Pedagogies of Enlightenment or Entitlement? Hospitality, School Yoga, and the Trials of Decolonization

Tasha Ausman
University of Ottawa
tausman@wqsb.qc.ca

Abstract

Mindfulness and wellness practices are increasingly becoming part of the curricular landscape in secondary schools in Canada, particularly with growing attention to the mental health of students during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. This research examines the implementation of a school yoga program introduced to students bubbled in classroom cohorts in a school in Gatineau, Quebec. This paper employs Derrida's framework of unconditional hospitality to ask whether it is possible for diasporas to reclaim indigenous knowledges through practices of ethical relationality, even as his philosophy brings to light some of the impossibilities of overturning the historical power relations entrenched in colonial pasts and the ongoing prevalence of White supremacy.

Yoga is not now, nor has it ever been, a practice aimed at physical mastery for its own sake. Nor is it a practice aimed at "stress-reduction" so we can function as better producers and consumers in a capitalist society. Yoga was originally intended to prepare the body as a foundation for unity with the spirit. The limb of asana aims at strengthening the body. Asana, along with dhyana or meditation, aim to harmonize body with breath in order to attain deeper and deeper states of meditative awareness or samadhi. The purpose of this kind of meditative awareness is to experience, practice, and live oneness of mind, body and soul with the divine. This kind of freedom is called samadhi or liberation. It is ironic that practice meant to free us has becoming so confining. (Barkataki, 2015, n.p.)

Yoga in the Classroom: "Namaste, Everyone!"

During these times of COVID-19 constrained schooling, with children bubbled into a single classroom all day, schools in Quebec are looking for ways to attend to student mental health. Administrators are bringing in outside help for sessions on mindfulness, resilience, and different kinds of sport that are safe to practice in small classrooms, because students cannot go to gyms where they can asymptotically spread the virus. I begin this piece by presenting a vignette about one such practice, named "chair yoga," newly offered on a class-by-class basis at a secondary school in Gatineau, Quebec. Chair yoga involves a series of activities that students can do by moving their chairs into the aisle in the classroom. The instructor at this school is the "school life coordinator." Her role is to build student cohesion by getting kids involved in different activities such as the school news channel, cultural awareness days, and this new yoga curricular health and wellness program. The school life coordinator is a cis-gendered White¹ woman with a pedagogy that draws on her lived experiences teaching and learning yoga in local studios.

One of the chair yoga sessions was allocated to a period of my ninth-grade science course. As it began, I started to witness the not-so subtle introduction of incorrectly used Hindi words and Sanskrit symbols (such as Om – ॐ), integrated with the guided activities of spiritual alignment, meditation, breathing and stretching. I suddenly felt very uneasy. As a desi Canadian familiar with yoga's Indian roots, I've always observed the industry from the outside – as a place where the New Age consumerist tropes of promised enlightenment through branded yoga mats, Lululemon pants, and expensive memberships were inaccessible to me in numerous ways. Over the course of the next forty minutes, I watched the children being instructed to put their hands in a “*namaste* position” and then raise their arms over their heads, “stretching their spirits to the sky.” My uneasiness soon turned to anger. Immediately it became clear that there was a disjunction between the lesson in front of me and the decolonization efforts that the school espouses as being central to the curriculum. The institution publicly supports its student-led Black Lives Matter movements, First Nations ceremonies guided by Elders within our Anishinaabe Lodge, and other grassroots movements. So how could this form of yoga be given a free pass to recolonize classrooms where students literally cannot choose to opt out? I considered that perhaps the yoga class was an oversight and one that could be remedied through the same difficult conversations we had in other committees such as First Nations, Métis, Inuit (FNMI), anti-bullying, and Black History. I sought out my South Asian colleagues for advice, and we had a meeting about what to do and whether it mattered.

Later that day, three teachers of South Asian descent, including me, discussed what we recognized as the dissemination of misinformation about our culture through the classroom yoga sessions. I sent an email to the administration asking for the chair yoga program to be altered to focus on stretching, breathing, and relaxation, while leaving out the use of Hindi or Sanskrit phrases, tropes, and symbols. The kids could benefit from movement activities without having Indian culture and elements of Hinduism entwined in the pedagogy. After all, the South Asian students in the school were being subjected to the same experience that I was – a misaligned pedagogy of so-called enlightenment carefully executed in their butchered m/other(ed) tongues. I was given permission to meet with the school life coordinator to have a conversation, and was thrilled that the administration wanted to remedy the situation.

