant). Yet, the neighborhood is repeatedly racialized and stigmatized in media[42].

Racial and territorial stigmatization led to public policies that justified "special measures" regarding immigration and policing which brings us to the Thatcher

[42] Interestingly, some of St. Pauls' residents also refer to their neighborhood as a ghetto (Slater and Anderson 543).

government. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher served two full terms in office: 1979-1983 and 1983-1987. Her third term began in 1987, but she later resigned on November 28, 1990. It should be noted that her resignation was not voluntary and the "downfall" of Margaret Thatcher has been the subject of historians and constitutionalists. It is generally agreed that Thatcher's 'poll tax' policies and view of Britain's integration with the European community led to her political demise. Thatcher was a polarizing figure with devoted supporters and harsh critics.

Upon her death, an online campaign pitted these opposing sides against each other. Her critics aimed to have the *Wizard of Oz* song "Ding Dong! The Witch is Dead" reach number one on the music charts, while her supporters campaigned for the song "I'm in Love with Margaret Thatcher". The latter song reached number 35 while the former came in at number two. Perhaps not reaching the number one slot speaks less to Thatcher's popularity and more to people finding the campaign in poor taste.

Thatcherism, the word used to refer to Thatcher's economic and political policies, also sums up her political philosophy and her legacy of "race" relations. In a 1978 interview, when asked about the Conservative party's stance on immigration and proposed "cutbacks" on the numbers of people allowed into the country, Thatcher said:

> . . . there was a committee which looked at it and said that if we went on as we are then by the end of the century there would be four million people of the new Commonwealth or Pakistan here. Now, that is an awful lot and I think it means that people are really rather afraid that this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture and, you know, the British character has done so much for democracy, for law and done so much

> throughout the world that if there is any fear that it might be swamped people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in. (*Margaret Thatcher Foundation*)

5.3 Heritage & history

The popular streaming service Netflix began a series entitled *Representation Matters Collection* which highlights work by and featuring people of color and other marginalized groups such as LGBTQ+ and those who are differently abled. Included in the collection is a program featuring US comedian Kevin Hart where he plays a father talking with his daughter about US Black history. His daughter is upset after having watched the film *12 years a slave* and uses two words to describe US Black history: horrible and embarrassing. Hart empathizes with his daughter's feelings and then assures her there is "so much more to Black history than people getting whipped" ("Kevin Hart's" Guide to Black History). Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie cautions against the "single story" and says, "[s]tories matter. Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair that broken dignity" (Adiche 2009). Stories that only situate Black people as oppressed and without agency do not provide a complete history and lead to a dubious heritage.

The distinctions between history and heritage are more nuanced than is commonly acknowledged. History is often viewed as the passing down of intangible information and heritage as the passing down of artifacts or other tangibles. Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995), however, problematizes history by contextualizing it within power dynamics, noting that it can be and is manipulated by those within power. In history, there are two competing sides: constructivism and positivism.

Constructivism essentially holds that the historical narrative is a “pretense of truth” and “one fiction among others;” on the other hand, positivism “hides the tropes of power behind a naïve epistemology” (Trouillot 6). Heritage is more in line with constructivism because it ‘accentuates the positive[s]’ of history while sifting away problematic aspects of the story (Daniker 30).

Generally speaking, countries tend to highlight their successes while ignoring problematic parts of their history. Germany, however, may be the one exception to this as it continues to publicly acknowledge its genocidal past through educational efforts inside and outside the classroom. Because of events that occurred and laws enacted in the 1980s, the port cities of Bristol and Liverpool[43] were under “civic pressure” to publicly acknowledge their inextricable historical link to the system of enslavement and the ways in which that legacy affected contemporary “race” relations and practices. Wallace (2006) notes there was a sentiment among Bristolians and Liverpudlians that racial tension between Black and White residents could be traced to a “missing history” (Wallace 26). I would argue the New Right ideology of preserving Britain’s ‘noble history’ contributed to the lack of public discourse regarding the country’s role in the system of enslavement.

The version of history that has been constructed, while not a fiction, is also incomplete. Discourse on enslavement has centered on England’s abolitionist movement such as the passing of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act. Yet, as Marika Sherwood (2007) points out, this law which made the trafficking of enslaved people illegal had many “loopholes” which were skillfully exploited by those who wished to continue the business (Sherwood 1). Collicot’s (2007) critique of the British moral high ground when it comes to its history of enslavement is noteworthy. The

[43] Liverpool is another city that experienced an uprising and was a port for the trafficking of enslaved people.

push to end the trafficking of enslaved Africans and their descendants did not occur in a vacuum. The British campaign developed alongside other events such as Denmark's decision to make the trafficking of enslaved people into its Caribbean colonies illegal, the French Revolution, and the continuous acts of resistance and insurrections by enslaved people themselves (Sherwood 1; Collicot). Outside academia, revolts organized and carried out by enslaved people do not receive much attention. Yet, these were quite common and at times a single revolt lasted years: First Carib War (1769-1773); Second Carib War (1795-1796); First Maroon War (1785-1790); Second Maroon War (1809-1814); and the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) among many others.

These critiques are not to suggest that the 1807 Act is insignificant in British history. In fact, in 2007 various events across the country marked the 200th year of its passing. Residents combed through local registries in search of documents and other material culture to evidence "an African presence" at a local level (Nichols 53). As Nichols notes, a country's history is ultimately, "a collection of all local history combined to portray the development and progress of [a] country" (Nichols 53). By researching the presence of Africans within British society at the local level, Britons were encouraged to examine the extent to which the system of enslavement reached into the interiors of the country and not just the port cities.

Ten years prior to the bicentenary events, which were not commemorated in all cities, towns, and villages, Bristol took steps to address public concerns at the local level with the formation of the Bristol Slave Trade Action Group (BSTAG). This exploratory group was tasked with coming up with different ways the city could publicly acknowledge its historical links to enslavement and by so doing BSTAG engaged in two types of heritage conservation: preservation and creation (Giles 16;

Wallace 48).

BSTAG's focus on preservation resulted in two exhibitions of sorts. One, a temporary museum exhibition entitled *A Respectable Trade? Bristol & Transatlantic Slavery* was held at the City Museum & Art Gallery. The aim of this exhibition was to publicly acknowledge the city's link to enslavement. The second, "a small display" consisting of six panels was installed inside The Georgian House Museum to provide additional information on the house and its owner, John Pinney (Giles 16). The Georgian House is an 18th century townhouse that was built by a wealthy plantation owner.[44] Prior to BSTAG's involvement, visitors had no idea that this historic house was directly linked to the system of enslavement. Interestingly, even now there is an attempt to whitewash its history and that of its owner. A display that asks the question: Where did the money come from provides the following answer:

> Pinney inherited land, plantations, an enslaved workforce and money. He invested, managed his land (including the sugar plantations) profitably, bought enslaved people and ran a sugar importing business. When he died he was worth £340,000 (almost £23 million today).
>
> While Pinney was *not* a slave trader, that is, someone involved in buying Africans and transporting them across the Atlantic to sell, he was buying the enslaved Africans from the slave traders and their agents (emphasis added). Part of the fortune he made was from sugar, grown and processed by enslaved workers. Another part came from acting as an agent in Bristol for other sugar planters who also used slave labor. Pinney, like other sugar

[44] These panels were updated in 2018 and now include the names of 903 people who were enslaved by the owner of this historic house (Giles16).

> plantation owners and sugar traders in Bristol, was part of the business of transatlantic slavery and the slave trade. (Georgian House Museum)

I argue that limiting the term "slave trader" to those who bought enslaved Africans from the geographic boundaries of the African continent and not also including in that term those who engaged in the buying, transporting, and selling of enslaved Africans outside of Africa is historically disingenuous and an example of Trouillot's positivism.

In addition to the above examples of preservation, BSTAG sought to conserve the city's heritage through the creation of a heritage trail. In 1998, the *Slave Trade Trail around Central Bristol* pamphlet was published. Wallace posits that the creation of heritage trails is a way of establishing or cementing what historian Raphael Samuel refers to as 'living history'' because it allows contemporary people to experience the past in an embodied way. Samuel states:

> '[Living history] eschews epics and grand narrative in favour of personal observation and local knowledge. … It pins its faith in surface appearances, visible artifacts, 'evidence…which can be seen, touched, and photographed,' rather than aggregates and abstractions. For a history of master narratives, or evolutionary theories of growth, it substitutes one of moments which can be intercepted and arrested—as in the postmodern novel—at any point in time.' (qtd. in Wallace 45-46)

Heritage trails allow participants to "re-examine the conditions under which history is made in the first place" (Wallace 30, 46). Walking along a heritage trail is not a mentally passive activity as it requires individuals to participate with the surroundings

not just through their footsteps, but also mentally by re-reading the city in light of new information.

The Bristol Slave Trade Trail is “modeled after” the Boston Freedom Trail in the US (Wallace 52). On both trails, one is taken through city spaces where buildings, public monuments, and burial sites are placed within context. Yet, there is one very visible difference (see fig. 14). Whereas the Freedom Trail is marked thereby making it easy for one to remain on the trail simply by sticking to the red bricked path, the Slave Trade Trail is not physically distinguished; “[o]nly the walker’s footsteps connect the places into a coherent path” which some may argue is a more embodied experience (Wallace 52).

Figure 14 Boston Freedom Trail | Image by D. Banks (2018)

5.4 Heritage trails

In the U.S., there are various walking trails that focus on the heritage of different groups. For example, in addition to the Freedom Trail, Boston is also home to the Irish Heritage Trail, the Native American Heritage Trail, the Women's Heritage Trail, and the Black Heritage Trail. The latter is 1.6 miles long and covers fourteen historic sites where a thriving nineteenth-century Black community lived, worshipped, and owned businesses. Boston is not unique as there are heritage trails throughout the US that highlight the contributions and achievements of Black Americans including those of enslaved people and their descendants. Massachusetts, which is the "seventh smallest of the U.S. states in terms of total area," has six such trails (Driscoll).[45]

Those who founded and currently maintain heritage trails are committed to un-silencing voices and using the natural and built environment to make the history visible to everyone (Daniker 24). Because heritage trails "are largely celebratory and seek to showcase a hidden or neglected past" they may, at times, ignore information that challenges their goal (Daniker 18). An example of this is the W.E.B. DuBois National Historic Site which consists of three venues that offer an opportunity to learn about DuBois' life and legacy. While labelled "historic", the parts of DuBois' life that are deemed "controversial" such as "his rejection of the United States and his attraction to Communism" are not completely sifted away, but are definitely not given in equal measure (Daniker 30). This in no way discounts the educational and cultural

[45] The extensive heritage trail on the island of Martha's Vineyard exists because of the "efforts of a single teacher, her students, and a handful of local residents" (Daniker 24). It includes sites and material culture relevant to the history of enslavement as well as the lives of Black people post enslavement. Information on Black sea captains, politicians, and "other legendary residents" are included within the trail.

value of heritage trails for students as well as the general public; however, trails in and of themselves are not a substitute for research. Instead, they can be viewed as a jumping off point by introducing a new aspect of local history and encouraging one to delve further to learn about the history of the place and the people who inhabited the area.

Trails centered on Black American heritage contribute to local history and also serve a positive social, cultural, and psychological role. While some heritage trails can be visited in person, others are available online. Wallace states that the “cynic” may find such examples as “further evidence of American laziness”; yet, the ability to virtually visit heritage trails is an alternative way for persons who are physically or financially unable to access the content that heritage trails provide (54). In Anita C. Daniker’s (2009) examination of heritage trails in the Upper Housatonic Valley,[46] she emphasizes their importance and notes that “[t]hey stress a vibrant and empowered heritage that contradicts the themes of victimization and oppression, which until fairly recently were associated with black history in the popular if not the scholarly milieu” (18). In other words, these heritage trails provide space, literally and figuratively, for a more complete story to be told and heard.

Bristol’s Slave Trade Trail aids in making the presumed external system of enslavement, internal as well as local. In addition to educating the public, I argue that heritage trails contribute to the livability of an area, which is one of the aspects of creative placemaking. By their mere existence, trails that are centered on aspects of Black heritage, a topic that is often marginalized in the public sphere, disrupt the racialization of space and the spatialization of race. For this reason, heritage trails can be categorized as therapeutic.

[46] The Upper Housatonic Valley is a heritage area that includes part of Connecticut and Massachusetts.

The term “therapeutic landscapes,” as discussed by Gesler (1993) is often used in reference to healthcare facilities where the treatment or recuperation of patients is linked to the natural environment (184). For example, patients who are in rooms with a view of trees recover quicker than those whose view looks onto a brick wall (*Scientific American*)**.** I posit the concept of therapeutic landscapes not be limited to medical spaces, but be extended to include communities, cities, and countries. Therapeutic landscapes enable individuals to have “a strong sense of place, which includes such qualities as identity and security” (Gesler 184). This in turn contributes to one’s mental wellbeing and to the livability of an area.

5.5 Livability

The term "livable cities” has been used since the 1980s mainly to address environmental and economic concerns (Kashef 243). Livable cities are economically competitive and therefore are able to provide good jobs for their residents and investment opportunities for those so inclined. These cities foster sustainability and aim to be environmentally resilient and responsible. For an environment to be livable it has to “integrate physical and social well-being parameters”; however, the focus tends to be on the economic and physical without much attention to the ways marginalized people interact with their environment (Kashef 240). While those who write on the topic state that livable cities should encompass communities made up of diverse people who engage with each other, the question of how this is achieved is not explored. In practice, tools are used to measure a city’s livability and then cities are ranked on a scale of 100 (ideal) to 1 (intolerable) (*The Global*). The livability score is reached by measuring varied indicators that are believed to be indicative of a city’s desirability. According to The Global Liveability Index 2019, the following categories are measured:

Category 1: Stability (weight: 25% of total) Indicator ● Prevalence of petty crime ● Prevalence of violent crime ● Threat of terror ● Threat of military conflict ● Threat of civil unrest/conflict	Category 2: Healthcare (weight: 20% of total) Indicator ● Availability of private healthcare ● Quality of private healthcare ● Availability of public healthcare ● Quality of public healthcare ● Availability of over-the-counter drugs ● General healthcare indicators
Category 3: Culture & Environment (weight: 25% of total) Indicator ● Humidity/temperature rating ● Discomfort of climate to travellers ● Transparency International Social or religious restrictions ● Level of censorship ● Sporting availability ● Cultural availability ● Food & drink ● Consumer goods & services	Category 4: Education (weight: 10% of total) Indicator ● Availability of private education ● Quality of private education ● Public education indicators
Category 5: Infrastructure (weight: 20% of total) Indicator ● Quality of road network ● Quality of public transport ● Quality of international links ● Availability of good quality housing ● Quality of energy provision ● Quality of water provision ● Quality of telecommunications	

While the concept of livability is concerned with the "quality of life" and "optimizing the performance and the integrity of human life," measurements do not take into account the full human experience and the disparities that exist within cities based on racial and gendered classifications (Kashef 240). One cannot truly measure the livability of a city when "race", ethnicity, and gender are not included in the conversation; yet, as evidenced by the above chart, racialized and gendered spaces are so deeply ingrained in the fabric of society that they are inconsequential as indicators of a city's livability. This exclusion is not because they are irrelevant, rather that they are not deemed important enough to garner consideration.

In 2019, Manchester was ranked the top UK city in which to live based on 'factors including environment, healthcare, education, culture and infrastructure' but as Professor Bridget Byrne notes, "Britain is more ethnically, racially and religiously diverse than ever, yet despite increasingly complex patterns of inequalities between and within ethnic groups, racial and ethnic inequalities remain entrenched features of all areas of social and economic life" (*BusinessLive*; *The University of Manchester*). Would those who are ethnically, racially, and/or religiously marginalized also rate Manchester as the top city in which to live? Perhaps, but no one can say definitively because these indicators were not included. In 1964, Habermas spoke of the universality of the public sphere when he said, "[a]ccess is guaranteed to all citizens" (49). This assessment has been critiqued because in reality, exclusion is the rule of the day leading to the normalization of racialized and gendered spaces. Despite the lack of acknowledgement, racialized and gendered public spaces can and do affect wellbeing causing increased stress levels and negatively affecting one's sense of place, identity, and belonging.

Livability is not just a "creative design process—to produce timeless physical

models and themes that contain the economic and social functions of urbanity"; it also goes to the heart of a place (Kashef 241). Bristol has taken efforts to make the city more livable with its legible city initiative which aims to make the city more visitor and resident friendly through wayfinding such as plaques, signage, integrated maps, and teams of on-street guides called navigators. As previously stated, in creative placemaking discourse there is a focus on the built environment. The same applies when livability enters the discussion. Works tend to focus on "spatial connectivity" and the means and ease of transportation (Harvey and Aultman-Hall 149). There is also a focus on "streetscapes," but this has more to do with the ease of navigating a city and the space designated for pedestrians on foot versus that of those via transportation (Harvey and Aultman-Hall 149).

