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April 14, 2023

Constellations of Un-Matter(ing) & Mattering Through Atlanta's Black Spaces: Anthropological
Perspectives on Housing & Relationality

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An abstract of
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Abstract

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By Naomi Gonzalez-Garcia

This thesis frames the experiences of unhoused people in Atlanta and the absence of affordable housing as a crisis in need of an imaginative intervention that expands upon and addresses the issue of housing. More importantly, the thesis utilizes interdisciplinary and experimental poetic methods to expand the understanding of unhoused people's lived experiences and approaches to better support them. This approach to the housing crisis, I argue, illuminates the social and material dimensions of housing and unhoused as informed by the place-making practices of Black women organizers within Atlanta's unhoused community. This exploratory case study project thus asks us: How can the knowledge of place-making practices of Black women reformulate policy and public understandings of housing and unhoused people in Atlanta?¹

¹ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

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From having to move countries to serve as a full-time care-giver, to working multiple, to full-time jobs, to family loss and medical debt, to balancing club and research positions, it has been a *collective* journey to graduate and this thesis. Lo hicimos! I want to extend the biggest thanks to my beautiful family and phenomenal community of support. I've had so many struggles but an absence of love, care and support has never been one of them. Thank you to my mother and grandmother for being the absolute strongest women I know. Thank you to my family of best friends Elsa, Erick, Gabriel, Isaac, Karina, and Mirian for showing me so much unconditional love and creating priceless memories with me. Thank you to my beautiful roommates Natalie, Eunice, Ioana and Vivi for being so kind, supportive, and understanding as I pulled so many all-nighters in the apartment. I am a proud alumni of Milwaukee Public Schools and the Boys & Girls Club program. I want to thank my mentor and highschool teacher Mr. Dillman for teaching me college was a place I could thrive in. Thank you to my college mentors Nancy and Andre for always providing me guidance and supporting supporting hundreds of Milwaukee's low income, inner-city, first-generation students of color such as myself.

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I dedicate this thesis to you hermano, Carlos Gonzalez. Siempre contigo.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Researcher's Positionality.....

Chapter 1. A Review of Scholarly Literature.....

1.1 Black Feminism & Geographic Frameworks.....

1.2 Blackness, Anarchy, & Matter.....

1.3 Whiteness, Worlding & Relation.....

1.4 Care, Galaxies & Beyond.....

Chapter 2. Methodology

Chapter 3: A History of Non-Matter(ing): The Collapse of Public Housing in Atlanta.....

3.1 Destroying Public Housing in the Mid-Late 20th Century.....

3.2 Re-imagining Desirability: Atlanta's 1996 Olympics.....

3.3 Critical Fabulation, or Re-Narrating Atlanta's Urban Renewal History.....

Chapter 4 Non-poetic Intervention.....

4.1 Octavia Butler's Earth Seed.....

4.2 Celeste's Non-Poetics.....

Chapter 5: Ethnographic Intervention & Planting the Seeds of Healing:

5.1 Hidden Matter.....

5.2 Health, Wellness, & Food

5.3 White Spaces & Matter(ing).....

5.4 Pedagogy of Love

Concluding Afterthoughts

Introduction

By 2011, the city of Atlanta had completely gutted its public housing projects and left in dust a system it was once praised for pioneering and erecting.² As the ashes of the rubble cleared this distinctly marked the first time in history, since the conception of public housing in America, that a city had destroyed all its physical housing structures.³ By 2015 there existed an affordability crisis in Atlanta that resulted in an eviction crisis, according to a report by Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.⁴ Some residents unable to pay rent were met with a notice such as the following:

Georgia Notice To Quit: In Accordance with O.C.G.A. 44-7-50. Termination of Tenancy for Non-Payment of Rent.