As I explained the complex history of yoga – that the lovely markets of Shimla were once the very same streets where Indians were banned from walking, and that yoga and Ayurveda were forbidden in India under British rule – my words fell short. I spoke about how we might introduce the history and philosophy of yoga with children, and in turn, how we might problematize the perpetuation of exotic stereotypes of Eastern mysticism and begin to understand yoga's place in Western society. And I conceded, that even as a desi person, I held no proprietary rights over the practice of yoga, which would be counter to its philosophy and history. The answer I received from the yoga instructor was brief and telling: “well, that's not what *namaste* means to *me*, so maybe you can listen to my perspective.” We, the South Asian diaspora, were immediately silenced through the discourses of denial and refusal. Our initial laughter at the yoga lady's lack of understanding of our language gave way to an uncomfortable silence. There was nothing we could do. The yoga program – its curriculum-as-implemented – continues to stretch its migratory (mis)appropriations within the lived experiences of our classrooms.

Cultural Appropriation and the Challenges of Hospitality

It might be obvious to say that classrooms are spaces of transformation for children, and that pedagogies we choose matter. Given the premise/promise of yoga as an unproblematic transformational practice to which children should be subjected unwillingly, this paper begins by locating the potential violence of the so-called mindfulness practice in Western contexts as a form of cultural appropriation. Cultural appropriation is defined by Thompson-Ochoa (2019) as taking “certain elements of a culture before modifying them according to the demands and expectations of a specific consumer segment” (p. 35). Kadi (1996) further argues that “what passes for multiculturalism is actually covert and overt cultural appropriation, actually a form of cultural genocide. As dominant White society casually buys and sells our symbols/realities, their cultural meaning is watered down and their integrity diminished” (p. 120). However, in challenging New Age cultural forms, Kadi offers the possibility of building “ethical cultural connections” in order to counter the imperialist attitude that permits people with privilege from owning aspects of indigenous cultures such as the ancient, historical, and religious practice of yoga in India. She explains that “ethical cultural connections are comprised of respect for the community involved, a desire to learn and take action, an openness to being challenged and criticized, a willingness to think critically about personal behavior, and a commitment to actively fighting racism” (p. 125). Given the potential for ethical cultural connections to challenge the violence against Indigenous knowledges such as yoga, I wish to employ a critical framework of hospitality derived from Derrida’s writings to first, provide insight into scene of classroom yoga teaching by White actors, and second, to suggest that there is the potential to foster ethical classroom pedagogies of mindfulness.

Echoing the call in this Special Issue to inquire about ways to “disrupt the violent curricular colonizing grammars of distancing and silencing” (Ng-A-Fook, Lee, & Oguanobi 2020), I wish to speak back to the institution of schooling as the place where a “foreigner’s” rights to unconditional hospitality are dismissed. Derrida distinguishes two kinds of hospitality in his philosophy when talking about the foreigner/stranger (the French term *étranger* applies to both). The first is *conditional hospitality* – one that is grounded in rights and laws of the land, where the guest is forced to ask for asylum, answer questions about where she is from in a language that is not her own. This juridical form of hospitality of the sovereign state is recognizable in all societies – as a form of “welcoming” and “tolerance” that nevertheless reminds the guest that she is not in her own home (Derrida, 2000). *Unconditional hospitality* is an absolute law and poses a kind of paradox. The guest is free of debt or conditions to the host.