Lance Jay Brown and David Dixon (2014) note that historically urban planners, designers, and architects paid "scant attention" to how their efforts affected the lives of those living within communities (xvii). The goal was on rebuilding and generating investments instead of using design to tackle such social issues as economic disparity, inclusion, and opportunity. When a city or neighborhood's livability is enhanced, Brown and Dixon argue this is "a key step toward … creating a greater sense of community" and that "these are prerequisites for the principles of expanding opportunity and promoting greater equality" (275). While their focus is on the US and they clearly disavow any claims that "these principles will prove timeless or are universal"; I argue that in the UK case, specifically Bristol, this is indeed applicable (275).

5.6 Representation as agency

I do not think it an overstatement to say that historically, the most common forms of public art are statues and monuments as countries have routinely memorialized

individuals, normally men, in public spaces. Images, as Johnson notes, "function as signposts, markers" (41). In Johnson's examination of the US she states, "[f]rom the Harlem Renaissance to the Black Arts Movement and continuing in this postmodern era, visual art . . . has played a critical role in educating, exploring, and (re) defining what it means to be Black locally, nationally, and globally" (41). Visual art provides evidence of a group's existence and lack of such imagery speaks volumes on both a social and political level.

The Bristol Slave Trade Trail contextualizes the city's past and firmly situates the system of enslavement within a local context. However, examining the legacy of enslavement by solely focusing on one story, namely how the city of Bristol and White Bristolians prospered, privileges whiteness while excluding the stories of non-White Bristolians. Equity is needed and art is a means of achieving it. Johnson argues that art in the public sphere is a means to "identify, reclaim, and appreciate Black culture" (41). To this, I would add that art is also a way to integrate the history of people of color into the wider history of the country.

The tagline for the Seven Saints of St. Pauls®' Art & Heritage Trail project is: *This isn't just Black history; this is Britain's history*. Visual representation of people of color and in this specific case of Black Britons or more specifically Black Bristolians interrogates and challenges the country's 'noble history'. Additionally, the term British history is often synonymous with White history, thereby excluding all others whose existence and labor aided in the growth of the British Empire and the country that exists today. British history and Black British history are not mutually exclusive; one does not exist without the other. Visual representation is a signifier of this symbiosis.

Chapter 6 | case study

6.0 Introduction

Since history is key in creative placemaking projects, the previous chapters aim to situate the *Seven Saints of St.* Pauls© *Art & Heritage Trail* historically while showing its contemporary relevance. This case study provides context for Curtis' motivation in developing the art and heritage trail which is the focus of this research. As such, it progresses from concept to realization and then to the launch of this state of the art creative placemaking endeavor.

After analyzing Curtis' positionality, this chapter introduces each of the *Seven Saints of St.* Pauls© by providing a tour of the art and heritage trail through discussions of each mural and biographical information of the seven individuals who founded St. Pauls Festival. The chapter then examines the process Curtis went through to realize this project, the obstacles she had to overcome, and the contributions made by the art and heritage trail.

6.1 Positioning Michele Curtis

As noted in chapter five, the neighborhood of St. Pauls has been racialized and stigmatized and despite evidence to the contrary it is referred to as a ghetto with all the negative connotations associated with the word. In creating the mural project, Curtis' aim was to push back against this stigmatization. Having grown up in a home where family members and friends were active and productive members of the society, she was dismayed by the plethora of negative media representation of Black Britons. Additionally, as the mother of two sons, she worried about how racial stigmatization and the lack of positive representation would affect her sons' self worth. Curtis says:

> Growing up in 1980s Britain, there was little positive representation of the African Caribbean experience. There was no Black History Month. I learned about Black history through mail order books from the US and by watching the Cosby show. This was great for learning about Black US history, but was completely unhelpful in regards to Black British history. This lack of acknowledgement contributed to my feelings of displacement and a lack of identity. Being the mother of two boys, … [e]ven the simplest task of buying a book that was representative of their heritage, resulted in me having to pay over the retail price because these books were considered niche items. The lack of positive representation of Black people in media was very much apparent and still is. (Curtis)

Curtis' experience was confirmed by a February 2018 study into ethnic representation in children's literature conducted by the Centre for Literacy in Primary Education which examined 9,115 children's books published in the UK in 2017. Of these only 391 featured BAME[47] characters. A summary of the findings follows:

- Only 4% of the children's books published in 2017 featured BAME characters
- Only 1% of the children's books published in the UK in 2017 had a BAME main character
- Over half the fiction books with BAME characters were defined as 'contemporary realism' (books set in modern day landscapes/contexts)
- 10% of books with BAME characters contained 'social justice' issues
- Only one book featuring a BAME character was defined as 'comedy'

[47] BAME is an acronym for Black Asian Minority Ethnic.

- 26% of the non-fiction submissions were aimed at an ‘Early Years’ audience” (Centre for Literacy 5).

In addition to her sons’ feelings, Curtis worried about how the lack of positive representation might negatively affect their safety, especially with the police. She knew that not much had changed from the 1980s and 1990s when songs in the UK and the US were giving voice to racial oppression and police brutality. Curtis also knew that the murders and maiming of young Black men, such as Stephen Lawrence and Julian Cole were not isolated events. As such, the *Seven Saints of St.* Pauls© *Art & Heritage Trail* not only benefits the larger community of Bristol, and the whole of the UK, but it also connects Curtis to the larger African diaspora where Black parents, living in societies that are “racially hostile”, have engaged in practices to “make life better” for their children (Whitaker and Snell 303). For Black parents this involves working to ensure the next generation experiences “less racial hostility, exclusion, and violence than the previous generations” (303). By literally transforming the physical landscape in Bristol through this art and heritage trail, Curtis has also contributed to changing the way Black people are represented, which not only benefits this community’s psychology, but possibly also their safety.

One of the ways parents work to reduce the violence that their children may encounter is by having ‘The Talk’ to prepare Black children, “particularly boys, to survive interactions with police or other members of authority. The content of this conversation is remarkably consistent and is passed down from generation to generation like a grandmother’s recipe” (304). While Whitaker and Snell (2016) note that ‘The Talk’ is given during a child’s adolescence and is deemed necessary to keep children safe, they also problematize ‘The Talk’ noting that it can negatively affect a child’s development and can reinforce “the idea that these children do not

belong, that they are neither welcomed, protected, nor inherently valuable in the country in which they are citizens" (307). By painting murals of local Black men and women, Curtis is sending a message to Bristol's Black youth that they do belong, their life has value, and they, like the individuals in the murals, can bring about positive changes for their country.

6.2 Contextualizing the Seven Saints of St. Pauls

In 2014 when Curtis planned the *Iconic Black Bristolians* exhibition while visiting her brother, she had no plans past this first exhibition for any additional creative projects. The public's response to her first exhibition was overwhelmingly positive. She was approached with a proposition by United Communities (UC), which was previously known as the United Housing Association and founded by three members of the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association (BWIP&FA): Delores Campbell, Owen Henry, and Barbara Dettering. UC suggested painting individuals featured in the exhibition on walls around Bristol. Curtis was intrigued and took a few months to consider the idea and to think about those she would memorialize.

Curtis lives in St. Pauls now, but she grew up in the nearby neighborhood of Easton and has fond memories of her entire family going to St. Pauls for Carnival each year. She remembers, as a young child, sitting on the wall-lined street excitedly waiting to see her older sister dance on one of the passing floats.[48] Carnival was a special time of year that brought a variety of fun activities. Curtis recalls:

> Carnival was always the first Saturday in July, but they had numerous events running up to that; so they had a dominoes competition and they had sports events. They had a beauty pageant [and] cricket championship; they had all of

[48] Interestingly, BBC Bristol holds archival footage of this performance. When Curtis shared the video with family members, they fondly reminisced over memories of Carnival

> these things and at the final day at the end of all those celebrations . . . then they would have Carnival . . . and open up the summer basically.

The pre-Carnival events took place in St. Pauls and nearby neighborhoods like Easton. Curtis says that during that time, Carnival “was about bringing people together, bringing the city together” (Curtis). For example, one of the events, a dance competition, included West Indian, Asian, and Irish dance troupes (Curtis).

In listening to Black Britons from different parts of the UK talk about their memories of the St. Pauls Carnival, as noted in section 4.2, it became clear that their fondness had less to do with the music, food, or events, and was intimately connected to something deeper. Vijay Agnew (2018) writes, “[r]acism affects our consciousness . . . and mediates our continuing attachment to the symbols of our cultural and ethnic heritage” (14). This attachment was a source of liberation from the day-to-day struggles as some recounted that it was okay to be Caribbean during Carnival thereby implying that at other times, this was not the case.

When local government budget cuts affected arts organizations throughout Bristol, St. Pauls Carnival was no exception. Curtis comments that during this period there was much discussion on Carnival’s significance as it was increasingly viewed and dismissed as just a street party (Curtis). Through Curtis’ research she had discovered that the seven founders of St. Pauls Festival were behind the Bristol Bus Boycott and that their civic engagement extended into various areas. At the same time, however, Curtis believed that through the years, the “ethos” of the celebration they established had been lost. Curtis wanted to pay homage to these founding members, all of whom were members of the BWIP&FA, by sharing their stories and hopefully “reviv[ing] the meaning and culture” of Carnival (Curtis). The seven individuals and a brief biography follow:

The Honourable Owen Adolphus Henry (1928? - December 1, 1989)

Henry was born in Jamaica and relocated to Bristol in 1955. He co-founded the Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee (CCC) now known as the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association (BWIP&FA) and the United Housing Association (UHC) now known as United Communities (UC). Henry spearheaded the Bristol Bus Boycott and was a member of the Bristol Racial Equality Council. Following the 1980 St Pauls' uprising referenced in section 5.1, Henry became a member of the Voluntary Police Liaison Committee. This committee was established to improve relations between the police and the Black community.

Barbara 'Aunty Babs' Dettering (born 1939)

Dettering was born in British Guyana now known as Guyana. In 1961, she and her sister travelled to the UK on holiday and Dettering decided to stay. She lived in the Clifton neighborhood of Bristol referenced in sections 1.5 and 5.1. Dettering recalls that even though "racism was rife in the city," she did not experience "any overt racism . . . and was made to feel welcome" (Artival). As a social worker, Deterring was dedicated to assisting others and in this regard, her personal life mirrored her professional as she is one of the longest-serving members of the BWIP&FA.

Dolores Evadne 'Nanny' Campbell (July 26, 1935 - August 25, 2011)

Campbell was born in Jamaica and moved to Bristol in 1954. In addition to being a member of the CCC and BWIP&FA, Campbell belonged to "numerous local and national committees that supported the wellbeing for young and old alike" (Artival). She worked on a number of committees such as the Malcolm X Elders Group, the Bristol Older People Partnership, and the Sick & Visiting Committee which was part of the BWIP&FA. Campbell also organized trips

within the UK and abroad so that young people could experience life and culture outside their city.

Carmen Etheline Marjorie Beckford MBE (December 21, 1928 – May 18, 2016)

Beckford was born in Jamaica and at the age of 17 she travelled to the UK to train to become a nurse. At this arguably young age, Carmen had the foresight to plan for her future. She trained "in every aspect of nursing" so that she would have the freedom to find "meaningful employment" in any country (ARTival). Her parents lived in Canada and she had plans to join them when life took a turn and propelled her even further into activism. The Medical Officer of Health approached Beckford and asked her to apply for the position of Bristol's Race Relation Officer. Initially, Beckford refused the request so the Medical Officer of Health approached the Jamaican High Commission and asked for help convincing Beckford to apply. Beckford relented, applied, and was offered the position. Her story is even more interesting because she beat out thirty-five men including the esteemed civil rights activist Dr. Paul Stephenson OBE.

Audley Evans (1929 - August 6, 1991)

Evans was born in Jamaica. He first moved to England then to Canada, and then settled with his family in the United States. He was a police officer in Jamaica and although he did not work in law enforcement upon relocating, his daughter Judith Evans-McIntyre notes he remained 'very outspoken about the rights of people and treating people a certain way' (qtd. in ARTival). Evans was a member of at least three community associations including CCC and the BWIP&FA. He, like the other seven individuals, was instrumental in the Bristol Bus Boycott and establishing the St Pauls Festival. After settling in Florida, Evans started a landscaping business and offered other immigrants employment.

Clifford Lesseps Drummond (November 4, 1917 - October 26, 2002)

Drummond was born in Jamaica and moved to the UK in 1954. Although he was an electrician and had worked as one in Jamaica, he could only work as an electrician's "mate" in the UK because he did not have an English certification. In addition to his full-time work, Drummond started a number of businesses and was committed to helping his community. He, along with Dettering, invited speakers to Bristol to talk about the then little-known sickle cell anemia.[49] Drummond also spent years helping former colleagues receive legal compensation for asbestos poisoning.

Lorel 'Roy' Hackett (born 1928)

Hackett was born in Jamaica and moved to the UK in 1952. He first lived in Liverpool, then London, and finally settled in Bristol. Hackett, Henry, and Drummond established the CCC to challenge the racist policies that existed in Bristol's government. In time, the CCC became the BWIP&FA and in April 2013, Hackett relinquished his role as chair although he remains an active member of the association. Since Hackett is the oldest surviving member of the BWIP&FA, he is frequently in-demand and asked to attend events where Bristol's history, the struggle for civil rights, and his role are discussed. In fact, he was one of the attendees at the meeting of educators mentioned in section 3.4 which makes the question on the efficacy of the Bristol Bus Boycott more injurious.

Once Curtis had a clear vision of the project and those she would memorialize, she needed a name. She recalls, "[o]bviously I wanted seven in there and then I wanted St. Pauls in there . . . These people are like saints; they are

[49] Mayo Clinic defines sickle cell anemia as, "one of a group of disorders known as sickle cell disease. Sickle cell anemia is an inherited red blood cell disorder in which there aren't enough healthy red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout your body." See: www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/sickle-cell-anemia/symptoms-causes/syc-20355876. According to Healthline, "People from regions that have endemic malaria are more likely to be carriers." These areas include: Africa, India, the Mediterranean, and Saudi Arabia. See: www.healthline.com/health/sickle-cell-anemia.

amazing people. I know it has religious connotations, etc., but these people are Christians anyway, and then I thought - the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls*" (Curtis). Curtis then designed the logo that would be used in each mural - the number seven with a halo around it.

Having a name and a logo were the first steps, but Curtis also needed partners in order to realize her vision. When Curtis first started the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls*® project, she did not have any official partners. She did, however, have "a substantial amount of support" from UC and in time partnerships developed and sponsors increased to include other housing associations and local businesses as indicated in appendix F and G. Jayne Whittlestone from UC states

> We wanted to support this as much as we can (sic). We not only gave her the wall for the first saint we paid for part of this commission. We supported her application to the arts council, supported her work with other landlords and secured other sites. We are SO proud of our relationship with Michele and we were pleased to use her work at out [sic] last AGM and 30 year celebration event. Michele was so insightful for us about our history and her massive scale peice [sic] of Owen Henry on one of walls [sic] is a fantastic contribution to the area and one we are so proud of supporting in the community. (Whittlestone)

In *The Face of Britain: A History of the Nation Through Its Portraits*, Simon Schama states that portraits "have always been made with an eye to posterity, to recreate a presence where there is, for whatever reason, absence" (xx). Within British history, with few exceptions, portraits of non-White people have been absent, so it is no coincidence that Curtis decided to paint portraits to add to Britain's story. In these murals, however, we see more than just the likeness of a person; we are

presented with a visual commentary that reflects each saint's hybrid identity of being both Black Caribbean and British.

For example, Owen Henry's mural, the first of the seven to be painted, is a nod to British Caribbean living rooms of the 1950s and 1960s (see fig. 15). The mural's backdrop is reminiscent of wallpaper which was commonly seen in West Indian homes. Curtis' use of the hummingbird as part of the wallpaper pattern refers to Henry's country of birth, Jamaica, where the hummingbird is the national bird. The living room or "Front Room"[50] as Michael McMillan (2003) refers to it, was important in West Indian families. McMillan states:

> It was usually the one room in the home where you weren't permitted, unless it was a Sunday or a special occasion when guests visited. As an opulent shrine to kitsch furniture, consumer fetish and home-made furnishings, it was a symbol of status and respectability, announcing that no matter how poor you were, if the Front Room looked good, then you were "*decent*" people" (McMillan 399).

McMillan refers to the upkeep of this space as 'impression management' and notes that it was part of the "presentation of self" that women were responsible for maintaining (399). In some homes, "black and white passport photos [were] enlarged, color painted and proudly displayed" in the living room; however, McMillan notes there was a practice of using "yellowish-brown" as the color for one's skin regardless of the individual's actual complexion (410). This signified their desire for upward social mobility which was not solely an economic matter, but was also related to "the shade of one's blackness" (410). Inspired by these living rooms, Curtis

[50] McMillan states, "[t]he Front Room is a generic term which includes the living room and sitting room and for aspirant White working-class families, it was inscribed with middle-class values" (405).

positions Owen's portrait as if it were displayed against a wallpapered backdrop. However, Curtis has not lightened Henry's skin and instead presents a brown-skinned man in a position of social importance as he welcomes all to the St. Pauls' neighborhood.