You are notified that you owe rent in the amount of \$__. If you do not pay this rent by the date stated below (which must be IMMEDIATELY) after you receive this notice) your tenancy is terminated and you must move.⁵

In Fulton County on average over 100 eviction notices are dispersed. If notified tenants did not pay “IMMEDIATELY” or vacate the property, then a landlord was able to immediately

²Stephanie Garlock, “By 2011, Atlanta Had Demolished All of Its Public Housing Projects. Where Did All Those People Go?,” Bloomberg.com (Bloomberg, May 8, 2014), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-05-08/by-2011-atlanta-had-demolished-all-of-its-public-housing-projects-where-did-all-those-people-go>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ryan Edwards, “Summer 2022 Report: The State of Eviction and Foreclosure Risk,” UrbanFootprint, July 14, 2022, <https://urbanfootprint.com/blog/in-the-news/2022-state-of-eviction-foreclosure-risk/>.

⁵“Georgia Immediate Notice to Quit: Non-Payment of Rent E Form ,” eForms, June 20, 2022, <https://eforms.com/eviction/ga/georgia-immediate-notice-to-quit-non-payment-of-rent/>.

file an eviction notice in court.⁶ The process in which the court engages in the eviction of a tenant varies from a week to up to 80 days. This report also noted how the rates of displacement correlated to socio-economic states, urban location and education levels were also indicators of being unhoused.⁷ More importantly the Federal Reserve of Atlanta the report argued “eviction is often an early sign of a downward spiral that renders which renders low-income, urban single-parent Black community members particularly vulnerable. Further, researchers argue how such a crisis is not isolated to Atlanta. Nationally the cost of housing, the amount of rent-burden households and rates of eviction nationally are only expected to increase necessitating new approaches to housing.”⁸

This thesis is comprised of historical and ethnographic research to weave Atlanta's history of housing. My research illustrates how important it is to move away from views of homelessness as an identity, to understanding it readily as a structural position “that is apart of a downward spiral” that can be reimagined, destroyed, and remade. The research site (discussed in further detail in chapter three and four) was chosen specifically because the unique organizational structure of this nonprofit provides unhoused people a living community that situates collective relationality through a mission of service of only three principles: love, faith, and compassion.

⁶ This excerpt taken from a Georgia eviction notice template elucidates that, for many Georgia renters, the reality of becoming unhoused is one that could occur *IMMEDIATELY*. In Georgia, landlords are allowed to submit an eviction filing the day after rent is due, upon a lease violation, or if the tenant has stayed beyond the term of their rental agreement. # More concerning, Georgia law does not require an eviction notice to be written. “2018 Georgia Code :: Title 44 - Property :: Chapter 7 - Landlord and Tenant :: Article 3 - Dispossessory Proceedings :: § 44-7-50. Demand for Possession; Procedure upon a Tenant's Refusal; Concurrent Issuance of Federal Lease Termination Notice,” Justia Law, accessed February 8, 2023, <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2018/title-44/chapter-7/article-3/section-44-7-50/>.

⁷ Elora Raymond and Richard Duckworth, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta; Ben Miller, Georgia State University; Michael Lucas, Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation; and Shiraj Pokharel, Georgia State University.

⁸ Ryan Edwards, “Summer 2022 Report: The State of Eviction and Foreclosure Risk,” UrbanFootprint, July 14, 2022, <https://urbanfootprint.com/blog/in-the-news/2022-state-of-eviction-foreclosure-risk/>.

This thesis embarks as an anthropological case study project to explore the crisis of Atlanta of the historical conditions through four chapters along with an introduction and conclusion. I argue that Black women's place-making practices can function as a radical intervention to Atlanta's housing crisis by ushering in a transformative Black World that radically re-imagines what it means to be a part of a community and functions as a radical re-imagination of matter(ing).⁹ The introduction discusses my positionality and subjectivity as I navigated this case study project and how the unique organizational structure of this nonprofit through three principles: of love, faith, and compassion and particularly a reimagining of matter through food.¹⁰ The second chapter is a literature review where I discuss the centrality of Black Feminist frameworks to situate the importance of Black Women, their place-making practices, and Black geographies in addition of theories of care, affect, and relation through these theories.¹¹ The third chapter details Atlanta's neoliberal urban-renewal policies from 1960-2011 that discuss the collapse of public housing as a physical system. I emphasize how the Olympics re-shaped the parameters of desirability regarding citizenship and rendered the tenants of housing projects, outside of such category which were overwhelmingly low-income Black people. I mobilize the practice of critical fabulation by Saidiya Harman to re-imagine this history by centering the voices and place-making practices of housing project residents and housing that were actively ignored, met with resistance and displaced by the Atlanta Housing Authority.¹² Chapter four discusses my research site is a non-profit that supports the unhoused community in

⁹ Kameron J Carter, "Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro," *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, <https://doi.org/10.2979/amerreli.2.2.07>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ KATHERINE MCKITTRICK, "Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle ... - JSTOR," 2006, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.ctttv711>.