[A]bsolute hospitality requires that I open up my home and that I give not only to the foreigner but to the absolute, unknown, anonymous other, and that I *give place* to them, that I let them come, that I let them arrive, and take place in the place I offer them, without asking of them either reciprocity (entering into a pact) or even asking their names. (Derrida, 2000, p. 25, original emphasis)

As Westmoreland (2008) points out, “absolute hospitality allows for violence” because the host and guest roles become inverted, turning the home inside out (p. 6). Welcoming someone without condition means that the guest becomes the host of the host, one who cannot be questioned – for even differences in language become transactional as one party must translate, and this disrupts the formulation of absolute hospitality. Westmoreland explains,

A tension arises. In order to be hospitable, the host must rid himself [herself, themselves] of security and invite the new arrival. The *ipse* [host] gives up security, authority, and property, and promises benevolence... The host has welcomed into his home the very thing that can overturn his sovereignty. In welcoming the new arrival, the host has brought about that which takes him hostage. (p. 7)

Is hospitality thus an aporia? If there is no sovereign state to govern the rules of hospitality, then the host can be overthrown. After all, the laws of the state presuppose the welcoming of the guest under conditional hospitality. What benefit is there to thinking about this philosophical paradox in relation to cultural, ethical, and pedagogical questions in relation to diasporas such as my own?

Foremost, we might consider that by conceiving of hospitality as a framework for decolonizing school spaces, we are open to interruptions of the self whereby the primacy of individual interests and ownership can be challenged. As well, the laws of hospitality bring into view those who are considered guests even as they are also hosts. In education, there is always violence. Children are asked to welcome the possibility of “new knowledge” that they are learning at school unconditionally. They are, of course, more welcoming than adults to such potential violence of misunderstanding, not knowing, and difficulties with apprehension. In the case of the school yoga program, there is a complex interweaving of relations, beginning with the unconditionality inherent in children to listen to the adult in the room. Moreover, the school itself is the official host of the guest yoga instructor who arrives at the threshold of the classroom to bring in new knowledge. She becomes the host of both the students and the spiritual knowledge of yoga in the class. The irony of this occurring in Quebec is glaring, as Bill 21 prohibits religious symbols such as hijabs, turbans, or kippahs to be worn by faculty or staff under its secularism law. However, Quebec classrooms are only inhospitable to non-Christian expressions of faith as the school gears up for its annual Christmas celebrations, food drives, and festive cheer without fear of the police or government inspectors showing up.

To this end, South Asian diaspora are placed in a strange liminal position. We can claim our place in the national imagination as born-Canadians, and we also occupy the role of hosts as certified classroom teachers forced to welcome unwanted guests into our pedagogical spaces. Stripped of our legal right to outwardly represent our religions, we have to hand over the keys to a new host, since our faiths literally cannot enter through the front door. Not only are we treated like guests where White perspectives supersede our held cultural knowledge, our faith is also transformed, (mis)appropriated and rendered barely recognizable as spiritual in the process. White supremacy thus erases and replaces us, and we are kicked out of our own home – the classroom, the public imagination, and even our religious cultural practices – by the very guest that we invited in. In the section that follows, I explore the paradox of unconditional hospitality further to ask whether it is possible to decolonize school yoga by reframing the roles of guest and host through a praxis of ethical relationality.

Is Decolonizing Yoga Possible?

The difficulty with decolonizing the practice of yoga, troubling its (mis)appropriation, is that its roots begin by retracing its literal routes to Imperial England, where Indian yogis began to travel to sell the art form, as a way to convince British imperialists that it was healthy, rational, and scientific. However, this “was a position they were coerced into, and unfortunately reified colonial forms of knowledge – that knowledge must be proven or scientific to be worth anything”

Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry, Fall 2020, 12(2), pp. 121-131

ISSN 1916-3460 © 2020 University of Alberta

<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/cpi/index>

(Gandhi and Wolff, 2017). Yoga became even more popular among Western audiences after Vivekananda's demonstration of the art form at the Chicago World Fair in 1893, though he is "variously described as exotic, mystical, heathen, and threatening—[which] reveals the instability of meaning that orbited around him and the nature and extent of Orientalist discourse surrounding India at the turn of the century" (Arora, 2016). Vivekananda's biggest supporters were elite, White American women, who continued to promote his tours across the United States to the dismay of orthodox White clergy. The capitalistic settler colonial commodification of yoga begins with this period of colonialism and exploitation, where practitioners were able to see religions of the East as spiritual but nevertheless inferior.

Figure 1. “Indra Devi” (Eugenie Peterson) posing with her cat on the cover of her 1963 book, *Renew Your Life Through Yoga*, which is still available for purchase.