Figure 15 The Honourable[51] Owen Adolphus Henry | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

Chapter one references discriminatory banking practices faced by Black and Brown Britons today. Unfortunately UK financial institutions have a history of such disparities which is why West Indians started their own system of banking called pardner[52], which is essentially a type of money pooling. A common practice among different ethnic groups in Africa, money pooling is one of the cultural traditions that was imported to the Americas (Hossein). West Indians who engaged in money

[51] It is said that Henry received the Jamaican Order of Merit in 1979 from Prime Minister Michael Manley in 1979, but I cannot find any evidence to support this claim. Curtis questioned its validity as well, but chose to include the honorific in the mural because Henry's family insist that he received the Order.

[52] Also paadna or pardna which reflects the Caribbean English Creole pronunciation. In Trinidad, it is called susu or sou sou. See: moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/rotating-savings-and-credit-associations and globalvoices.org/2020/09/26/in-trinidad-tobago-citizens-defend-sou-sou-savings-against-pyramid-scheme-comparisons/

pooling brought this practice into the UK[53] and while it is unclear whether Henry was involved in the formation of this system in Bristol, he was an innovator and used his creativity to offset specific racially motivated practices including housing discrimination, which was experienced by at least one of the Seven Saints.

> Lorel "Roy" Hackett shared his stories of such discrimination and states:
> If you didn't know anyone (in Bristol) with a room to rent, you were in trouble. When you walked down the street there were signs in the windows saying 'Room to Rent,' but when you'd knock on the door they'd refuse you. Some signs would say 'No Blacks, No Irish, No Dogs,' so you knew not to bother knocking on those doors" (qtd. in ARTival).

He recalls that on his first night in Bristol, failing to find a place that would allow him to rent, he slept in a doorway (Andrews).

Just as pardner provided relief from discriminatory banking practices, a housing system was needed to help those who were looking for a place to call home, so Henry along with Barbara Dettering and Delores Campbell founded the United Housing Association now known as United Communities. While not exclusively for West Indians, it was the first and only Black-owned housing association in the South West of England.

Dettering, the other founding member of the housing association and one of two surviving saints, is the only one not born in Jamaica. Dettering hails from British Guyana[54] and her mural introduces the viewer to the country's national bird, the

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[53] CarolineShenazHossein argues this practice is common throughout the African diaspora as it originated within Africa.See Beverley Bryan, Morag Styles Teaching Caribbean Poetry and O. Alexander Miller Colonial Capital: Advances in Understanding Caribbean Migration Experiences.

[54] Upon independence from Britain in 1966, the country's new name became Guyana.

hoatzin as well as the national flower, the water lily (see fig. 16). Dettering’s mural is personalized further as it contains a quote. Recalling her first introduction to the Bristol Bus Boycott, Dettering says, ‘I saw a crowd of people, Black people . . . doing something for themselves . . . and I wanted to be a part of that’ (ARTival). After 50 years of community service in Bristol, Dettering remains committed to being an agent of change. Although a member of the BWIP&FA, she does not limit her activities to this group, but instead also works with other local institutions to assist where needed.

Figure 16 Barbara ‘Aunty Babs’ Dettering | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

In addition to being the third founder of the United Housing Association, Delores Campbell was a nurse and a Bristol City Council Ambassador for Fostering. Over an eighteen year period, Campbell fostered thirty children who lovingly referred

to her as ‘Nanny’ (ARTival). Curtis acknowledges Campbell’s foster work by including the images of children in the mural design (see fig. 17). Since Campbell was referred to as Nanny, Curtis links her mural to imagery found on the Jamaican five hundred dollar bill: hibiscus flowers and an image of the legendary Nanny[55] of the Maroons who wears a similar headwrap[56] as the one depicted on Campbell in the mural. While details of Nanny’s life are unknown, it is widely accepted that as the leader of the Windward Maroons, she played a pivotal role in fighting against the British. Historian Verene A. Shepherd (2005) states that Nanny is “the most important female figure in the history of the liberation struggles in Jamaica” (Shepherd). As such, she is a symbol of strength and resilience; Campbell, a nurse, activist, and foster mother, embodies these same qualities.

In 2013, Her Excellency Aloun Ndombet-Assamba, Jamaican High Commissioner to the United Kingdom posthumously awarded a commendation to Campbell for her services to the community as part of the BWIP&FA. Dettering was also awarded a commendation. As noted in chapter one, the BWIP&FA is a Caribbean space that helped unify, preserve, and strengthen a Caribbean identity. For this reason, it is not surprising that the Jamaican High Commissioner would award a commendation to a non-Jamaican for her work with the association.

[55] Her name (properly *Nanani*) was derived from the Akan (Ghanaian) word meaning "ancestress" and "mother," and this establishes her ethnic origin (Shepherd).

[56] Headwraps are not just a fashion statement, but have a long and at times complicated history. Headwraps are worn in many cultures, but those that are worn by women in Africa and in the African diaspora have a specific historical and cultural significance that warrants scholarly analysis.

Figure 17 Dolores Evadne 'Nanny' Campbell | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

Like Campbell, Carmen Beckford was also a nurse and in 1962, Beckford took up flower arranging. This was an activity to keep herself busy while working the night shift as a midwife. In a video recording she states, she needed a hobby that would help her relax" (Beckford). Because of her love of flowers, Curtis included Jamaica's national flower, lignum vitae, in the design along with a quote from Beckford: 'We all shared the same vision and we worked together to make it happen' (see fig. 18).

Campbell and Beckford were two of many women from the Caribbean who trained and worked as nurses in the UK. Just as Black men answered the UK's call and fought for the crown as discussed in section 3.2, Black women from British colonies answered the UK's call in the 1950s for nurses to shore up the failing

National Health Service (NHS). In 2016, BBC Four aired a documentary entitled "The Black Nurses who Saved the NHS" which details the racism experienced by Black women from the Caribbean and Africa ranging from verbal to physical violence. One woman states: "You just reached the stage that you cannot believe that this is the country that you were told is your mother country. You can't believe that this degree of ignorance exists" (The Black Nurses). Even today, there is still inequality in the medical field with nurses and doctors reporting the racism and discrimination they experience from patients as well as colleagues (Campbell; Nayar; Abdelaziz).

In addition to her work as a midwife, Beckford became the first Race Relations Officer in Bristol and in 1982, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II awarded Beckford an MBE for her service to the country. In a 1984 interview, Beckford recounted the harassment she endured after receiving such royal acknowledgment. Over a period of nine months, "offensive" messages via mail and phone were constant, and on one occasion, she received the head of a chicken (Beckford).

Figure 18 Carmen Etheline Marjorie Beckford MBE | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

While individual encounters with such blatant acts of racism are not well-documented in the records made available to me, one can assume that each of the Seven Saints experienced and witnessed varying levels of racism and discrimination. Audley Evans is the only one who did not remain in the UK, but made his way to the US via Canada. It is believed that his reason for leaving Bristol had to do with the racism that he experienced. Interestingly, his children had no knowledge of his work with the BWIP&FA, his role in the Bristol Bus Boycott, or his involvement in the development of the St. Pauls Festival.

Evans' mural includes the country's national tree, the blue mahoe, and like other murals, it also has a wallpaper pattern with Jamaica's national motto: "Out of Many, One People" which is on Jamaica's Coat of Arms and references the country's

multiracial population (Office of the Prime Minister) (see fig. 19). In theory, the national motto is a nice sentiment, but as Deborah A. Thomas (2004) argues, the reality is much more complex as there are “links between global processes, nationalist visions, and local practices" that shape the politics and cultural identity of Jamaica and other Caribbean countries (19).

Figure 19 Audley Evans | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

As a collective and individually, the Seven Saints navigated a racist and discriminatory environment and worked to bring about impactful social and political change, and establishing businesses was one way in which this was done. Henry was not only a co-founder in the United Housing Association, but he along with Clifford Drummond established a travel agency that specialised in chartered flights to and from the Caribbean. Drummond, in addition to working a full-time job, started several businesses and was involved in multiple community organisations. The

Speedy Bird Cafe, his first business venture, is featured in the mural design (see fig. 20).

The mural also references the work Drummond did with other communities. As mentioned previously, racist and discriminatory practices have been applied to Black people and Asians and since larger numbers of Indians were relocating to England around the same time as West Indians, Drummond offered his assistance to those who were newly arrived in Bristol by helping them navigate the barrage of confusing legal paperwork they had to submit for various reasons. Lastly, the mural's Jamaican connection is highlighted by the ackee fruit which is one part of Jamaica's national dish, ackee and saltfish.

Figure 20 Clifford Lesseps Drummond | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

Roy Hackett is the longest serving member of the BWIP&FA and has witnessed and been deeply involved in many of the racial advancements made in the city. In addition to his work with BWIP&FA, Hackett was a member of the Bristol Race Equality Council from 1965 to 2005 and was involved in other community associations with the goal of improving the quality of life for marginalized Bristolians. His mural highlights one of the many history altering activities he has been involved in, namely the 1963 Bristol Bus Boycott as discussed in section 3.3. As with the six other murals, the reference to his country of birth is found in the foliage (see fig. 21). In this case, Curtis chose to include roselle which is a species of hibiscus that is used to prepare sorrel, a popular Caribbean Christmas drink. Roselle is not indigenous to Jamaica and K.R. Vaidya (2000) writes that it was "probably brought to the Western hemisphere" by enslaved people so not only is its inclusion in the mural a specific reference to a popular holiday drink, it is also a link to the African diaspora and the system of enslavement that created it (Genetics and Molecular).

Despite the previously mentioned challenges Hackett faced during his early years in Bristol and those that still persist, he remains optimistic and determined. In speaking of the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020, Hackett expresses his support and states, '[w]e fought for what we have now. Let's push it further' (Andrews). For his commitment and efforts to bring about positive change, Hackett received a commendation from the Jamaican High Commissioner.[57] In 1993, he received his first official recognition from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II when he was presented

[57] While several sources state Hackett received an award, I have not been able to find the year this occurred and as such, I do not know the name of the person who awarded Hackett the commendation.

with Maundy money[58] during an annual ceremony and in 2020, Hackett, like Beckford was awarded an MBE.

Figure 21 Lorel ‘Roy’ Hackett | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

6.3 The process

The art and heritage trail is a community initiative which came to fruition at the suggestion of the UC as mentioned in section 6.1. Curtis developed the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* to be a permanent open-air gallery based in St. Pauls. Her aim was to encourage visitors into the area to learn about the history of Black Bristolians of Caribbean descent and the contributions they have made to

[58] Elderly people who have contributed to their community and the church receive ceremonial coins presented by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. See: royal.uk/royal-maundy-service

Bristol. Since the murals were of the seven founders of the St. Pauls Festival, initially Curtis wanted them to appear at certain locations along the Carnival procession route. Ultimately though, this did not happen. For one thing, today's procession route is different from the original. Also, because of development and changes made to roads to aid in the flow of traffic, following the original route would have been problematic.

For a muralist, a blank wall is a canvas and while UC provided the first wall, Curtis needed six more. She scouted locations by driving around the neighborhood, looking at the exterior walls of buildings, and then contacting the property owner. Properties typically belonged to two or three housing associations, Bristol City Council, or were privately owned. She aimed to find walls that did not have windows and were "roughly the same size and shape" so that the murals would be cohesive (Curtis). UC were helpful in making introductions to other housing associations. Even though the process was arduous, Curtis was determined not to take any shortcuts and to go "through the proper channels" in order to "obtain permission to paint the murals on specific buildings" (Curtis). She was determined to create a project that would be long-lasting.

Curtis engaged the community by collaborating with local businesses. First, she partnered with The Paintsmiths (Paintsmiths) who are, in a business sense, competitors because they also work with schools in Bristol, run workshops, and inspire creativity in children and young adults. As a new artist on the street art scene, it was important for Curtis to collaborate with someone who knew the technical aspects of mural painting. By partnering with Paintsmiths, a well-respected group in the street art world, Curtis' vision materialized on the exterior walls of St. Pauls. She

entered into agreements with local housing associations, one of which was, United Housing Association.

Since special training and certification was needed to use the cherry picker, Curtis paid for Paintsmiths to take the required training. The general public, however, could not participate in any painting that took place off the ground. Although Curtis had envisioned more community involvement in the actual painting of the murals from the ground level, this did not occur largely because of funding delays which affected the timeline. However, some members of the community actually participated in painting the murals.

6.31 The Launch

Once all the murals had been completed, Curtis held a launch which took place on June 24, 2019 at City of Bristol College, Ashley Down Centre. Since Curtis had studied at this institution, they wanted to be supportive, so they provided the venue free of charge. The launch also marked the official name change from Iconic Black Bristolians to Iconic Black Britons.

Soon after the launch, Curtis arranged for some of the elders within the community to take the guided tour. She notes, "I hadn't even considered how important the tour was for the elders as it is for the younger generation! They loved it! Every stop was an education and a debate about history and culture, they also shared so many stories!" (sic) (Curtis). From Curtis' first exhibition onward, and aside from a few detractors, the public's response has been positive. Because of this, Curtis began thinking of the Seven Saints as her pilot project and spoke of taking what she has learned from it to paint heritage murals throughout the UK. If this is realized, then the question would be raised as to whether the projects could continue to be categorized as *creative* placemaking. Would a Bristol artist be able to tell the

history of Black Britons in other parts of the country? If she is able to do so, this perhaps sheds light on a more complicated and systemic issue regarding blackness in Britain.

Throughout this work, I have emphasized that creative placemaking projects are rooted within the community and argued the socio-cultural importance of community-engaged murals. The following section will show how *The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* emerged from within the community.

6.32 Financial concerns

When I interviewed Curtis in December 2017, she stated her hope of receiving funding for the Seven Saints project from the Arts Council England South West. The two main funding bodies within the UK are the Arts Council England (ACE) and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF); however, you are not allowed to apply to both organizations simultaneously because each uses money from the National Lottery. I asked if Curtis had a plan B in case her grant application was not successful and she responded, “I feel pretty confident that the funding will come. There’s clearly a need for it. I’ve got a lot of support from a lot of prestigious companies” (Curtis). Despite Curtis’ confidence, I was surprised that she did not have an alternative plan and/or other streams of funding as there are many applicants each funding cycle and the competition is stiff. In the end, Curtis was successful in her first bid for funding from ACE and in her first bid to Bristol City Council’s Originators’ fund;[59] however, a second application to Bristol City Council was denied. Although successful in her first two funding applications, I learned that Curtis was unable to pay herself a salary because there were not enough funds to cover the murals and pay the artist.

[59] The Originator’s fund is one of three funds offered by Bristol City Council as part of their Cultural Investment Programme. See bristol.gov.uk.

Unfortunately, this remained the case throughout the entirety of this creative placemaking project which began in 2016 and ended in 2019 as Curtis was continually struggling to receive enough funds to complete the project while never having enough to pay herself a salary.

The fact that Curtis is a Black female artist with spina bifida cannot be ignored and I believe at least two and perhaps all three of these categories are the reasons why she has been on the receiving side of unethical behavior and criminal behavior on numerous occasions. In one case, Curtis paid for a website that was never designed; on another occasion, a man, who had found her images online, downloaded, printed, and exhibited them without her knowledge or approval; and an artist who had taken photos at her exhibition, added the photos to his website in such a manner that it appeared as if the works belonged to him and not someone else. Such incidents could be seen as a breakout artist being an easy mark and taken advantage of by unscrupulous individuals; however, when examined within a larger framework I posit that these and other exploitative experiences occurred not solely because of her gender or her “race”, but because of both parts of her identity as will be discussed in the next section. Inequities within the arts are not solely applicable to art institutions, but permeates throughout the entire art world and negatively affects freelance creatives (Cocco).

6.4 Street art and identity

Having never engaged in street art, Curtis’ collaboration with Paintsmiths was helpful in many ways, one of which is that their name gave her work credibility and protection. Initially, she had hoped that the community would be appreciative of the murals and would self-govern and protect them; however, she learned that the situation was more complicated. She states:

> There is an unspoken law around street art and people who tag generally know who's work to touch [and] who's work not to touch. When it comes to large-scale murals they (Paintsmiths) are the best that I know but having their signature gives me, in the street art world, kudos. Don't touch this because this is one of ours basically. This isn't just some random person [who] put up a piece. You need to respect this piece" (Curtis).

Unfortunately, respecting the murals did not always translate into respecting her as an artist. Based on my observations and readings on street art, I posit that the negative treatment Curtis received is rooted in her intersectional identity as a Black female artist and there are two specific incidents that led to this conclusion.

On more than one occasion, while Paintsmiths were in the cherry picker painting, passers-by stopped, looked, and asked questions. One of the common questions directed to the two White men was, who is the artist. When they pointed out Curtis who was also onsite, each person looked at her and then continued directing questions to Paintsmiths. Upon hearing this, I initially thought of Ellison's *Invisible Man* referenced in chapter two - a story which unfortunately is often applicable in the daily lives of Black and Brown people. To paraphrase Ellison, Curtis, while made of flesh and bone, possessing a creative mind, and standing in their midst, was invisible simply because people refused to see her.[20] The more I think about it, however, it is not simply that they refuse to see her. In fact, they do see her; they see her gender and her "race" and because of these two parts of her identity, she is deemed less credible than her White male collaborators.