¹² *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (London, UK: Serpent's Tail, 2019).

Atlanta and only operates under the principles of faith, love, and compassion. I argue such organization precludes separability; to cement this central understanding of the organization this thesis is experimental in its design and includes a non-poetic intervention in nature in order to capture perspectives beyond scholarly and policy approaches to issues of housing and prepare my reader for my interviews. Chapter five illustrates this non-poetic intervention as I guide readers through a world yet to exist. My last chapter consists of the interview material and reflects an absence of care and love at the state level, but further elucidates the geographies of a highly mobilized community of love by everyday people and organizers. This chapter brings forth ontological questions of value, property, and ultimately of relationality such as how we understand ourselves and others through different categories. I argue that Black women's place-making practices can function as a radical intervention to Atlanta's housing crisis by ushering in a transformative Black World that radically re-imagines what it means to be a part of a community and functions as a radical re-imagination of matter(ing).¹³

In total, 2 interviews were conducted for this case study. The two interviews that animate later chapters each play an essential role within this nonprofit and research questions animated my time spent on this site included. The interviewees were both Black Women who were a part of non-profit work supporting the unhoused community in Atlanta. Data was collected in a systemized manner through the use of semi-structured interviews employing a narrative approach.¹⁴ However as a case study project, the results and findings are not generalizable to broader communities. I emphasize how this case study project is not intended to produce results

¹³ Kameron J Carter, "Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro," *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, <https://doi.org/10.2979/amerreli.2.2.07>.

¹⁴ "Comparing the Five Approaches - Sage Publications Inc," accessed April 10, 2023, https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/creswell_qualitative_inquiry_and_research_design_4e_-_comparing_the_five_approaches.pdf.

that are generalizable to other communities struggling with a housing crisis, but I want to note and mark the existence of this place-making work by Black Women organizers. These interviews were transcribed into written text for analyses with pseudonyms assigned to ensure participants could properly speak on their experiences without any ramifications.

Furthermore, the research site and interviews provides further nuances to understand the role that race, gender, and class play within the social dimensions of perceptions and attitudes regarding unhoused people. My thesis altogether combines ethnographic methods with semi-structured interviews, and oral histories to illustrate possible alternatives to addressing questions of housing inequality and relationality. As a socio-historical project, the study might be suggestive of trends in housing, and unhoused populations in Atlanta. However, this project is not intended to produce results that are generalizable; rather it is rooted in a theoretical exploration of relational and communal alternatives to societal housing challenges as a case study project. I want to affirm that this thesis does not seek to provide any form of institutional legitimization to these strategies of place-making, nor does it seek to measure or evaluate their efficacy. As a case study, this thesis is exploratory in nature, rooted in a desire to explore and investigate. This also attempts to expand on anthropological theories of praxis and theories of space and place, specifically how place-making and spatial-based modes of existence can inform our understanding of ourselves and others. This thesis attempts lastly through two interviews that animate later chapters each play an essential role within this nonprofit and research questions animated my time spent on this site included. I argue that Black women's place-making practices can function as a radical intervention to Atlanta's housing crisis by ushering in a radically re-imagining what it means to be a part of a community and functions as a radical re-imagination of matter(ing)¹²

Researcher's Positionality

The late rent payments lay visible on the kitchen table. My parents laid in angst as they rehearsed how they would ask, more so plea, our landlord for one *final* rent extension. If he didn't accept, we would have to leave everything we knew that was home. Yet again. My parents hugged me and whispered in my ear, "Celeste solo vamos a rentar por mientras. Un día vamos a tener una casa y ya no nos vamos a tener que preocuparnos."¹⁵ I went to bed that night smiling, dreaming of the beautiful house we would soon own. I didn't care if it was spacious or pretty, all I wanted was a place where I could safely frolic in the backyard, where fears and angst could no longer plague us. I remember reading the book, *The House on Mango Street* and feeling so hopeful and inspired, fully certain that day would soon come.