Guests in the colonizer's home, yogis engaged in an embodied translation – one that was a performance for the colonizer's benefit, a transaction of conditional hospitality. As yoga became entwined with the commercial imperative of colonialism, cultural appropriation was the natural next step. Gandhi and Wolff (2017) assert:

...one of the goals of White Supremacy is to buffer white people from the pain that comes from the process of exchanging cultural grounding for the unearned power and privilege of whiteness. This looks like the hoarding of material resources and wealth into the hands, pockets, and bank accounts of white society. Meanwhile, in order to uphold the foundation and on-going functioning of white supremacist and racial capitalism, white people are taught to be ahistorical and emotionally repressed. In order to maintain the status quo, white people are taught to sublimate and anesthetize feeling. To feel — whether joy, sorrow, or grief — is to be counter cultural... (n.p.)

Ironically, the practice of yoga now, as it was then, claims to put people in touch with their inner emotions and spirituality. Yet it does so by selling White consumers the very tranquilizer they need to sedate the anxiety of losing their power, one expensive meditation session at a time. Setting aside the fact that the practice of New Age yoga in Western contexts rarely takes into consideration the full spectrum of yoga's religious and spiritual elements in order to get onto the business of *doing* what you paid for (the stretches, poses and meditations) it hardly, if ever understands its origins in White supremacy.

Figure 2. The cover to the LP entitled “Concentration and Meditation.” Indra Devi/Eugenie Peterson’s pose features a halo around her head in an entwining of Christian symbology alongside tropes of Indian culture. She wears a white sari indicating spirituality and purity, and places her hands in the position of religious offering.

Telling the story of the whitewashing of yoga in North America is risky business. In 2013, Chiraag Bhakta was invited to present his exhibition entitled #WhitePeopleDoingYoga at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. Over a series of months prior to the grand opening, the museum muted its original enthusiasm and instead began to issue a series of demands on the artist, beginning with the request to change the exhibition name to #PeopleDoingYoga, removing the museum swag, and toning-down the exhibit to divert attention from the thousands of collected images Bhakta curated about the White appropriation of the yoga art form. Bhakta (2019) describes the events as absurd, “a parade of condescension, passive aggressiveness, and white fragility in which the Asian Art Museum revealed itself to be in a losing struggle with the whiteness at the core of its identity” (n.p). In the exhibition, which was eventually allowed to proceed with its original title (but no swag), museum-goers were invited to take in wall-to-wall images of White people doing yoga – from magazine covers to self-help books to albums. Some of the self-described yogis in this context are famous, such as Eugenia (aka Eugenie) Vassilievna Peterson, a hugely popular White teacher credited with starting the movement of American yoga as a physical exercise (Goldberg, 2015). Her many metamorphoses took her from Russian aristocrat to actress and cabaret performer, a diplomat’s wife during WWII, and eventually to her yoga persona under the pseudonym Indra Devi – a moniker she kept up until her death in

Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry, Fall 2020, 12(2), pp. 121-131

ISSN 1916-3460 © 2020 University of Alberta

<http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/cpi/index>

Argentina, aged 102. She appeared on television, coached Hollywood stars, and even went to China to give classes at the home of Madame Chiang Kai-shek. The internet is full of references to Indra Devi as an inspiration, and her many books with yoga poses and meditations can still be purchased on Amazon and through second-hand sellers (*Figure 1*). Most often, you see images of Indra in her classic Indian sari, such as on the 1965 record cover for “Concentration and Meditation” (*Figure 2*) where she’s touted as “The world’s foremost authority on yoga; founder of the crusade for light in darkness.” Looking at the uncontested and ongoing popularity of Indra Devi alongside the trouble around Bhakta’s exhibit brings into focus an important fact about yoga in contemporary society. Not only do images such as those of Devi remind us that the passage from darkness to lightness (whiteness) is something we can buy, but that the *fiction* of enlightenment is what people actually desire – namely, the White actor, not the reality. As well, the discomfort by the museum’s curatorial staff in promoting or even hosting the exhibition illuminates the largest irony: “Here were white elites exerting power over Brown critique that was explicitly about white elites exerting power over Brown culture” (Bhakta, 2019). Bhakta’s punchline illuminates how the laws of conditional hospitality are clear when we consider Whiteness as the cultural host that permits the foreigner refuge but only under a set of strict conditions.