Passers-by were not the only ones who seemed to question Curtis' position and authority. As previously mentioned, Curtis was diagnosed with spina bifida; she

walks with the aid of a forearm crutch. This fact is important when considering the execution of her vision of seven large-scale murals. Curtis designed each mural on her computer and sent the file to Paintsmiths for any feedback they may have on bringing her original design to scale (see fig. 22). Curtis and Paintsmiths went out at night and projected the designs onto the chosen walls. Paintsmiths got into the cherry picker, outlined the complete design, and then during the day, they painted within the lines (see fig. 23) while Curtis painted areas of the wall that were accessible from the ground. As this was a collaboration, at the bottom of each mural is an attribution line which reads, Painted by Michele Curtis & The Paintsmiths. This text was agreed upon by both Curtis and Paintsmiths before the painting of the murals began.

Figure 22 Paintsmiths' artist holding Curtis' mural design | | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

Figure 23 Paintsmiths' artist in cherry picker | | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

To provide context, the last two murals were behind schedule and because of this, the lead Paintsmiths' artist was unavailable, so they hired an artist from London to fill in. Once the murals were completed, the London artist tagged each of the murals he had worked on. It is important to note that St. Pauls is a heavily tagged neighborhood. In fact, tags were the first thing I noticed upon my arrival.[60] Bristol City Council have established stiff penalties for those caught tagging without permission ranging from fines to jail time (Bristol Clean Streets).

One of the reasons the housing associations were supportive of the mural project is because they saw it as a way to reduce the amount of tagging in the neighborhood. While stylized writing is an art form, its unofficial nature and appearance on private property was not welcomed. In fact, part of the agreement between Curtis and property owners is that the murals would remain untouched and

[60] It is believed that young people who live outside of St. Pauls come into the neighborhood to leave their mark. However, as this was not part of my research, I can neither confirm nor deny the claims.

if any are tagged, Curtis will remove the tag within 48-72 hours, so of course, Curtis requested the artist remove his tag. The London artist then alleged that Curtis was "trying to take credit for other artists (sic) work" (London artist) and threatened that he would go to the media to expose her. Curtis was subsequently trolled on social media with claims that she is a fraud.

Curtis is not the first artist to collaborate with other artists and she never hid the fact that the project was a collaboration. This was made known via the attribution line, in interviews with press, and in press photographs (see fig. 24).

Figure 24 Curtis, the Paintsmiths, and a housing association staff member | Image by Bhagesh Sachania Photography, © 2014-2019 Michele Curtis

6.5 Intersectionality and collaborations

The accusation of fraud brings up a debate within art history on the use of assistants. Artists categorized as the "Old Masters" frequently used assistants to complete artwork; yet, these were typically their students or taking part in an apprenticeship.

Today's assistants are not necessarily the recipients of a tradition, but are employees of the artist (Sherwin 2). In the 1970s, Andy Warhol's Factory introduced the "assembly-line approach to creating visual work... [and] gave birth to a new normal: the artist could call a work of art his own, even if he didn't have a single part in its execution" (Yu). Artists such as Koons, Hirst, Wiley and others use assistants to realize their vision and while this process is not novel, it has been discussed frequently in recent years and especially since 2013 when one of Koons' works sold for $58.4 million (Roberts 2004; Tenner 2011; Sherwin 2012; Lazic 2014; Neuendorf 2016). Koons received the credit and the bulk of the money thereby giving renewed energy to the debate around assistants; however, Logan de la Cruz, who has been working as Koons' assistant since 2015 states:

> Jeff's work is Jeff's work. It's not necessarily something I need to be credited on. I'm being paid to help create his vision, and that's where I leave it. I don't feel any grudge for not being credited there … That's Jeff's vision, and it would feel weird to be credited for his vision in any way. I have my own visions, and I want them to be solely mine. And credited to me. (De La Cruz in Yu)

Yet, there are other artists whose use of assistants is unquestioned such as Yinka Shonibare and Angela de la Cruz. Shonibare has the distinction of being the only differently-abled artist whose work has appeared on Trafalgar Square's Fourth Plinth. He works with a team of assistants who help realize his artistic vision because he is physically unable to do so. The artist de la Cruz suffered a stroke and lost her ability to paint so she also works with assistants to aid in executing her vision. From the above, we can see that while there are differences of opinion on when it is socially acceptable to use assistants, the fact remains that artists have a long history

of being credited for work they did not physically produce. In Curtis' case, however, Paintsmiths were not paid assistants, they were collaborators and their names appear on each mural.

While a definitive answer does not exist, the question must be raised as to whether such attacks would have occurred if she were a man. Aside from the illegitimacy of the claim made by the London artist, the act of tagging these heritage murals raises a different set of concerns. Tagging is, as Pabón notes, performing a self-created identity and through it, artists mark spaces. Tagging is "widely understood as an anarchic aesthetic of communication and rebellion against political disenfranchisement and social invisibility" (Pabón 78). To understand the seriousness of the tag and why it is much more than vandalism, we must first acknowledge the politics of street art, the history of contemporary graffiti, and the socio-economic environment in which it emerged.

6.6 Street art and politics

Public spaces are largely racialized White and gendered male and this fact makes the White male London artist's tag, while legally an act of vandalism, more profound. A reasonable argument can be made that a person wanting acknowledgment for his part in painting these murals would have requested to be included in the attribution line. Instead, he chose to tag the mural and claim it, not as a collaborator, but as his own. The politics of street art and specifically graffiti along with a critical examination of whiteness and gender aids in contextualizing this act of ownership.

Contemporary graffiti and by the use of this word, I am referring to tagging and large artworks referred to as 'pieces',[61] began in US cities in the 1960s.[1] This artistic expression was a way for marginalized young Black and Brown men to assert

[61] The word 'pieces' is short for masterpieces

their identity while living under societal conditions that made them feel[62] invisible. Scholars on graffiti agree that from its beginnings, it was an expression of visibility for groups who felt invisible because they lived in ‘an environment that made legitimate avenues for material and social participation inaccessible’ (Anderson 8; Ponterotto). As such graffiti was more than just an artistic expression or an act of vandalism, it was rooted in spatial politics and therefore was a means of “reclaiming public space” and grounding a minority identity into those spaces that resisted their presence (Anderson 8-9). In communities where property ownership was highly unlikely because of systemic racism and discrimination, graffiti writing was, as graffiti advocate Hugo Martinez notes, a way for young people to ‘own property . . . to have [an] identity’ (qtd in Anderson 9). Graffiti emerged from a “context and position of powerlessness” (Anderson 13-14), so it is important to first acknowledge that graffiti has a socio-political message and then to analyze its message, which is linked to social exclusion and spatial politics.

Ponterotto points to the “tag” as "the most prototypical form of graffiti, a kind of urban territorial marker" which asserts itself by crossing racial boundaries and inserting itself into the dominant group’s domain and claiming “audibility and visibility” (Ponterotto 115-116). Graffiti and other forms of street art such as murals are a means to “dispute hegemony and challenge mainstream society,” resist historical silencing, and claim an identity (Ponterotto 124).

Based on the history of graffiti and what it represents, the irony and inappropriateness of tagging a heritage mural becomes quite obvious. Each of the seven murals provide a ‘territorial marker’ and claim visibility and audibility or in a

[62] It can be argued that this was not just a feeling, but that systems were put in place to limit their actual visibility in social and political contexts through discrimination in housing and employment..

word, belonging for Black Britons. These murals are the first of their kind within the UK and they recognize a group that has been marginalized, underrepresented, and on the receiving end of discrimination in British society. The murals interrupt the status quo of spatial ideologies and, in an area that is undergoing gentrification, they reclaim the physical space. Yet, through the tagging of two murals, we witness the insertion of one's gender and whiteness.

In an interview, Michael Kimmel, one of the "preeminent scholar[s] of masculinity studies . . . analyzes masculinity's intersections with racism" (Wade 2018). He states:

> ...whenever anybody talks about gender or masculinity, we always go to the margins. We talk about those who are marginalized by inequality and discrimination. … we don't name straight, white, middle-class, able-bodied, cisgender men. … If our political goal is to decenter that center, the first task is to make it visible (Wade 234).

This is not to say that the artist intentionally decided to use his whiteness and his gender to claim the space of a Black female artist whose murals exist to, among other things, provide a sense of belonging for Black Britons. He would likely not see his act as one of privilege and might have felt that he was not being recognized for his contribution and wanted to be acknowledged. However, the means by which he went about gaining acknowledgement is problematic and as such his gender and masculinity must be made visible, as Kimmel urges.

Tagging is a specific type of identity marker so to tag these murals was an act of claiming or possessing not only the murals, but the Black bodies within the murals. Additionally, the fact that the London artist did not seek permission from Curtis to

have his name included in the attribution line indicates that he saw her role as irrelevant and believed he could proceed undeterred. Peggy McIntosh (1989) observes “whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege, as males are taught not to recognize male privilege”. The artist’s privilege motivated the tagging and kept him from realizing the inappropriateness of the tags.

6.7 Contextualizing Street art and Gender

Despite the seeming novelty of women using walls as canvases, this act has a history that dates back to at least the Upper Paleolithic period. Human handprints and hand stencils that appear in parietal art, more commonly known as cave art, were believed to have been produced by men. Yet, research done on Upper Paleolithic cave art found in southern France and northern Spain indicates that the hand stencils’ authors “were predominantly females” (Snow 746). Graffiti and other forms of street art are typically gendered male so artists who identify as women “have to decide whether or not to make their gender difference visible” because if they do, they are making their art “susceptible to judgments based on . . . gender rather than . . . skill” (Pabón 79). Other artists choose to “navigate the politics of visuality” by choosing gender-neutral, ‘masculine’, or androgynous names (Pabón 79). This is more of an issue with graffiti artists than those engaged in other forms of street art.

Graffiti and street art are often spoken of in the same vein with more focus being given to graffiti in and out of academia (Waclawek 2011). I do not agree with Fekner who states that street art is ‘All art on the street that’s not graffiti’ because while not all street art is graffiti, graffiti is a form of street art (qtd. in Blanché 33). Jessica N. Pabón (2016) highlights some of the differences between art that is labeled graffiti and that which is labeled street art by noting that in the former, the

artist performs a self-created identity whereas in street art, the self is not front and center, instead the “central visual” may be a landscape, a symbol, a statement, a person, or something else (78).

Additionally, if graffiti is measured against other forms of street art in levels of extreme, street art is considered ‘less risky,’ “less physical, [and] less dangerous” than graffiti and because of this, it is also viewed as “less ‘masculine’” which is why street art is associated more with women than graffiti (Pabón 78). Despite the perception of street art being a male domain, there are increasing numbers of women artists and some of these have formed collectives using street art as a means to educate and empower girls and women and to stake a claim of belonging within male-gendered public spaces (Pabón 78).

The following excerpt from The Feminist Artist Statement written by Swoon shows the internal struggle with outing oneself as a female street artist:

> At first I was so wound up about being a woman in a man’s field that I didn’t want to talk about it at all. I was making art out on the street, and no one knew I was a woman for at least a year, maybe three. I was adamant about my ‘neutrality’ so to speak. I was concerned with my ability to create things which would be read as universally human, and not tether me to a gender identity, which, I feared, would engulf what I had to bring, and chuck me into that marginalized, patronized place I associated feminism (sic). I wanted to sneak in through the air shaft and show up whole (Brooklyn Museum).

It is interesting to note that in wanting to create works that ‘would be read as universally human’, Swoon believed her gender may negatively impact the universality of her art and in turn marginalize it. This is not a concern that a male artist would have.

Despite the works of Swoon and other female street artists in cities around the world, there is still a tendency to think of street artists as men. From early names like Jean Michel Basquiat and Al Diaz as SAMO to Banksy, and JR, those that are most associated and globally recognized with street art are men. When a woman is mentioned, she is compared with a male counterpart. For example, British street artist, Bambi who has been called 'the female Banksy' has expressed her frustration with not being recognized as "an artist in her own right" and notes "[i]t's a perfect example that we live in a male-dominated society at the moment … Men set the benchmark and women are judged by that" (Ellis-Petersen). Interestingly, Bambi qualified her critique with the words 'at the moment' thereby indicating her belief that such male domination will not last forever.

The scholarly discourse on graffiti and other forms of street art has increased with research having been published by "well-respected academic presses" and included in academic conferences (Ross, J. I., et al 3). Street art transcends the obvious field of art history and is also included in rhetoric, criminology, cultural studies, and political science (Ross, J. I., et al 3). The issue of gender bias in art has been noted in chapter four**;** however, more scholarly attention is needed regarding such bias within street art and not just among street artists, but also the general public's perception of street artists.

Although women who are street artists are not beholden to a specific style, aesthetic, or technique, Vittorio Parisi's (2015) research "seem(s) to confirm the general impression that the perception of urban art is deeply affected by all sorts of gender prejudices" (Parisi 60). The survey was conducted in 2013 and had 242 participants who judged 24 artworks made by 22 artists. The ratio of men to women was 10:14. Participants viewed artwork, were asked the sex of the artist, and then

were asked to justify their response.

The survey's data, especially the participants' justifications, proved interesting and says a lot about how gender differences are perceived. For example, artworks that contained 'rounded shapes' were considered a 'feminine style' while those with sharp or pointed shapes were considered masculine (Parisi 59-60). In fact, even those works that are considered 'neutral' were still believed to have been painted by men because they did not betray a supposed 'feminine aesthetic[s]' (Parisi 61). This research supports Pabón's argument that our ways of seeing are "heavily influenced by hegemonic Western gender norms" (79). It also supports the dichotomy referenced by Swoon of the presumed universality of art that is perceived as masculine and the marginalization that is associated with works that are seen as feminine.

In addition to gender-related biases, the artist's "race", ethnicity, and socio-economic class also come into play in street art. Pabón notes:

> The process of a viewer's visual and cognitive perception replaces anonymity with biases and stereotypes of the subject held responsible and/or given credit for the public act. The subject is likely assumed to be urban, economically disenfranchised, and a racial or ethnic minority. Moreover, the writer/artist is invariably assumed to be male. Under the conditions of this particular gaze, girls and women who write graffiti or make street art are not visible (78).

In stating the above, Pabón fails to consider the ways that "race" and gender intersect within street art. As Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) pointed out in her seminal article, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics," it is

problematic “to treat race and gender as mutually exclusive categories of experience and analysis” because “women of color are marginalized within both (1989, 139; 1991, 1244). As such, I posit the intersection of Curtis’ “race” and gender underlie the negativity she received. Actually, this was more than just “negativity”. Curtis was on the receiving end of microaggressions and criminal behavior which, unfortunately, continued throughout the entirety of the project.

6.8 Observations

Since Markusen and Gadwa’s white paper introduced me to creative placemaking, it is fitting to refer to them and the components they state are needed in order to have a successful case of creative placemaking:

- rooted in the talents and vision of one or several collaborating initiators
- demonstrates a commitment to a particular place and its distinctive qualities
- mobilizes public will around its vision
- garners private sector business support and buy-in
- enjoys the commitment of the local arts and cultural community
- dovetails initiators’ aspirations with those of other partners
- crosses boundaries to leverage support and funds from other functional agencies (transportation, housing, environmental, parks and recreation, workforce development, small business) and levels of government (Markusen and Gadwa 26).

The *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* meets these seven components and based on these criteria can be considered a successful case of

creative placemaking. While I intended to include a template on how artists and community members can start and lead a creative placemaking project, I have concluded that not only is this not practical but it would be problematic. Successful creative placemaking projects are grounded within the local community and speak to the community's needs. As such, each project would differ. While not a template, below are my observations on this specific Bristol project, what worked and what did not. There is definitely knowledge that can be gained from the missteps and successes of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®,* but I would not go so far as to say that I am providing a guide for others.

The *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* was artist-led and therefore took a bottom-up approach by which I mean, it was community-driven. In preparation for the project, Curtis conducted research on the people whose names she had heard her parents mention while growing up. Yet, she was unable to find "basic information" on these individuals so, without any tangible documentation, she began interviewing people within St. Pauls' to find out more about the people and the social conditions of the day. While archival records and photographs could shed light on some of the historical moments, it was only by talking with people who lived through the experiences that she was able to gain a sense of the emotions felt by those who lived through this period.

One of my initial questions had to do with gentrification. Specifically, I wanted to know the strategies that were in place to combat the negative effects of gentrification, specifically housing displacement. Although this is still relevant when examining creative placemaking, in this specific case, the more I learned about the project, the less relevant it appeared. I say this because one of the reasons Curtis chose the subject matter she did is because St. Pauls was already experiencing

gentrification and she wanted to preserve a part of the community's history. While this is her intention, not everyone in the community views it the same way.