Sixteen years later I continue to make my way along the same broken pavement to arrive back at this same apartment- my home in Milwaukee to reside in for my final winter break of college. It remains the rented two-bedroom 850 square foot apartment in the southside except now there's six people and rent is twice as high. The house never arrived and each day, my family feels the increasing weight and burden of debt, particularly, medical debt with my physical disability.

I awoke in the middle of the night shivering with a numb face and fingers. The bright lights of the street illuminated hints of my breath, rendering small pouts of air visible in my room. I checked the weather app; It was 2:54am and Milwaukee was below zero. I sighed.

Our apartment still did not have proper heating and insulation and unfortunately winters in Wisconsin are particularly difficult. The coldness in the apartment was only worsened from

¹⁵ Spanish to English translation: "Celeste (the name my family refers to me as) we'll only be renting for a little longer. One day we will own a house and we will no longer have to worry."

our apartment's weak energy infrastructure which suffered from constant shortages given it was often exacerbated by our use of multiple space heaters. This made winters in Wisconsin particularly turbulent, and further demanded we be extra cautious to not overload the system or worse- ignite a fire. I struggled to move a bit as I slowly regained circulation in my fingers. I scanned the room and smiled as I saw my other three brothers peacefully asleep. I sighed. I was freezing but I knew I couldn't break our rules. Our space heaters couldn't remain on during the night, even in the coldest moments-when you need it the most. I always added several layers of clothing- sweatpants, pajamas, and two sweaters before bed. It was a necessity. But sometimes it wasn't enough. And unfortunately, that night in December 2022 was one of those nights.

Throughout my entire life, I've had a very personal understanding of housing precarity which continues to inform my research interests and is an integral part of my positionality as a scholar. Here, from the southside of one of the nation's most racially segregated cities, I learned to understand the concurrent realities and limitations placed upon people through matters of race, class, and legality. I learned how I was consistently rendered to not matter in some ways, while my family members struggled with different modes of being made to "un-matter".¹⁶ Growing up my older brother and mother were undocumented, and my mother's pregnancy catalyzed my family's permanent relocation to Mexico. I think often on how I was rendered to matter because of my status as a citizen. I witnessed first-hand how substance abuse, trauma, harm, violence, and mental health are exacerbated for those who live without access to state or social resources. Why do people deprive others of love to not matter? And yet, perfection was still demanded?

There is a personal stake that stems from a desire to never have children of color ask themselves that question.

However, there is so much life, love and care, bright graffiti-filled alleys, and murals on every corner, the paleteros, eloteros, and the distant music of corridos were also a staple of mine. My experiences growing up in the inner-city of Milwaukee influenced a large aspect of my pedagogy. As such, communal modes of care have become essential within my praxis not just because of their necessity to sustain life, but also to heal and to be. Here, I first witnessed the power of communal place-making, resistance and care. This taught me why action, vision, and un-learning are part of the praxis of dissolution. Further, through anthropology I've found more worlds than I could ever imagine and here's to searching for many more.

I want to address how my status as a US citizen has been a source of privilege that has significantly facilitated my ability to access, navigate and be safe in spaces. I want to acknowledge the absence of a criminal record. I have the privilege of housing. I want to acknowledge we are on Muskogee land and acknowledge how Emory has historically functioned as a site of colonial violence but also as a place of power and status in Atlanta. As such, I want to recognize my status as an Emory student and be cognizant of my privilege of attending Emory and how it has significantly increased my ability to navigate spaces, particularly white spaces through my newly acquired designation. I further want to note the privilege I have of being a part of and navigating academic language and environments. Further, I want to acknowledge how even as a Queer woman, I was assigned female at birth, I adhere to a gender-conforming presentation of femininity and have the social privilege of thinness. These are factors that all contribute to increased social desirability privilege which could have facilitated my mobility through spaces places and my agency and afforded me privileges other people do not have.