Like the state, which can include or exclude individuals based on its national laws and rights, the rights held by White people become the benchmark against which all foreigners become judged. The problem with decolonizing yoga in places such as classrooms is that South Asians who oppose the rule of White supremacy are seen as divisive and unaccommodating, further positioning them as guests, even in their own homes – such as my classroom where I have been a tenured teacher for over thirteen years. Under the conditions of hospitality as rule of law, I will never get to be the host, regardless of my position as “certified” or “permanent” in relation to the White interloper – an unlicensed staff member with no teaching experience. Thus, no matter the philosophical underpinnings of unconditional hospitality, White supremacy as the colonial metropole in institutions such as schooling invariably allocates all sovereign rights of the host to the colonizer regardless of societal or institutional position.

Going back to the Asian Art Museum, Bhakta’s exhibition’s opening night was headlined by a White DJ with the name “MC Yogi” hired by the museum. His logo features an Om with a crown positioned on top, perfectly encapsulating how commonplace imperialistic tropes of British rule have become for mass consumption. Reflecting on the mashup of Hip-Hop and Indian music which fetishized “Brown and cool,” Bhakta locates the primary problem we face as educators when communicating with the school yoga instructor:

To a certain kind of liberal-minded white person, perspectives like MC Yogi’s are commonly viewed as positive. He is “sharing” and “celebrating” cultures, not raiding them for his own benefit. In these contexts, positivity acts as a sort of Trojan horse; it’s how you smuggle white supremacy into the gates. Perspectives like mine, on the other hand, are widely seen as negative, divisive. (Bhakta, 2019, n.p.)

The arguments made in favour of the school yoga program reveal the banality of colonial violence – namely that an individual with an equally uninspiring title of “school life coordinator” can literally upend the decolonizing efforts of an entire institution merely by cheerfully showing up at the door and disregarding voices from the margins pleading with her to listen.

Conclusion: Yoga as Decolonizing Praxis

As part of his project of deconstruction, beginning with the opposition to Platonism and its reliance on binaries as oppositions which are hierarchical, Derrida focuses on the reversal and then dissolution of opposing forms such as appearance vs essence, and the invisible vs intelligible. There is an instinctual, visceral opposition between the self and the Other in the conditions of hospitality – at the same time as we feel the force to welcome others in, there is a primal instinct to pull back, shut the door, remain safe. This is the aporia of unconditional hospitality when we think about welcoming the diasporic or migrant Other. Lawlor (2019) explains,

The impossibility of unconditional hospitality means that any attempt to open the globe completely is insufficient. Being insufficient, every attempt therefore requires criticism; it must be “deconstructed,” as Derrida would say. But this deconstruction would be a deconstruction that recognizes its own insufficiency. (n.p.)

Anti-colonial work is also grounded in disrupting binaries, in this case the power relations of colonizer and colonized, in essence deconstructing the quest for mastery by imperial forces over people and capital. However, the insufficiency of unconditional hospitality applies to the deconstruction of colonial relations too, as colonized peoples undertake the project of mastery in the realm of self-determination and the formation of post-colonial nation states. New exclusionary practices emerge that are tied to the reclamation of culture, language, and territory. Thus, the impossibility of unconditional hospitality seems to weigh on the deconstructive project of decolonization with equal value as it does upon the colonizer. In response, I propose that there is an intrinsic compatibility between the projects of deconstruction and decolonization in their goals to erase hierarchical binaries, but the quest for mastery that lurks under the surface demands a reworking of ethics in order to confront the unwanted colonial guest. Dissolution of hierarchies is possible through decolonizing frameworks only if they are centred on returning to the knowledges that *precede* the fixation upon mastery in the first place – whether historical mastery by the colonizer, or by marginalized peoples presently undertaking ever-incomplete decolonization projects.