In November 2018, I attended the National Education Union, Black Teachers Conference. One of the presenters when introducing Curtis to the audience linked the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls*® project with the neighborhood's gentrification. While said in a joking manner on more than one occasion, his comments indicate that he, and perhaps he is not alone, views the mural project in a negative way and believes it adds to the problem instead of counters it.

As mentioned in chapters three and four, when an area is undergoing gentrification, cultural preservation is difficult. For this reason, some artists, like Curtis, respond by creating art to reflect the area's history. What makes Bristol unique, however, is that it is the first city in the UK and Europe that has a creative placemaking project that examines the legacy of enslavement through the creation of an open-air gallery. This gallery is also distinctive because not only does it memorialize local history, but it also features seven large-scale portraits of women and men of the African diaspora who did not acquiesce to the injustices faced, but forged ahead to make life better for themselves and other marginalized groups.

6.9 Contributions

> Thank you for reminding Bristol that Black people are more than slavery and reminding me that I enjoy great privilege as a result of the work my grandparents' generation did! There is still work to be done in Bristol!
>
> ~ Shanaz, June 2018

> I walked a different way to work this morning and went past your Owen Henry [mural]. It made me smile and feel uplifted. Thank you for the lovely art and history!
>
> ~ Chrissy Kelly, Bristol resident, January 2018

While the above comments were not submitted as part of data collection to measure one's sense of belonging and cannot speak for the larger population in and of themselves,[63] I believe these comments, along with the speaking engagements and tour enquiries, express an interest in part of Bristol's history that many had not known. This collective interest in local history, I would argue, is indicative of a sense of belonging which extends beyond the boundaries of Bristol as noted by the Jamaican High Commissioner who endorsed this project. He states:

> Michele's work is a valuable contribution to the documentation of our presence in Britain. By mapping the achievements of the African Caribbean community in Bristol, Michele is also raising the profile of Jamaicans in the UK. Her work shares inspirational narratives of how Black people have continued to fight against indifference, oppression and racism, whilst striving to promote integration and equality. It is encouraging to see Michele educating young people, inspiring them to be the next generation of role models, whilst being an inspiration in her own right.
>
> ~His Excellency Seth George Ramocan, Jamaican High Commissioner (Iconic Black Britons)

The *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* fills a current gap in UK popular culture and Bristol's local history and is an example for others who would like

[63] I was unable to engage in any quantitative measuring; however, Curtis has been working with a consultant to create a measuring guide. It is a long process and I do not know when it will be completed and implemented.

to explore their local history via murals. Even though this art and heritage trail focuses on Black Bristolians, the history is not solely applicable or of interest to this specific population. The history of Black Britons is not separate from the cumulative story of British history. Once Curtis decided to take on this project, she made it clear from the outset that the history she was trying to tell was not just Black history but the history of Bristol. The individuals, while Black, are part of a shared history within the city and therefore the stories are not exclusive to Black Bristolians.

Many creative placemaking projects prioritize the economic benefits that are achieved; however, Leonardo Vazquez (2012) argues for creative placemaking to take a place-based approach and to focus on the physical and psychological link between people and the environment. I have endeavored to show that the Seven Saints differs from others because it is firmly rooted in the area's history and psychology. It actively addresses critiques that other projects have received by taking into account "race" and class. This dissertation, however, goes further by addressing gender which, from my findings, has not been explored in the creative placemaking case studies I have found.

Even though my focus was not solely on the economic benefits, this is certainly an area I planned to explore in order to present a well-rounded case study that covered the social, cultural, and economic contributions. However, I was unable to gather any data to analyze because at this stage, Curtis does not have an "official strategy" (Curtis). While I can speak in general terms and reference other projects, I am not in a position to detail with any accuracy the economic benefits of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls®* project from its beginning to date nor am I able to discuss long-term strategies related to this specific case study.

Additionally, while Curtis states her intention to boost the local economy, nothing tangible has been put into place. She has mentioned the possibility of having people pay for tours, merchandise, and services with Bristol pounds, “the UK’s largest local currency” as opposed to British pounds as a means to help the local economy, but to date this has not been realized (Bristol Pound). Also, Curtis’ plan would not specifically benefit St. Pauls, but instead the City of Bristol. While St. Pauls and its residents may in theory benefit from more money coming into the city, it is questionable whether the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls*® project will result in the neighborhood experiencing an upward turn in its economic health. People who take the guided tour may patronize a neighborhood restaurant or café; yet, this is not guaranteed as will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 7 | conclusions

“Roses are red violets are blue if your marriage is a sham we'll be onto you. #happyvalentinesday”

7.0 The UK’s Windrush scandal

This dissertation investigated a creative placemaking project, the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* in Bristol, England to analyze its social, cultural, and political power. The heritage trail features seven large-scale murals of seven individuals of the Windrush generation and is the first of its kind within the UK.

Early arrivals of the Windrush generation held to the concept of universal Britishness and viewed England as their Motherland. They evidenced this belief by their assistance in the war efforts in World War I and II as soldiers and civilians and later by answering Britain’s call for nurses. Yet, despite their many contributions to the UK, a scandal was uncovered that has taken a devastating toll on those of the Windrush generation and their families.

In February 2013, the UK’s Home Office posted the above tweet as part of its hostile environment policy which was introduced by Theresa May in 2012 during her time as Home Secretary and supported by then Prime Minister David Cameron. The policy aimed to reduce net migration to the tens of thousands, a goal which Amelia Gentleman states was “unachievable” (Gentleman and Edwardes). Gentleman, a journalist for *The Guardian,* broke the story of how this immigration policy negatively affected individuals of the Windrush generation who were legally living within the UK.

This story takes us back to the idea of universal Britishness introduced in chapter three and the immigration policies in the 1950s and 1960s that were enacted to reduce free movement from certain Commonwealth territories. Those from the West Indies who arrived in the UK prior to independence from Britain were

“essentially making an internal journey” (Gentleman and Edwardes). Just as there was a “racist subtext” (Gentleman and Edwardes) to immigration legislation in the twentieth century, the same continues in the twenty-first century where individuals of the Windrush generation once again had their Britishness called into question and subsequently denied. Having spent over three years investigating what is now referred to as the Windrush scandal, Gentleman argues that the hostile environment policy, which required proof of residency, evidenced “layers of institutional racism” (Gentleman and Edwardes) where judgements were made based on a person’s skin color and/or accent as to whether the person had a right to be in the country.

The UK did not have a tradition of issuing identification cards, so many of the children, some as young as three who arrived legally with family members, did not possess any official documentation to prove their right to live within the UK. These individuals went to school, worked, had families, and were living full lives when, after the hostile environment policy was enacted, they began receiving “menacing letters from the Home Office” regarding their legal status (Gentleman and Edwardes). Unable to provide documentation, some were deported, others lost their jobs and homes, and at least one person was denied cancer treatment through the NHS unless he paid £54,000.

Those who were affected contacted the Home Office, but to no avail. Ironically, the very documentation that would have proven one’s legal right to live in the UK was destroyed or lost by the Home Office, and then individuals and families paid the price for this “extraordinary level of incompetence” (Gentleman and Edwardes). Then in the midst of the scandal, in June 2018 the government announced that Windrush Day would be observed each year to commemorate the 1948 arrivals from the West Indies and to celebrate the Caribbean contributions to

the country. The government also included a £500,000 grant earmarked to fund activities and events that community groups or others organized in honor of this day (gov.uk).

In establishing the fund and creating a day of remembrance, the government sought to shift the focus away from the Windrush debacle to a more complimentary topic. Interestingly, the £500,000 grant was established prior to the compensation plan which was put in place for those who were improperly targeted because of the hostile environment policy. The government showed that it is keenly aware of the power of representation. By establishing Windrush Day, the government's 'incompetence' was not the only narrative as it expanded to include the annual celebration and the £500,000 grant.

7.1 Legacy and its effect on representation

The Windrush generation sits at the center of this dissertation, but this generation would not exist were it not for enslavement and colonialism. By analyzing aspects of Britain's history from the colonial period to date, this dissertation has shown that the legacy of enslavement looms large in Bristol where the public memory of its historical links are visible throughout the city through place naming and public memorialization. Paradoxically, such naming and commemorating strengthens the sense of place and identity for some Bristolians while having an alienating effect on others.

In recent years there has been a call throughout cities in the Americas, the UK, and Europe to remove public art that memorializes individuals involved in what is now viewed as crimes against humanity. In the US case, this has included a push to remove statues of confederate soldiers, those who "owned" enslaved people, and Christopher Columbus. In Bristol, there has been a decade's long debate over the

name and legacy of one person in particular, Edward Colston. Some places have been renamed, while others still bear the Colston name. His statue has had a more tumultuous existence as it has been defaced, stolen, and ultimately, during the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020, removed from its pedestal and cast into the harbor. While some Bristolians have lauded these actions, others have strongly opposed them.

In using Sandercook as a point of departure, I posited that rejecting change is rooted in one's sense of place and of identity. Both of these come under threat when there is talk of changing something that has been viewed through the lens of permanency. In the US, it is often said of people who do not like change that they are "stuck in their ways" meaning they have specific routines and see no legitimate reason for revising them. This may also be viewed on a macro scale as it is applicable to the reactions people have to calls for removal of statues and the renaming of places. As discussed in chapter two, a place and/or local community can become part of one's identity and because of this, there is a feeling of ownership or control of their communities (Anton, et al. 146). Individuals are psychologically invested in the areas they inhabit so any change or proposed change is seen as an attack on one's self because of this strong attachment.

While there is an element of place attachment, I have also argued that negative feelings about change are rooted in White privilege and that the vast majority of those who oppose changes to street names, removal of statues, and renaming of public buildings do not realize that their comfort with the way things are and discomfort with any changes is because they have been "conditioned into oblivion" about the existence of their "unearned skin privilege" (McIntosh). Opponents see such removals or renamings as attempts to alter history; yet, we

have the example of Germany to counter this reasoning. Germans are keenly aware of their history and the country's role in the rise of Adolf Hitler and Nazism. At the same time, however, public statues of Hitler are banned as are street names or public places named after him or anyone else associated with Nazism. Germans have chosen not to glorify this part of their history and not to inflict psychological pain on society through public naming and other forms of memorials.

7.2 The struggles of representation

Within the UK there continues to be a 'struggle over representation'. In addition to the scarcity of representation in children's literature as noted in section 6.1, film and television have frequently allowed stereotypes to guide the plot and character development. Creatives are working to change this by creating their own stories, however, the process takes time (Clarke-Ezzidio). While the history of enslavement should never be minimized, it is also important to acknowledge the legacy of that history and in doing so to recognize that a lack of positive representation and a lack of authentic Black stories is still prevalent. Patrick Younge[64] states, "...we have Black characters, but they are not living authentic black lives, . . .   everything becomes an interpretation of somebody else who has not lived that life or lived that experience" (Clarke-Ezzidio). As noted in section 3.1, Doctor Who's advice to Martha Jones to 'own the place' made light of her racial and gendered positionality. This example shows that attempts to be inclusive or diverse can ring hollow when the stories have been written by White men.

Aside from the media, representation in education and politics also needs

[64] Younge "is an award-winning journalist and creative leader with 29 years' experience" and has worked within the UK and abroad. See cardiffproductions.co.uk.

improvement. During my fieldwork, I was surprised to learn that the UK's first Black Studies Program began in September 2017 at Birmingham City University (BCU). I then learned that this program was actually the first in Europe. Professor Andrews, one of the professors in the program, notes:

> There are few problems of racism that manifest worse in the UK than the US, but the absence of Black voices from the academy is one of them. There is a crisis of representation with only 1 percent of academic staff in Britain being Black. The problem is even worse in the higher levels of the profession where there are only 60 Black full professors across all subjects in the entire country. (Andrews)

The struggle for representation also exists within government as ethnic minority Members of the House of Commons and House of Lords are not representative of their number within the UK population. A briefing paper entitled "Ethnic diversity in politics and public life" reports that "[f]ollowing the 2019 General Election, 65 or 10% of Members of the House of Commons were from ethnic minority backgrounds. … In March 2020, 50 or 6.3% of Members of the House of Lords were from ethnic minority groups" (Uberoi and Lees 3-4). These percentages are an improvement over previous years, yet they still fall short of providing equality in representation.

Members of the Windrush generation preserved and strengthened a Caribbean identity through the formation of community associations and in effect created a cultural and political space that coalesced a sense of unity, purpose, and respect. Through these organizations and the civic work they generated, members were able to disrupt, even temporarily, the racialized status quo.

While equity in representation does not solve all social issues, it is important

to have diversity in “the ways in which 'being black' is represented” (Hall 274). Such representation will not, however, “displace the negative” or disappear racism, discrimination, and other injustices (274). Perhaps no greater example of this fact is the US where positive representation of Black and Brown people is increasing to greater and lesser degrees yet systemic racism remains. It is easy to become disheartened.

Over the past year with the murder of George Floyd and other Black and Brown people in the US, various clips and quotes of James Baldwin have been shared via social media. One quote in particular has appeared often – “Not everything that is faced can be changed; but nothing can be changed until it is faced” (103). As stated previously, I am not advocating for a revisionist British history, but rather one that is complete. Whether stories, poems, song lyrics, Carnival, film, paintings, or murals, Black and Brown artists are telling stories that matter not just to them and the communities they inhabit, but also to the larger societal community.

Since Bristol is known for its street art and walking tours, this in and of itself is not a novel concept. Yet, the heritage aspect of the S*even Saints of St. Pauls® Art Heritage Trail* sets it apart from all the other artworks in the city and in the country. Additionally, while the government has decided to implement a yearly celebration of Caribbean culture and its contributions to British society, this open-air gallery is a daily acknowledgement of the same. Though the individuals represented are Black and Caribbean-born, the story is a collective heritage.

7.3 Systemic racism

Since George Floyd’s murder, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that began in the US has spread with protests taking place in multiple countries including the UK,

Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands. In some countries, protestors evoke Floyd's name along with the names of people from their own country who were killed at the hands of the police. It is easy to point at the US, as many have done, and compartmentalize racism as a uniquely US phenomenon as any cursory read of the comments section of an article or video related to the protests shows; however, countries that were involved in the system of enslavement and were colonial powers often have a difficult time having conversations about "race" and more importantly racism, a matter which is not unique to the US. As Stam and Spence (1983) state, "It is hardly accidental that the most obvious victims of racism are those whose identity was forged within the colonial process: blacks in the United States, Asians and West Indians in Great Britain, Arab workers in France, all of whom share an oppressive situation and the status of second-class citizens" (4). As has been shown throughout this dissertation, historical markers manifest in contemporary societies in varied tangible and intangible ways; racism is one key manifestation.

Simply because public discourse on racism is not had, does not mean that the problem does not exist; "in a systematically racist society few escape the effects of racism" (Stam and Spence 20). Floyd's murder, which occurred during a global pandemic when many around the world were in different stages and/or levels of lockdown, received more attention than the numerous murders which preceded it because of the restrictions caused by the pandemic. In the US, from January 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, the police killed 164 Black people.[65] The insidiousness of systemic racism within the US is not new to Black, Indigenous, and other people of

[65] "This data is based on reported and verified cases, and does not necessarily account for all incidents in which a person was killed by police. But based on the known cases, police have killed at least one Black person every week since January 1, and only two states — Rhode Island and Vermont — have reported no killings by police this year." (CBS News)

color who routinely experience social, political, environmental, and economic inequities. While Black stories and experiences are an ever-growing part of US history, within the UK acknowledgment of these has been slower and I believe representation plays a powerful role in addressing these matters.

There is social, cultural, economic, and political power in representation and without positive and fluid representation, it is much easier to categorize and minimize groups of people. In Bristol, one BLM protest climaxed with hurling Colston's statue into the river as crowds of onlookers cheered their approval.[66] The cathartic act of discarding Colston's statue and what it signifies for groups of Bristolians shows the importance of representation. The racism on which the BLM movement has shed a piercing light is not new. Contributing to the discourse on representation and creating a scholarly space where the voices of those who have been largely silenced in the historical record can be heard is vital not just for academia, but for real world interactions; it has material effects. Introducing these voices is not revisionist history or an effort to put forth 'nice' images which if done improperly could be paternalistic and therefore equally problematic (Stam and Spence 3). This is where context is key. Visual representation that lacks historical, social, or cultural context is as void of meaning as the lone African mask referenced in chapter two. It is a bone thrown to appear "woke"[67], but in reality betrays a dearth of awareness and leaves the audience utterly unsatiated.

Racism is not as Stam and Spence state "permanently inscribed in celluloid or in the human mind … [so] we must never forget, we are far from powerless" (20).

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[66] At some point the stolen statue was returned to its plinth, but I was unable to determine when or by whom.