Further, I want to acknowledge how my physical mobility provides the privilege of able-bodiedness. Furthermore, and very importantly for this project, I want to acknowledge my status as a non-Black person of color in a Black place. In particular, I want to note how even as a person of color, within communities of color I still benefit from increased mobility and agency than others; I want to acknowledge how my light-skin and some of the Eurocentric features such as light-colored eyes reflect an increased proximity to whiteness which functions as a source of privilege and provides me with more opportunities to be in relation. I also want to note and apologize for the absence of the accessibility in my thesis. I utilized language that might not be accessible to the communities I am speaking of, disabled communities, and non-English speaking communities.

Chapter 1: A Review of Literature

Along with its poetic and experimental nature, this thesis functions as both an anthropological and socio-historical case study project and as such was approached through very interdisciplinary methods. This research is informed in particular by anthropological, historical, as discussed in this literature review. It was specifically through research into theories of space and place that led me to anarchist frameworks of thought that were central to my analysis.¹⁷ I also found rich nuance modes of analysis within the disciplines of Anthropology and History on communal place-making. However, as my inquiries unfolded, my secondary readings led me into Feminist Anarchist ideas. Black theorists particularly within the sub-fields of afro-pessimism became central intellectual interlocutors within my work to explore the relations and affect, I elucidate the need for an ontological - or relational - intervention of the perception and understanding of unhoused people's needs and place in society.¹⁸ There are current gaps in ontological interventions approaching and addressing the discourse of housing and unhoused. Furthermore, there is not sufficient research that may inform discussions on how to discuss matters like the housing crisis, and expanding an understanding of the unhoused community through a socio-political context elucidates the need to discuss its stigma and perception. The following pages think through interlocking research questions, including: How do we deconstruct the value that we place on those who are housed versus those who are unhoused?

¹⁷ David Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* (Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004).

A pedagogy of anarchist frameworks was highly conducive to me thinking concurrently with and through anarchy and anthropology illustrating how anarchist logics are integral to anthropology. Such frameworks also allowed for me to operate with and through ideas of anarchy and worlding in conjunction with African American theories of metaphysical Blackness.

¹⁸ Desmond, M. (2016). *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*. New York: Crown.

Why is the language of value, worth and deserving one ingrained in how we perceive ourselves and others in relation to housing security?¹⁹

1.1 Black Feminism & Black Geographic Frameworks

In this thesis, an understanding of Black women as place-makers plays an essential role in my analysis of space and place. I understand place-making through McKittrick's Black geographic frameworks, which contends that affixation on space and place can be useful in unweaving how space and place can concurrently be sites transformed and understood through Blackness. McKittrick notes the particularity of a Black geographic frameworks further allows for nuances of how space and place give Black lives meaning in a world that has considered them un-geographic and philosophically underdeveloped to be explored²⁰. Further, McKittrick argues the importance of marking the existence of places to show Black geographic presence, while further acknowledging it as the most radical form of spatial knowledge.²¹ Lastly these Black frameworks recognize the geographies of Black people and their place-making but particularly argue how such mobility is crucial to geographic geographies and mobility.

As I embarked in my anthropological research, I mobilized in my historical research Hartman's methods of critical fabulation. As she states “produce the archival traces and institutional records that inform the reconstruction of these lives; but desire and the want of

¹⁹ ¹⁹ KATHERINE MCKITTRICK, “Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle ... - JSTOR,” 2006, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.cttv711>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

something better decide the contours of the telling.”²² She argues how archives are important because they “emulates the errant path of the way-ward and moves from one story to another by way of encounter, chance meeting, proximity, and the sociality created by enclosure.”²³