Decolonization can only begin by returning the land, peoples, and structures that preceded colonization and are free from its norms. In theoretical terms, unconditional hospitality “requires one to give all one has to another without asking any questions, imposing any restrictions, or requiring any compensation” (Westmoreland, 2008, p. 3). Since yoga is about authentic cultural exchange, and above all, liberation “from every construct, including that of race, gender, time, space, location, identity, and even history itself” (Barkataki, 2015), only one question remains: how does one ask the colonizer, as host of social and cultural institutions including schools, to engage in unconditional hospitality through decolonization without asking those who are marginalized to assume the role of master in turn?

The answer, once again, feels like a philosophical impossibility. By imposing a set of conditions upon either party in the relationship of hospitality, it becomes conditional. But perhaps the answer is also contained in the very praxis itself. Foremost, yoga (derived from the Sanskrit *yuj*, meaning to unite or join) is a set of heterogeneous spiritual practices, derived from the multiplicity of religious variants of Hinduism (a singular term that might be considered a Western abstraction of multiple faiths). Given the multiplicity of yogic practices dating back to

200 BC (Askegaard & Eckhardt, 2014), it is clear that no one faith or set of practices might be considered the right way to practice the art, nor can any one person or group claim to master it. This poses a serious challenge to decolonization, on the one hand, as attributing yoga to a single indigenous group proves impossible. As a member of the South Asian diaspora, I make no claims to ownership as this would be antithetical to philosophy of yoga as breaking down binaries, liberating the self, and resisting demarcations of insiders and outsiders. On the other hand, looking at yoga's roots as challenging hegemonic thinking through the multiplicity of interpretations gives us the rationale for decolonization as a "talking back" that challenges "the misappropriation and domination for commercial gain with little regard to sacred symbols and significations which underpins [yoga's] genesis" (Bowers and Cheer, 2017). How then, do we let yoga "do the talking" in classrooms such as my own? And in what ways can White staff and students be part of the conversation?

At this difficult juncture where the practice precedes any sort of formal discussion at the administrative level, I assert that South Asian teachers such as myself must become the "host of the host" in Derrida's formulation. That is, while I might be the unwelcome guest, I nevertheless cross the threshold of the home to meet the master and make my presence known. If decolonization is fundamentally about reclamation and yoga about liberation, then the aims of unconditional hospitality where the guest is "the liberator that brings the keys to the prison of the nation or the family" might be enacted by first making my voice present in the room (Rafn, 2013). The project is a difficult one, but one that might be put into relief against other forms of decolonization within the school itself. Members of the other culturally-focused committees at our school are largely White female teachers led by exclusively White female administrators. Might I begin an intervention by naming their participation in these other groups as intrinsically problematic if they pop off to "align their chakras" at the yoga studio after the school First Nations, Métis, and Inuit meeting? Is there not a disjuncture here whereby we need to call into question the entire paradigm of what decolonization means at secondary institutions? My words here ring as negative and divisive, as Bhakta's were – unpalatable to White tastes. Nonetheless, the process of decolonization, much like colonization itself, is not without the exposure of painful realities. And, as we have read, unconditional hospitality can also invite its own form of violence through the upturning of the roles of host and guest.

While I have hopes that my goal of introducing the complexity of cultural (mis)appropriation to school administrators and teachers will have the intended effect of reducing the harm of the misuse and commodification of yoga's Indigenous symbols, I also realize that formal educational channels might be necessary. One such mode is through film, such as showing students movies, e.g. *Yoga, Inc.* (Philp, 2007) and *Who Owns Yoga?* (Carleton and Garen, 2015), as ways to have students engage with the discursive and social regimes of power and White supremacy in Judeo-Christian religio-economic terms. The final piece might be to return to my own routes/roots with the children themselves, by introducing the history, spiritual intentions, and praxis of yoga as the very medium through which we can decolonize our classroom space. Children break down binaries all the time, as witnessed by student-led Black Lives Matter movements, trans-student acceptance, and anti-bullying initiatives. Yoga with children might be less about the stretches, moving chairs into the aisles, or breathing through the nose. *Doing* yoga is about unpacking what liberation means to them particularly at a time when anxieties are high, students learn with one another on screens every other day, and intentional physical embrace while at school is cause for suspension. The people who understand the need

for liberation within systems of oppression are undoubtedly those who are least free but most hospitable – children constrained in their seats all day wearing masks, obediently following the White lady in yoga pants telling them over and over again to chant the word *namaste*.