[67] The term *woke* is used in the US to refer to an "aware[ness] of and actively attentive to important facts and issues (especially issues of racial and social justice)". See https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/woke

Dating back to the 1960s, marginalized groups have used community-engaged murals in their fight for representation and while this struggle continues this in no way signifies this art form's lack of social or political importance. Art is, as Murray Edelman (1996) states, "a major and integral part of the transaction that engenders political behavior . . . it supplies images that construct the worlds in which we act" (2-3). As such, art in all its forms, can and does influence our political beliefs and social interactions. Edelman states, [t]here is no neat correlation between the conspicuous art of a period and the political idea and discourse it stimulates. But the body of extant art does provide a reservoir of images, narratives, schemata, and models from which everyone draws" (5-6). This is precisely why as social ideals change, images that were once considered acceptable are deemed inappropriate. One case which received international attention is Dr. Seuss Enterprises which withdrew six books from publication because they contained racist imagery.[68]

The social, cultural, historical, and political importance of the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* cannot be overstated. The trail is not simply a symbolic gesture; instead, Curtis has used portrait paintings to say something meaningful (Hall 15). She has turned St. Pauls into an open-air gallery while memorializing contemporary Black men and women in a medium and space that is not common within the UK. As such, the murals provide much needed positive representation, help instill a sense of belonging, and evoke a communal feeling. The benefits, however, do not end here. These seven murals define a physical space, preserve and magnify a neighborhood's heritage, and are a means for mental and emotional healing. One way they assist in this regard is by destigmatizing the St.

[68] *Dr. Seuss* books written by Theodor Seuss Geisel are a popular collection of children's books read by millions of people.

Pauls' neighborhood and encouraging visitors to the area even when Carnival is not taking place. These murals are specific to the neighborhood, but are also part of Bristol and the UK as a whole. They effectively alter the discourse of British history, the assumption of Britain's insularity, and the belief, among some, that in order to be British one has to be White. British history and Black British history are not at opposing ends; they are, as has been shown, intricately bound together.

When I began my investigation, I did not expect my research to take me to urban geography and an examination of the ways that public spaces are racialized and gendered. As I delved deeper, I realized the naming power of this mural project and its ability to make a mark in a city with many tangible reminders of the institution of enslavement. While petitions were being signed and debates held over changing the names of streets, landmarks, etc, Curtis, through this project, busied herself with planning and realizing these seven murals thereby transcending the uproar and making meaningful change which can be enjoyed by all.

7.4 Future work

Bristol has been an interesting city to analyze because it projects the image of a vibrant and welcoming city that appreciates art and cultural diversity. I recall hearing, on more than one occasion, that Bristol is the new London meaning a cosmopolitan city full of history and cultured happenings. It boasts its public art tours where one can view some of Banksy's early works including *Mild Mild West* or go on the city's famed pirate walks. At the same time, however, Bristol's legacy of enslavement is ever present and this history is believed to be at the foundation of the city's racial issues.

When I began this dissertation, I was searching for a reason, other than racism, that caused people to have such vitriolic reactions to others and now, having

listened, observed behavior, and read comments, I have a deeper understanding of the psychology behind such reactions. This realization has piqued my interest in exploring how public places and spaces are marked (gendered and racialized) and I would like to delve deeper into this area of research[69]. While the vast majority of people do not question or think about such matters unless someone proposes a name change or the removal of a public commemorative work, these are communicative signals that exist in various cities and countries throughout the world. I would like to explore this connection as well as the ways in which marginalized groups, specifically non-white women street artists, make themselves visible by taking spaces and marking places, and the social and political results of their actions.

Community-engaged murals are not just communicative signals, but also social signals and should be recognized as an important form of representation. This opens up new avenues of research on Caribbean diasporic communities where research on public art in general and community-engaged murals specifically, is lacking.

Because the *Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Art & Heritage Trail* is still new, it is impossible to state with any certainty how it will be perceived as the years pass. I envision tracing the evolution and effects of this particular case and expanding my research to examine how the Caribbean diaspora constructs and expresses their cultural and political identities in other geographical areas, specifically in countries that had and/or still have Caribbean "possessions" such as France and the Netherlands.

This dissertation not only serves an academic purpose by adding to discourse

[69] Places are also marked according to physical ability, however, this is not an area I am interested in exploring at this stage.

on cultural studies, creative placemaking, urban geography, and public art, but is also helpful in informing public policy. Over the past year, more and more people from various countries have joined in protests and debates surrounding the presence of certain public statues. My dissertation emphasizes the key role that history, “race”, gender, and culture play in developing arts-based initiatives that are representative of the community. As such, this work could be a resource to assist in supporting programs and policies that aim to address representation by focusing on racialized and gendered public spaces.

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Appendix A | Glossary of terms

Caribbean v. West Indian

Being from the US, I use the terms interchangeably to refer to people of Caribbean ancestry; however, in the UK, Caribbean is preferred as West Indian is considered outdated. The Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association has received new members in the past few years and some of these have advocated for a change of name, one that does not include the term “West Indian”. When referring to the geographic area, Caribbean is, as Begg (2011) notes, the politically correct term used by historians and social scientists because the term West Indies was coined by European colonizers.

Public art

There is not a single all-encompassing definition for public art, but it is generally agreed that there are certain discernible factors. Cartiere and Willis state that public art “must fit within at least one of” four categories:

1. in a place freely accessible or visible to the public: *in public*
2. concerned with, or affecting the community or individuals: *public interest*
3. maintained for or used by the community or individuals: *public place*
4. paid for by the public: *publicly funded*

Public art is an umbrella term with “varying forms of artwork” that fall underneath it. (4) Because of this, it is impossible to generate a clear and concise definition. My use of the term in relation to Bristol refers to it being both ‘in public’ and of ‘public interest’.

St Pauls' Uprising

The term St Pauls' Uprising is used as opposed to St Pauls' Riots. While media reports typically use the term 'riots', I have chosen to use 'uprising' as this term better expresses the feelings of the community members who lived through the event. One community member refers to the event as "an uprising against the system," the system being excessive policing which targeted a largely minority neighborhood.

Trafficking

While the term "trafficking" is a contemporary one, I believe it is fitting to use when discussing the movement of enslaved people. According to the *Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*, there are "three elements of human trafficking" and each of these was implemented in the movement of enslaved people.:

1. The Act (What is done)
    a. Recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons
2. The Means (How it is done)
    a. Threat or use of force, coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or vulnerability, or giving payments or benefits to a person in control of the victim
3. The Purpose (Why it is done)
    a. For the purpose of exploitation, which includes exploiting the prostitution of others, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery or similar practices and the removal of organs." Definition provided in

article 3, paragraph (a) of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons. (United Nations).

Windrush generation

The ‘Windrush generation’ refers to people who emigrated from the West Indies to the United Kingdom between 1948 to 1971. The first ship to dock in 1948 was named the *MV Empire Windrush*, hence the name Windrush generation. On board the first ship were 490 men and two women. These individuals were from Commonwealth countries under British control, spoke English, had received a British education, fought in England’s wars, the Queen was their Queen, and as such they saw themselves as British. This was a commonly held belief by people from the West Indies. The majority of people arrived from Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Appendix B | The Times, Monday November 6, 1954

THE TIMES MONDAY NOVEMBER 8 1954 7

THE TIMES

MONDAY NOVEMBER 8 1954

FREEING TRADE

WEATHER FORECAST

TO-DAY'S ARRANGEMENTS

TO-DAY'S NEWS

Dingy Flowered Aspidistra

The Pennoyer Rule

Mr. Nehru's Visit

THE AUTOMATIC FACTORY

A NEW "INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION"

LEGAL PROCESS IN KENYA

THE MUSLIM CRISIS

CHILDREN'S COMICS

ART UNDERGROUND

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

BIRD MIGRATION

THE WEST INDIAN SETTLERS

I—FIRST SIGNS OF A BRITISH COLOUR PROBLEM

By Our Special Correspondent

SLUMS IN THE MAKING

URGE TO EMIGRATE

CALL TO GOVERNMENT

BRITAIN'S FISH SUPPLIES

APPROACH TO CHESS

HOLY TRINITY, LEEDS

Appendix C | Lyrics to Sonny's Lettah

Dear mama

Good day

I hope that when these few lines reach you they may

Find you in the best of health

I doun know how to tell ya dis

For I did mek a solemn promise

To tek care a lickle Jim

An try mi bes fi look out fi him

Mama, I really did try mi bes

But none a di less

Sorry fi tell ya seh, poor lickle Jim get arres

It was de miggle a di rush hour

Hevrybody jus a hustle and a bustle

To go home fi dem evenin shower

Mi an Jim stan up waitin pon a bus

Not causin no fuss

When all of a sudden a police van pull up

Out jump tree policemen

De whole a dem carryin baton

Dem walk straight up to me and Jim

One a dem hold on to Jim

Seh dem tekin him in

Jim tell him fi leggo a him

For him nah do nutt'n

And 'I'm nah t'ief, not even a but'n

Jim start to wriggle

De police start to giggle

Mama, mek I tell you wa dem do to Jim?

Mek I tell you wa dem do to 'I'm?

Dem thump him him in him belly and it turn to jelly

Dem lick 'I'm pon 'I'm back and 'I'm rib get pop

Dem thump him pon him head but it tough like lead

Dem kick 'I'm in 'I'm seed and it started to bleed

Mama, I jus couldn't stan up deh, nah do nuttin'

So mi jook one in him eye and him started fi cry

Me thump him pon him mout and him started fi shout

Me kick him pon him shin so him started fi spin

Me hit him pon him chin an him drop pon a bin

- an crash, an dead

More policeman come dung

Dem beat me to the grung

Dem charge Jim fi sus

Dem charge mi fi murdah

Mama, doan fret

Doan get depress an downhearted

Be of good courage-acap (Johnson)

Appendix D | Interview with Aldo Rinaldi, Senior Public Art Senior Public Art Officer at Art and the Public Realm Bristol

DB: Bristol is a very diverse city with an interesting history so when you talk about Bristol's identity, what exactly does that mean? What is Bristol's identity?

AR: Bristol has its own identity like other cities have a distinctive identity. For instance people think of Bristol as having urban art, a free spirit, green outlook, a good music scene, and a heritage environment, so identity is about the character of the city. But that is different for everyone but some aspects all agree with (green, liberal, etc).

DB: How are artists and communities who have been traditionally excluded from public art now included? Or, if they are not yet included, what's being done to include them, and are you seeing a change?

AR: Public art is publicly accessible, if they are excluded it is because they don't know about it or don't engage with it. We work across the whole city and across many contexts (health care, schools, offices, public spaces, landscape, temporay [sic], and with partners such as Arnolfini[70] and others) so we think it is largely accessible. Be nice to do more publicity and marketing but that is expensive.

[70] Arnolfini is the name of an International Centre for Contemporary Arts located in Bristol. arnolfini.org.uk

Appendix E | Interview with Susan Pontious, Program Director, Civic Art Collection and Public Art Program of the San Francisco Arts Commission

DB: Please talk about the social, political, and psychological effects of public art? In what ways is your collection culturally representative of San Francisco? How do you ensure the art remains representative?

SP: Historically, approximately 70% of our commissions go to San Francisco and Bay Area artists. Most of the major artists and art movements in our region are represented in the collection. Our collection is also representative of not only the diverse styles of artists in our region, it is also reflective of its cultural diversity. Cultural and gender equity is a deeply held value in our city, and the Arts Commission works to embody that value in its art collection.

DB: How and in what ways are public responses to the art monitored? Are there any mechanisms by which feedback is encouraged or members of the public can provide feedback to the art?

SP: At present, we have no formal system for monitoring public feedback once artwork is installed. We are in the process of developing an evaluation tool to capture feedback in terms of responses to the projects we get from individuals, press coverage, etc. We actually have very few complaints about artwork; most of the

response we receive is very positive.

DB: “Artwork acquired and accepted into the collection should be appropriate in scale, media and context with its intended display location, and be relevant within the cultural, historical, social/political and environmental context of San Francisco and the Bay Area.” Please explain how this works especially with non-Bay area artists (national/international artists)?

SP: SFAC’s program is not restricted to Bay Area artists. Many or [sic] our commissions are awarded to artists from other states/regions of the country with some international artists. Commissioned artists are given an extensive site orientation and are provided opportunities to work closely with the client department and engage community stakeholders. All artists are selected based on their judged ability to respond to the site, the architecture, and its social context. It has been my experience that the out of area artists we select have been well able to do this.

Appendix F | List of Partners

Partners	Role
Paintsmiths	This team of diverse artists are expert in large-scale public art murals and have created some of the best murals within the UK. IBB's partnership with the Paintsmiths is vital to the execution of the murals created and designed by IBB's owner, Curtis.
BBC Bristol	Through this partnership, IBB has access to archival resources including video footage. Initially, it was planned that select footage would be included in the mobile app for the self-guided tour. However, this did not come to fruition. IBB wanted to have video footage embedded within the app for ease of visitor viewing. The BBC would not give permission to do this because they wanted visitors to know it was their footage. They would provide a link, but then one would be taken out of the app in order to view the footage. In the end, the video footage was not included. These resources are invaluable to the historical aspect of IBB's educational work.
University of Bristol	The university allows IBB to conduct research within their libraries and archives. Additionally, they will edit and publish IBB's book on Carnival.
PAPER Arts CIC	This local nonprofit provides training and mentorship to young creatives who are interested in working in the creative industries. They provide IBB with access to community networks. They also market IBB's work in their newsletters and on social media.
United Housing Association	This is a small community-based housing association founded by three of the Seven Saints over 30 years ago. They provide IBB with access to community networks. They also market IBB's work in their newsletters and on social media.

LiveWest Housing Association	A housing association in the South West of England. They provide IBB with access to community networks. They also market IBB's work in their newsletters and on social media.
Cactus Apps	This small independent Bristol business created a mobile app for self-guided walking tours of IBB's murals. The app is available through the App Store (Apple iOS) and Google Play (Android).

Appendix G | List of Sponsors

Sponsors	**Role**
Boomsatsuma	Provide animation and filming services as part of their in-kind sponsorship.
A Productions	Provide training and mentoring for Michele Curtis and assist with the production of our animations.
Bristol City Council	Provided a monetary contribution to the Seven Saints of St Pauls' mural initiative. Also granted permission to use one of their homes for a mural.
Arts Council England	Provided grants to cover the cost of *The Seven Saints of St Pauls'* mural initiative in Bristol.

Appendix H | Interviews with Michele Curtis

1. Interview with Michele Curtis | via email

Prior to meeting Curtis in person, I emailed her eight questions on June 23, 2017 and on June 26, 2017, she responded. My questions and her answers follow. Her responses then served as a basis for the questions I asked in our in-person interview.

DB: *I've read that in creative placemaking, partnerships are key so I'd like to know your experience. Who were the partners involved in The Seven Saints? Who initiated the partnership? What were the roles of each partner?*

MC: I initiated the Seven Saints of Saint Pauls® Project and there were no official partners although I did get a substantial amount of support and a small grant from United Housing Association and received sponsorship in-kind from various organisations.

The project started following my first exhibition entitled ‘Iconic Black Bristolians’ in 2014. Following the success of the exhibition, the positive responses and the persistent requests for ‘more’, I immediately knew that my next exhibition would cover the history of the St. Pauls Carnival and would include the founders, music scene and other community members who had contributed over the years since its inception.

When I began my research I immediately realised the scope and significance of this project, especially with its impending 50th Anniversary in 2018. I decided to split the exhibition into three parts: The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® (2015), Bristol Beats & Bass(2016) and The St. Pauls Carnival Collective (2018) all under the umbrella of ARTival 2018: St. Pauls Carnival Heritage Initiative.

The mural initiative came about because one of my sponsors for the 2014 Iconic Black Bristolians exhibition suggested that it would be a good idea to paint some of the subjects from that exhibition onto walls around Bristol. After months of consideration, I decided to develop The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® exhibition into a mural initiative, to be a permanent out door gallery and tour in the St. Pauls area of Bristol, to encourage visitors into the area and to learn about the history of the African Caribbean presence and contributions made to the City.
DB: *What role does history of place and people play in your project?*

MC: The role of history of place and people plays a significant role in this project. Historically, St. Pauls has been infamously renowned as a 'no go' area in Bristol and some people still believe this to be the case. St. Pauls has historically been inhabited by predominantly African Caribbean people who were deemed socially and economically inferior to other communities in Bristol.

Racism in bristol (sic) has always been a very contentious subject and one that was traditionally swept under the carpet, so to speak for several reasons, one in particular being the City's connection to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. It was important to me and the project to share the stories and experiences of the Black Community in Bristol, to help dispel some of the negative stereotypes and assumptions about the African Caribbean Diaspora in the City and the places in which they inhabited.

That is not to say that some of the deprived areas which were occupied by the Black community were not without their problems, like other deprived areas of the City that were predominantly inhabited by white populations like Knowle West and Southmead, but to show a balanced a fair perspective of a community and area that

has historically been marginalised and polarised due to the colour of the inhabitants skin.

By extending this project into a permanent outdoor gallery and tour, I hope to encourage people to visit the area and ‘find out for themselves’.

DB: *In what way and how is your project directly related to the city or the community's social and cultural identity? Were any long-term strategies put in place to aid in this regard?*

MC: This project is not just about ‘Black’ History, but Bristol’s History. A shared history which the City can be proud of. This project is directly related to all of the above. The St. Pauls Carnival was established by The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® primarily, for two reasons:

One, to say thank you to the City for all their support regarding the support they (The Seven Saints of St. Pauls®) received during the campaigning they organised and did for the 1963 Bristol Bus Boycott.

Two, to invite people from outside the African Caribbean Community, to visit St. Pauls to learn more about their culture and to promote integration.

Through the The (sic) Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Mural initiative, I hope to continue the legacy which they started. St. Pauls Carnival has from the outset encouraged and attracted many visitors, from many walks of life to the St. Pauls area for one day a year. However, after the Carnival all is forgotten and the City reverts to its old patterns of stigma and separation of and from the Black Community, whilst perpetuating the historical negative stereotypes. Although many of the Carnival goers have personal experiences that are conflicting of their learnt perceptions through those same negative stereotypes, the culture of condescending and

segregation of the Black Community continues throughout the remaining 364 days of the year, the effects of which are often unknown or disregarded by some of the White British and European populations.

DB: *In what way and how is your project directly related to the city or the community's economic identity? Were any long-term strategies put in place to aid in this regard?*

MC: At this stage no official strategy has been applied to this project, however I did take into consideration the potential to increase the Community's economic growth. By completing this project I hope to help boost the areas local economy by inviting people to explore the area and spend money with local businesses, and encourage new businesses to emerge through the areas increased footfall due to the Murals.

DB: *I've read about murals being painted and then people losing their homes because rent skyrockets. What strategies are in place to combat the negative effects of gentrification, specifically housing displacement?*

Gentrification of the St. Pauls area was also a consideration during the planning of this project. St. Pauls has already and continues to experience the adverse affects (sic) of gentrification, the changes and investments in the area has changed the landscape significantly to date.

One of the reasons why I felt so passionately about the project besides the obvious, was to ensure that, as the area inevitably changes due to gentrification, it is important to me that the history of the area and its inhabitants remains known and is never lost or forgotten. I believe The Seven Saints of St. Pauls® Murals and The Iconic Black Bristolians initiative will achieve this.

DB: *What long-term strategies are in place to create a sense of belonging for all members of the community?*

MC: Right from the outset, I have made it clear that the Iconic Black Bristolians initiative is about 'Our' History as a City. I have established strong working relationships with many organisations, community groups and educational institutions to ensure that this is achieved. Iconic Black Bristolians is about sharing and mapping the achievements of the BME Community in Bristol but it is not exclusive, it is for us all to share, learn and be inspired by these stories of triumphs over struggles, and what we can achieve when we respect each other and work together in unity.

DB: *What has been the public's response to The Seven Saints?*

MC: The public's response to date has been very supportive and extremely overwhelming, I am deeply humbled. I have been privileged enough to receive a generous amount of media coverage and for that I am extremely grateful as I have been able to reach audiences that I would not have been able to with out (sic) the press coverage received.

Given the subject matter of my work, it has been extremely refreshing to see my hopes and aspirations fulfilled by the engagement from many different ethnic groups, cultures and communities from around the City, Country and abroad.

Without this support the project would have not been able to flourish and grow. The public's support has been a large part of why I have continued to work endlessly to ensure this project is a success.

DB: *Are you engaged in any other creative placemaking projects?*

MC: At present I am not, but I hope to continue the work of Iconic Black Bristolians Nationally (sic) and Internationally in the future.

2. Interview with Michele Curtis | in-person

This interview took place at Costa Coffee in Bristol, UK on December 17, 2017. I had originally suggested meeting at Curtis' studio, but she chose the coffee shop. I later understood the reason for this is that she works out of her home and since, at that time, I was a stranger, she did not want to invite me into her home. We met at 10:00 a.m. and talked for approximately three hours. Once the actual interview ended, our conversation continued. We stayed in touch and approximately six months later, Curtis called and asked if I would return to Bristol to work with her on the Seven Saints of St Pauls® project. Seeing this as a great opportunity to conduct fieldwork and get hands-on experience in a creative placemaking project, I agreed. I arrived in the UK in September 2018 and as previously mentioned remained for six months.

I am indebted to Curtis for giving me the opportunity to interview her as she provided me with a foundation upon which I could build this dissertation. Prior to meeting with her, a few online articles was all the information I had and these would not have been enough to formulate this research.

DB: *How did you choose the title, the Seven Saints of St Pauls?*

MC: This project was just going to be one exhibition initially and when I started doing research into looking at the founders I realized there were seven of them and then I thought this information is so huge it has to be separate exhibitions and then at the end put it all into one large exhibition . . . I was looking at names for the exhibition.

Obviously I wanted seven in there and then I wanted St. Pauls in there. . . . I said these people are like saints; they are amazing people. I know it has religious connotations, etc., but these people are Christians anyway and then I just thought the seven saints of St. Pauls.

DB: *So are these the seven that started Carnival or that were behind the boycott?*

MB: Both. Essentially what happened - there was an organization in Bristol . . . Commonwealth Co-ordinated Committee and these seven were a part of that committee and those were the people that were the campaigners and the people that initiated the Bristol bus boycott. There was a group of people from all over the Caribbean that were living in Bristol at the time - that were unhappy with the way . . . things were, so they campaigned for the Bristol bus boycott with the exception of Carmen Beckford who at the time I believe was not living in Bristol. I think she might have been in London studying to be a midwife and that was in 1963 and then in 1968 they changed their name to the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association, but it was the same group of people and the reason why they did that was because Jamaica had just had their independence so they were no longer part of the Commonwealth but now the West Indies and . . . They wanted a way to kind of bring people together and to say thank you to the people in the city from all walks of life who supported them throughout the campaigning for the Bristol bus boycott so that's when . . . Carnival was started as a thank you and to . . . bring people to learn more about other cultures. So even though it was a predominantly Caribbean-style Carnival, it was also about sharing you know food and culture and stories . . . Carnival was always the first Saturday in July, but they had numerous events running up to that. . . . They had a dominoes competition and they had sports events. They had a beauty pageant, cricket championship. They had all of these things and at the

final day, at the end of all those celebrations, . . . then they would have Carnival . . . like celebrate and open up the summer basically.

DB: *Were the days leading up to the event well attended?*

MC: Yes, for example they had the dance competition at the Colston Hall and then you have the West Indian dance team. You had Asian, Irish, everybody would all be competing together . . .

DB: *Was the competition based on ethnicity?*

MC: Yeah I guess it was based on ethnicity or culture really. I guess because it would be their traditional style of dancing and all that kind of stuff and then they had the cricket clubs. The West Indian cricket club - so they used to have tournaments for that and they used to have sports tournaments as well like relay racing and all the traditional kind of sports.

DB: *Will the events be part of next year's celebration?*

MC: I'm not sure I believe they're talking about having . . . I can't remember, . . . talk about bringing those events prior to Carnival back but I'm not sure . . . I haven't had much involvement with the current St. Pauls Carnival which is called St. Pauls African Caribbean Carnival. I haven't had much contact with them over the past year and then there's the new St. Pauls' Carnival CIC. One's got funding from Arts Council, one hasn't, basically.

DB: *Which one doesn't have it?*

MC: St Pauls African Caribbean Carnival which is the one that basically the Bristol West Indian Parents & Friends Association stood down and gave it to the community and that's the organization that now has it . . . and there's a new St. Pauls Carnival

CIC, who is about a year old now, who set up because the Arts Council and the city council didn't feel as though the St Pauls African Caribbean Carnival were fulfilling their duties in terms of providing a Caribbean-style Carnival that would enable carnival-goers to learn more about African Caribbean culture so there was a bit of consultation and then this new organization was born out of that consultation . . . They don't work together; they don't really communicate together. They're organizing separate events and things like that . . . very confusing for the community.

DB: *Is St Pauls' festival different?*

MC: St Pauls' festival is what it was originally called. . . . When they say 50 years . . . they're talking about the same thing but initially when St Pauls Carnival was set up in 1968 it was literally like a fete like a fair and it expanded to have . . . It was St Pauls, Easton, Montpellier, and St. Werburgh's. I believe it was called a fete or festival and as the years went by it grew. . . . The pre-carnival events I was just describing, they didn't happen in St Pauls. They were like in Bedminster in Easton . . . all part of the Carnival. It was about bringing people together, bringing the city together and so over the years the ethos has been lost which is why I wanted to do this project. . . . When city council, Arts Council . . . cut the funding, it was a lot of talk in the media about St Pauls Carnival and its significance. All that was coming out of it was oh, loads of violence there, just a huge street party, doesn't mean anything. At the time I was doing the research and I thought no, it's not just a … street party. [People] come into St Pauls, . . . get drunk, have a good time, eat some jerk chicken, and curry goat, and then piss off back to wherever and then slag people in St Pauls off. . . . It was never about that. It was always about bringing people together and sharing culture and diversity, and celebrating diversity and difference, also looking at

how we are all the same in the same light and a lot of that was lost over the last 25/30 years.

I wanted to revive that and revive the meaning and culture behind it all, but also as I said, as I was doing the research I also found out that they were the campaigners, the founders behind the Bristol bus boycott. Individually they had done so much for not just the Black community but Bristol as a whole. Like they [people] celebrate how culturally diverse Bristol is and it's a great place to live and everybody's so integrated and that is in part due, the majority of it is due to the work that these seven people and their organizations had done to try and bring communities together. So I want to share that story.

DB: *Is there any suggested reading material?*

MC: My research is mainly through interviewing - oral stories and speaking to other people and they bring up more names but what I was going to say to you, I'm writing a book to accompany the exhibition next year so there will be something. People have said to me [that] people have written stories about Carnival already, but I can't find it. Why is it not accessible then? So I want to produce a book that is accessible to everybody, you know. People can, you know, find out about the history without having to go through what I've had to go through just to find basic information essentially. . . . Because how could we not know fifty years down the line that the people who did Bristol bus boycott also started St Pauls Carnival and did so many other things.

DB: *What are some of the other things that they've done?*

MC: Carmen Beckford, she was the first Black female race relations officer in Britain. She was the first African Caribbean female to receive an MBE from the Queen in the

Southwest of England. She also did a lot of campaigning for young people in the UK. She was actually the one that was head of the Bristol West Indian dance team and she was the person that arranged all the dance tournaments. She also took children on camping trips and fundraised and took them abroad to do dancing.

DB: *All children or just Caribbean children?*

MC: Predominantly people from the inner city at that time so it would be BME . . . and took them abroad. Owen Henry, he was one of the first successful business owners in Bristol, Black-owned business. He had a shipping company and a travel agents and that's like back in the 60s. He also did a lot of campaigning and he worked alongside the police - the police liaison committee to help to improve relationships between the police and the youth in the community. He also received a medal of honour from Michael Manley back in 1979. Barbara Dettering as well. I mean they've all received . . . from the Jamaican High Commission for their work and service to the community. Barbara Dettering, she does a lot of community theatre. She's done a lot of campaigning as well for many rights . . . sickle cell and bringing awareness to the masses in Bristol. Roy Hackett well obviously he started Carnival and did the boycott I mean . . . now he's in his 80s and he's still fighting for rights and at the moment he's working on improving situations for homeless people so he's trying to arrange for them to be able to go places in Bristol and have breakfast in the morning things like that. . . .

DB: You said it's not just about Black history it's our history. Often when one shows a Black person doing something, it's seen as a Black thing, but when a White person does something, it's just a thing. Can you talk about that?

MC: . . . Why can’t I just be an artist? I have to be a Black artist or a Black female artist. Why can’t I just be an artist? A lot of what people often say to me especially when I go, for example, the other day I had a conversation on the phone and I was asking someone to be a part of the exhibition next year and he was like yeah, yeah, yeah, I’d love to. Put us down, but there’s one thing I’d like to ask you Mich, if you don’t mind. I said yeah sure and he said to me, . . . why don’t you have an exhibition in St Pauls? People ask me. Yeah the work you do is great but why don’t she ever have an exhibition in St Pauls? And I said well first of all that’s not true. I said I understand why you’re asking me that question. There’s a lot of politics around that. The first two exhibitions were in St Pauls, but the majority of people who come to my exhibitions are not BME; they’re White European or Asian and they bring their families as well. And that is the whole point - not just about Black history . . . not about educating us. . . . We know these names. We may not know what they’ve done or what they’ve accomplished for us, but we know some of these names. But like I said, it’s not just about Black history, yes it’s Black people and its history but it’s our history . . . and of our country. . . .

It was the Bristol bus boycott that changed legislation in the race relations act in the UK and they never talk about it even on national news without mentioning Roy Hackett and Owen Henry and Paul Stevenson OBE, so we have a significant role to play in the history of the UK. And I think that with Bristol’s history with the slave trade and everything, everybody shies away from Black history because, as you know especially being American as well, . . . whenever people talk about Black history it was just slavery for years and they never talk about anything before and they never talk about anything . . . which always makes Black history a contentious subject and . . . well actually yes that is all relevant. Yes, that is all significant, but what about the

years after? What about the things that we've accomplished? And even though it wasn't my plan, but actually next year is the 70th anniversary of the Windrush so that all coincides with everything. Whenever they talk about the Windrush they just talk about a bunch of people on a ship, or the ship, but what about the story of those people that came over on that ship? What did they do? What did they accomplish? How did they change the face of not just Black British culture but British culture because a lot of what we see now today, that is our influence. So like, for example, my son was watching a youtube video and it was about roadman – basically roadman is a young Black youth, wears a hoodies, stands on the street corner - is like wha, wha, wha, you know whateva, and there was a White guy you know breaking it down. It was like a parody and he was trying to educate other White people about the roadman culture. My son was watching it; he's only nine. He was like laughing and joking and dhe said something, and it like stuck out to me, he said something along the lines of oh yeah wha wha in roadman culture means hello blood means like your friend or someone and it stuck out to me because that's not what it means. It's the same way like it's weird how those two phrases alone came from the West Indies and wha wha means what's happening. It doesn't mean hello. It means, you know, what's happening. Also, I say to my son that blood is like saying brother and that's what they used to say wha wha blood? Blood, meaning coming from the slave trade or Africa. We don't know [each other] but we're blood you know. . . . People don't really understand how our culture has influenced British culture in general because it's not just Black people that use that terminology anymore it's Asian people, it's White people, it's everybody that use those terms.

I remember years ago, I was working . . . for a youth organization . . . I was sat at reception; there was an Asian boy and a White boy standing in front of me. They

were talking; they were swearing and they were talking and he was like shhh, she's going to hear what we're saying and the White boy turns to the Asian boy and says she doesn't even know what we're talking about anyway. I was thinking, but you're talking patois. They say patois is broken English, but you're speaking broken patois, so it's like of course I understand what you're talking about. This is my culture, my language, but it's never associated with us as such. The influence that we've had even when I was growing up you'd never see a Caucasian male wearing his cap to the back and wearing trainers as a casual footwear. They would always wear shoes and things like that . . . Now everybody's wearing sneakers. You must remember, you know, this is like a Black thing. . . . We always wore sneakers and it's funny how it's come into mainstream fashion and that's from our influence as well. It's not Black history, it's our history essentially. Sorry, rambling.

DB: *No, totally fine. Thank you. Okay so when you were speaking you separated Asian from BME. I thought BME stood for Black Minority Ethnic. Isn't this a term for all non-white people?*

MC: Now they've changed it to be BAME, Black Asian Minority Ethnic and I don't like that term at all.

DB: *Why did they change it?*

MC: I guess because Black was too much of an umbrella for Asian people to be founded under. . . . Now it's BAME instead of BME so I don't know. It's a term that I've never really been comfortable with myself. . . . People really normally say BME in professional circles. I generally now say people of African Caribbean heritage because some Caribbean people don't want to be associated with Africa, so it's like what do you say so I generally say the African Caribbean diaspora. . . . Even with

the name Iconic Black Bristolians, I really struggled with that for a long time, but then that's how I identify. I identify with being Black and there was a time when everybody was proud to be Black. I grew up listening to reggae songs and music, you know, like James Brown . . . and the Black Panther movement and being fascinated with that whole . . . I identify as Black and it's my project, it's my company, this is what I'm going to call it. You can't please everybody and quite frankly Iconic BMEs doesn't really have a ring to it, does it?

DB: *With gentrification and tagging, are you concerned about the murals?*

MC: No, . . . One of the things that I was hoping initially when I started the project was that people will self govern the murals and want them to be protected. . . . People will just respect it and leave it alone, but one of the things I learned through working with The Paintsmiths, and even that connection with Stokes Croft, is that there is an unspoken law around street art and people who tag and things like that. They generally know who's work to touch and who's work not to touch . . . I was just going to work with Paintsmiths anyway because when it comes to large scale murals they are the best that I know, but having their signature gives me in the street art world kudos . . . don't touch this because this is one of ours basically. This isn't just some random person . . . you need to respect this piece. The politics behind it . . . it's an unspoken law I guess . . . you don't touch some people's work.