Endnote:

¹ The usage of *white* vs *White* is contested in both journalistic and academic circles. Laws (2020) explains the position of the *Columbia Journalism Review*: “For many people, Black reflects a shared sense of identity and community. White carries a different set of meanings; capitalizing the word in this context risks following the lead of white supremacists” (n.p.). Conversely, many texts including the *Diversity Style Guide* (Kanigel, Ed., 2020), and the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition* (2020) assert that White should be capitalized. The rationale is best explained by Ann Thúy Nguyễn and Maya Pendleton of the Center for the Study of Social Policy: “the detachment of ‘White’ as a proper noun allows White people to sit out of conversations about race and removes accountability from White people’s and White institutions’ involvement in racism” (as cited in Kanigel, Ed., 2020). In considering the arguments from both sides, and the APA stylistics which are used throughout this paper, I will choose to use White in capital terms – as a way to illuminate the ways Whiteness structures and operates in social and educational institutions. I will, however, respect the use of lowercase “white” in quotations from original “sources.”

References

- American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Arora, A. (2016). “A black pagan in orange clothes”: Swami Vivekananda’s American travels. *Literature, Interpretation, Theory*, 27(1), 71-89.
- Askegaard, S., & Eckhardt, G. M. (2012). Glocal yoga: Re-appropriation in the Indian consumptionscape. *Marketing Theory*, 12(1), 45-60.
- Barkataki, S. (2015, July 13). *How to decolonize your yoga practice*. Retrieved from Open Democracy: Free Thinking for the World: <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/transformation/how-to-decolonize-your-yoga-practice/>
- Bhakta, C. (2019, October 17). *The whitewashing of “#whitepeopledoingyoga”*. Retrieved from Mother Jones: <https://www.motherjones.com/media/2019/10/white-people-yoga-sf-asian-art-museum/>
- Bowers, H., & Cheer, J. M. (2017). Yoga tourism: Commodification and western embracement of eastern spiritual practice. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 24, 208-216.

- Carleton, M.-H., & Garen, M. (Directors). (2015). *Who Owns Yoga?* [Motion Picture].
- Derrida, J. (2000). *Of hospitality*. (R. Bowlby, Trans.) Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Devi, I. (1963). *Renew your life through yoga: The Indra Devi method for relaxation through rhythmic breathing*. New York: Warner Books.
- Devi, I. (1965). Concentration & meditation. [LP, Mono]. S. Green.
- Ghandi, S., & Wolff, L. (2017, December 19). *Yoga and the roots of cultural appropriation*. Retrieved from Praxis Center: Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership: <https://www.kzoo.edu/praxis/yoga/>
- Goldberg, M. (2015). *The goddess pose: The audacious life of Indra Devi, the woman who helped bring Yoga to the west*. New York: Alfred A Knopf.
- Kadi, J. (1996). *Thinking class: Sketches from a cultural worker*. Boston: South End Press.
- Kanigel, R. (Ed.). (2020). *White, white*. Retrieved from The Diversity Style Guide: <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com/glossary/white-white/>
- Lawlor, L. (2019, July 30). *Jacques Derrida* (E. N. Zalta, Editor). Retrieved from The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2019/entries/derrida>
- Laws, M. (2020, June 16). *Why we capitalize 'Black' (and not 'white')*. Retrieved from Columbia Journalism Review: <https://www.cjr.org/analysis/capital-b-black-styleguide.php>
- Philp, J. (Director). (2007). *Yoga, Inc.* [Motion Picture].
- Rafn, S. (2013, February 27). *Jacques Derrida: Of hospitality*. Retrieved from visAvis: Voices on Asylum and Migration: <https://www.visavis.dk/2013/02/jacques-derrida-of-hospitality/>
- Thompson-Ochoa, D. (2019). Is yoga cultural appropriation? *Yoga mimamsa*, 51(1), 34-36.
- Westmoreland, M. W. (2008). Interruptions: Derrida and hospitality. *Kritike*, 2(1), 1-10.