DB: *What about developers?*

MC: That's one of the reasons why this project has taken so long. . . . One of the things people said was just go ahead and do it because everybody else does it, but one thing I wanted to ensure was that the properties we use we had the permission from the managing agents whether that's Bristol City Council or another housing

association - permission to do it with an understanding that these murals will not be touched and I will maintain them for a certain amount of time and that we have an agreement in place that if it is tagged then we will go and make good of whatever is tagged. But we're hoping that because we're working together with the Paintsmiths that it should be okay because everyone knows who they are and their work is never defaced or anything like that. They're respected in the street art world in Bristol.

DB: *I read that the murals are going to be on the Carnival procession route. How do you choose places and why did you choose the procession route considering Carnival hasn't taken place lately?*

MC: Well that was the idea, but actually in reality, it's not going to be the procession route. It's been where we can secure walls because one thing I learned through the research and development last year was that the Carnival procession doesn't actually follow the original . . . It used to come all the way from Eastville through Easton down through St Pauls and etc because of development and the way that roads have changed it couldn't happen that way. So basically it was also about finding walls that were roughly the same size and shape without any windows and where we could get permission from the landlords to use those walls. And with the exception of one wall that has widows on the side but the wall's so massive that it doesn't really matter. The windows don't interfere with it. So we've got predominantly in St Pauls. Some of the locations have just been driving around, . . . find a wall. But one particular wall which is the wall that Dolores Campbell is going to go on is actually going to be on Campbell Street because the family of Dolores Campbell said please can we have her on Campbell Street because it's her name. So we managed to secure that wall on Campbell Street which is on the other end. So the migration mural is at the top and Dolores will be at the bottom.

DB: *Have you had any problems securing walls you wanted?*

MC: No, it was absolutely fine. I have two walls from United Housing Association who have supported the project right from the beginning and also have a legacy connection with the seven saints because I think three of the seven saints . . . founded that housing organization. . . . decided to start up the housing association to try and find appropriate housing options for, I think it was predominantly for elderly people because they found their needs . . . weren't being fulfilled. It wasn't exclusively for BME people but they wanted to ensure that the elderly Caribbean people had somewhere where they could be housed, be given their own food, their cultural beliefs would be respected in terms of the support that they needed. So yeah, I have two walls from them. Bristol City Council I have one and I have one from another housing association. And then the rest I have people contact me after the mural went up last year saying, we got a wall come and have a look and see if you can potentially do a mural on our wall because we'd like to be a part of the project.

DB: *You've established strong working relationships within the community and in education. Will you please talk about these?*

MC: Fortunately for me when I started Iconic Black Bristolians, it was just one exhibition of 6 portraits. . . . I hadn't drawn in like seventeen years. . . . I had just been made redundant. . . . I'd go back and study graphic design and then I can just work from home and be self employed. . . . All throughout my course, my tutors were saying your work is really beautiful. Are you sure you want to be a graphic designer, seems like a waste? You should have an exhibition. . . . I was in London and I thought maybe I should have an exhibition. But what's my subject matter? What's

important to me? And then I thought, well I love Bristol, I love black people, I love my culture. And I thought maybe I should do an exhibition about Black people in Bristol. But maybe I should do it about unsung heroes and that's where I came up with Iconic Black Bristolians. That was just going to be the name of the exhibition. . . . It was in August and I was doing it for Black history so I had about a month to get six portraits done and put an exhibition together, find a venue, etc. And that's where United Housing came in. I can't really remember how it came about but . . . There was a local place and I asked them if I could have an exhibition there. They had connections with United so United found out about what I was doing … and they were interested and they came to find out more about the project and I told them oh you know there's links here with Carnival, etc. I put out all the publicity for the first exhibition and once I had my first interview on a community radio by a radio presenter called Primrose Granville who now works for the BBC and that was it. I went on her show and then everybody went crazy for it basically. I had the launch event and I was just so overwhelmed, literally. I was ram packed. It was hot. I couldn't breathe. And everybody was like why have you done this person? Why have you done that person? And I was like this is my first exhibition . . . never done anything before and they were like really. But when I did the publicity I had been contacted by Colston's Girl School which is like quite a prestigious girl's school in Bristol. . . . Can you come into our school and talk to our children about your exhibition in an assembly?

DB: *So they approached you?*

MC: They approached me; they saw a flyer somewhere. So I said yeah sure, so that was the first of it. So I had the exhibition and then they called me to come back and do a career talk at their school for their young girls about careers in art; so I did that.

During this time, I was working on the St. Pauls Carnival exhibition because it was just going to be an exhibition and then I realized how big the exhibition was. . . . As I was working on that one they asked me to come back and talk about that exhibition and invite their girls to come and see the exhibition. Then I got a call from a primary school telling me that Owen Henry's granddaughter goes to that school and they would love to have their children come in and see the exhibition. . . . After that I had another call from a primary school asking . . . come and do a talk at our school for our young people about being an artist, the importance of integration and diversity, and all that kind of stuff, and then I did that. Then I got contacted by the University of Bristol Student Union saying we're doing something for Black History Month 2015. We'd love to have your seven saints exhibition here. Can you do a talk? . . . So I did that. . . .

United Housing asked me to come and do a talk and presentation at their AGM… and so now in terms of the 2018 exhibition which is going to be ARTival 2018 . . . I now have an official partnership with the university of Bristol. They are the official partner of the exhibition so I think with regard to my work rather than me just being an artist or a "black female artist" there's a huge educational aspect to the work that I do and I think why I've been so popular within the school system is that . . . there isn't any information and if there is, it's hard to access. . . . One of the things I always used to say when I go into schools is that when it comes to Black history in the UK, we always look to America and there's nothing wrong with that . . . We have our own history and we should be sharing that history with our brothers and sisters in America and vice versa.

DB: *Can you speak to the Caribbean commonality that exists between the US and the UK?*

MC: I was listening to Talib Kweli and Mos Def. Is he Jamaican? It would be interesting to find out. . . . American Black history is very American-centric and I used to find that really alienating when I was a child. . . . I think generally, I don't know if it's politics . . . it's always been like they love our culture but they don't love us. Especially being of Jamaican heritage myself, it's always been like they love our culture but they don't love us. I can say it's a Jamaican thing but no it's not, it's universal. It doesn't matter if you're Black from Jamaica or from NY or . . . whether you're from Miami or L.A., or whatever, you experience that same thing. They love your culture, but they don't like you. Right?

That's why I don't like the term BME and the whole political correctness to a certain extent because I know why they're doing it, but I also . . . feel like it's a barrier to stop people from communicating and talking about issues . . . because I find that with the term BME and all this different political correctness I think people that aren't of African Caribbean descent get pissed off and feel alienated. . . . Why are they always called these different things? And they don't know what to say.

When I was working for The Crown Prosecution [Service], they weren't allowed to say black bags because it could be deemed as being racist. But the bag is black so. . . . You had to say bin liners or trash bags. But we've always said black bags because they're black and they're bags. Why would I be offended by that. . . . No one asked me what I find offensive. I'm Black that's how I identify. That's what I'm going to call my company. Sorry, I went on.

DB: *You said that by having the mural project, you hope to encourage people to visit St Pauls. Are you marketing or doing outreach in some way?*

MC: Mainly through PR, but at the moment no. I literally had my head down this year. The project is so big and I'm project managing and I'm doing the artwork, and I had to bring in people to do bits of work because I can't do everything, and looking for partnerships and that kind of stuff, having to sell myself to the industry which really hasn't been difficult to be honest - just write them a lovely letter and say hey look this is what I've done. It's funny because my work isn't even up, I took my website down and still. I've been lucky. I've had like a wishlist and people have been like sure yeah we'll support you 110%, but like I said earlier, . . . a real niche market and I have access to information that's not readily available out there yet so I've just been keeping my head down with the intention of having to finish the project next summer and bringing everything together that I've done - if I'm successful with the Arts Council funding because now the project is completely reliable upon receiving this funding from Arts Council otherwise I won't be able to go ahead.

DB: *Is there a plan b?*

MC: At the moment there really isn't a plan b because the biggest source of funding for the arts in the UK is Arts Council England. Although I could go down for the Lottery Heritage Fund . . . if I was going to apply for that one, I would have had to . . . like August or September and at that time, I didn't have the partnership with the university, but now that would be a plan b because I could go down that route, but you can't apply for both simultaneously. Because Arts Council gave me the money to do the research and development last year, it made sense to go to them and say well that was a success now can you give me the rest so I can finish the project. The sponsors that I have and the partners that I have, they have given me a substantial amount of funding towards the project but it's still not enough to complete the project - bring in more staff and admin, people to do PR, people to do admin stuff, people to

do social media and all that kind of stuff because I have to design six murals and project manage. I've got to write the book and I've got to do more research and more portraits and all those creative things on top of everything else, so I need all hands on deck basically. I feel pretty confident that the funding will come; there's clearly a need for it. . . .

DB: *Do you think your project will inspire other groups to paint murals that reflect their culture?*

MC: I don't know, I haven't seen anything. Even though there is a huge divide now to a certain extent, Owen Henry and Clifford Drummond did a lot of work in the Asian community back in the 60s. They would help them to fill out passport applications . . . citizenship . . . and all that kind of stuff . . . never spoken about. . . . Even with St. Pauls Carnival there was a lot of Irish involvement. . . . these seven put carnival together . . . [the church] give them a space free of charge so they could plan and all that kind of stuff, raising funds and all those kinds of things, the church would take collection . . . They'd go and knock door to door. It's about whole communities working together even though they were the founders of it, they helped other people - communities contributed and helped them.

DB: *How did that get lost?*

MC: It really annoys me when I hear people talking about immigration and these people coming in and the Somali community feeling isolated and I think, why. The same things that these seven have fought for . . . but people think it's okay because it's not their ethnic group that's experiencing it this time. What was all that work for? The biggest thing that I want my work to achieve is just to try and help people change their perception - shift peoples views of what they thought was true. People

come to St. Pauls and they have a blast. They have an amazing time. They love Black culture, they love being around people. There isn't a lot of trouble, . . . only one or two people that aren't necessarily from Bristol come in and make trouble and then that's all that's reported. No one ever reports how everybody was hand in hand, dancing, laughing, drinking, eating and then people leave never to look back again until the following year. Why don't you come during the year? Why don't you talk to us like we're human beings? Why are you still saying, oh they're from St Pauls when you were in St Pauls months ago in the summer and had fun and everything was fine? - no one stole anything, no one attacked you.

DB: *I asked this previously and at the time you did not have one. Have you thought of an official long-term strategy for helping the economy?*

MC: I've been thinking about ideas. I want to start producing merchandise to sell: prints, t-shirts, jumpers - starting out small, nothing too big . . . looking at how I can accept Bristol pounds, so we've got our own local currency in Bristol. It's to encourage people to spend money in the city so the money stays in the city so it doesn't go out. . . .

For example when we pay our council tax you can choose to pay in Bristol pounds or British pounds. If you pay your rent or council tax in Bristol pounds then the council can only spend that money in Bristol so I'm looking at that. . . . St Pauls is going through a bit of regeneration but there are still some local businesses there so it would be nice to have people come in and spend money in St Pauls whilst they're there. Although a lot of the shop fronts have closed down, within the next couple of years they're going to open up again.

DB: Can you talk about the cultural economy?

MC: Encouraging people to buy Black as well. No offense to any . . . that are there, but there's no African Caribbean shops. There's only one there in St Pauls at the moment. Two, because there's Glenn who has an African Caribbean restaurant in the Learning Center. . . . When I had the seven saints exhibition in St Pauls, I had a few people come and they were like look we've been so inspired by your exhibition, we'd like to support a local business is there anywhere we can go and stop for a coffee before we go back into Broadmead and at the time there wasn't . . . anywhere where I could send them whereas in the days of Owen Henry and the seven saints there were loads of Black-owned businesses in the area . . .

DB: *Do you think Carnival will return in 2018?*

MC: Yeah I do. . . . in terms of marketing promotion as you were saying, I'd like to get them (the murals) done, having people snapping them and putting them on social media. I'm also in talks with destination Bristol. I had contacted them before because one of the things, visitbristol[.org] there's nothing there about St Pauls. No one knows the history of St. Pauls. There isn't really anything happening there at the moment apart from developers there building luxury apartments. I'm hoping to get people to really explore Bristol . . .

DB: *How are you recruiting people to help?*

MC: . . . the project has grown so quickly that I can't keep up because it's only me on my own so my long-term goal is to turn Iconic Black Bristolians into a company of a social purpose . . . and what I want to do after that is to expand from Iconic Black Bristolians to Iconic Black Britons and then through that travel and share the stories of our African Caribbean diaspora here, Caribbean, America, and Africa, you know just doing small exhibitions . . . if I can make the right connections and . . . in France

or in wherever about our community and their impact, what they've done, I'd be happy to do that. But in order for me to get to that stage, I have to be a company. I have to have paid staff, generating income on a regular basis. . . . In regards to recruiting people, it's been people who I've met like yourself that have contacted me, we've just been talking via email . . . I've got some spare time in the summer and need some work experience. Can I come and do some work with you? And I'm like okay. The thing is, I don't really have the time to accommodate anybody because I don't know what I'm doing myself. . . . I've got a student that I work with . . . Can you please give me a job? I'd happily hire you, but I just can't pay you right now. I do a lot of work with her and she's really involved in what I do. She's been here from the beginning. She was from Colston Girls School and she heard my first talk. She said, I'm so inspired by what you were saying and she's always saying to me, you're such an inspiration. . . . I can't keep giving people work experience when I don't have the resources to manage what I'm doing. Even though I still work with everybody now, it's just in the long-term I want to take care of those people that showed a genuine interest . . . have like a real team . . .

DB: *Are the materials that you are using bought locally?*

MC: I'm trying to resource everything locally with the exception of press and media which obviously I want national press for this project. For everything I'm trying to use local people and buy everything locally so I've been approaching local companies and all that kind of stuff and local organizations and trying to purchase everything and even working with people who are local. I do get people contacting me from all over really, but I mean I want to try and keep it as Bristolcentric as possible. To try and show also, as well, one of the things working with Paintsmiths and even some of the organizations I work with, a lot of people are kinda like oh, they're not BME why

aren't you using Black companies or Black whatever, but at the end of the day Carnival wasn't built like that - it's not what it's about. Although I would like to help everybody like I was just explaining, I need resources because I don't have the capacity to be training everybody and having the time . . . I need support as well in order to get it done in time which is why I'm going down that route so that I'm able to have my beneficiaries and customers and I'm able to kinda provide a service to those who cannot afford it or even my time for like work experience, bringing people onboard, being able to give people paid work experiences or internships as well so they're getting value out of what they're trying to accomplish and really having a hands on contribution to whatever work we're doing rather than just being oh yeah, make us some team rather than being involved in the design process . . . A lot of people want to go into arts and culture but they don't necessarily have, there's not the scope to have the real true work experience which Is what I give to my students that I work with so I just want to build on that really and produce great content at the same time and I want to do more books and more . . . I've got loads of ideas . . .

When I was doing the mural of Owen Henry, I was up on the scaffolding and it wasn't even finished or anything it was half done, you get the gist of it, and a Black guy walked past and he was like, what's all this about. I said it was a project the seven saints of St Pauls and he was like but there's no Carnival no carnival. I was like, yeah I know. What's the point of it then? It's the history of Carnival and the history of these people and what they've done for our community and for Bristol. He was like, well this isn't history. The ship around the corner, the Windrush, that's all of our history. And I'm thinking some people just don't get the connection - don't get that these people came across on the Windrush, this is what they've done. It's not just about a ship. It's not the ship that's the history; it's the people. Some people just

don’t get it and that’s okay. But I think at the moment, I take responsibility for that as well because I haven’t really been, the website is done, you know, nothing’s going out, . . . I’m hoping that once the project’s done that everything will come together. . . .

I'll tell you why I took the website down - because people were stealing my work and not giving me credit. That’s why I took it down. Because I was planning on doing the book and the fifty year anniversary is coming up, I just thought, somebody is going to go on my website, steal everything, write a book, and then release it before I have. So that’s part of the reason I took it down and then also because I want to produce merchandise this year as well, I’m upgrading it like an e-commerce. I’m going to start doing postcards, the book obviously, and prints of the portraits. . . . There’s going to be biographies but not to the entirety of what’s going to be in the book so if local children want to go and research local people, they’ve got a resource to go and do that. . . . Even press and media stole my work without giving me credit or saying information found by .. . I’ve been looking at terms and conditions of use to put on my website . . . Everything’s ready to go essentially, but what I’m hoping to do is just before the exhibition, probably like the Friday before or something like that, launch the website and . . . then on the Monday night when I have the launch event for the exhibition, launch the application for the tours the same night. . . .

DB: *What has been the response outside of Bristol?*

MC: I just had the Jamaican High Commission endorse Iconic Black Bristolians. I’ve got their logo on everything now so that’s a start. With the exhibition next year, we got two people from Guyana, so I’m going to try to get the Guyana High Commissioner to come to the exhibition as well and try to get everybody from the

Caribbean to endorse it because you know we have that small island mentality . . . but actually here that doesn't matter because we're all in the same boat together and we work together . . .