I positioned and understood Black Women as place-makers and my research site as a space that was transformed to a place and frame “place” as an imagined community through the conception of worlding; as such it renders visible the process of producing a place and concurrently knowledge on how to counter or evade placelessness. McKittrick’s Black feminist understanding of place notes how geographic frameworks can be useful in analyzing Black Women’s place-making and concurrently how spaces are site that can be transformed and understood through Blackness.²⁴ McKittrick argues how Black women assert their sense of place through their own negotiations in re-imagining race, class, gender and sexuality and such negotiations depict the possibilities of geography as a terrain that can be altered spatially.²⁵ Furthermore, this practice illustrates how Black Women’s place-making strategies are “not necessarily a desire for ownership or repossession” as typical geographies are naturalized rather Davis conceives of Black women’s geographies as “ethical human-geographies.”²⁶ This expands on Black Women’s integral role in shaping geographies across time and space by demonstrating how such forms of labor have been negotiated by Black communities by tracing a genealogy of their Black women’s place-making. Angela Davis notes how the slavery regime, the plantation

²² Saidiya Harman. *Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments: Intimate Histories of Social Upheaval* (London, UK: Serpent's Tail, 2019).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ KATHERINE MCKITTRICK, “Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle ... - JSTOR,” 2006, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5749/j.cttv711>.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Davis, Angela. “Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR.” JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

model are not important but constitute intimate knowledge that sustained life, in spite of them being relegated outside of humanness and femininity in the history of the United States.²⁷ Through my analysis I mobilize the concept of matter(ing) as a central tenet to think from, with, and of as I analyze the practices of place-making and this historical context. As Long rigorously argues, this history is crucial because it is a “*new archē*’ of being and knowing, of ontology and epistemology, took place as the modern world and forward in what is often called the Age of Discovery and Conquest.”²⁸ As such, Long historical Black Women within the context of the nation-state to identify how racial capitalism acted upon them but similarly to Angela Davis’s community of slaves illustrates how the concurrent effects of slavery and capitalism work in conjunction with one another since these frameworks construct the present.²⁹ As a colonial *archē*, such a foundation necessitates the sciences and altogether allows a re-imagination of matter and ourselves.³⁰ Further, mobilizing matter as a recurrent site of analysis allows for a continuous interrogation of the naturalization of individuality. Through an understanding of matter as a site, we can understand how it can be transformed and re-imagined through the place-making of Black women. This framework further elucidates the unique nuances that Black women are susceptible to regarding non-relationality and the concurrent modes in which matter can be re-imagined spatially. The framework further brings forth the historic ways in which BI³¹

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Kameron J Carter, “Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro,” *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, <https://doi.org/10.2979/amerreli.2.2.07>.

²⁹ Giorgio Agamben and Alberto Parisi, “The ‘Dark Night’ of Juan De La Cruz: PMLA,” Cambridge Core (Cambridge University Press, July 28, 2022), <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/pmla/article/abs/dark-night-of-juan-de-la-cruz/A1BBE37B080CFD887C827CF769E54FB8>.

This has allowed me to understand how Modernity is not a structure, but a practice, our imagination as a practice of modernity. Modernity/logics of such inherent to capitalism. Forms of command-> question of how do we rupture or render such logics inoperable; Place-making strategies as mental interventions to ontological practices of modernity.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Davis, Angela. “Reflections on the Black Woman’s Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR.” JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

1.2 Blackness, Anarchy, & Matter

Understanding the intrinsic relationship between knowledge, power and place and its role in the process re-imagination cements the importance of ethnographies in changing ideas and perceptions.³² As a pioneer of the sub-field I extended it through Long's concept of matter(ing).³³ I extended this concept through Christian mystical frameworks, Agamben argues how knowledge is constructed as positive through its capacity to produce, as such it aspires to create and achieve value precluding the possibility of collective relationality by creating separability and thereby rendering science and its truths as antagonistic to collective love.³⁴ This structuring, Agamben argues, allows us to think of divinity and love not through a hierarchy of higher power but instead as a "deeper" power. Agamben's critique of science and its methods, particularly objectivity, through his theoretical frameworks of negativity³⁵ are essential to mobilize within this thesis because it understands how ontological designations of better or worse connote a designation of good or bad. Such designations preclude the possibility of love given separation functions as a form Objectivity creates a separation between the subjective and the objective, a

³² David Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* (Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004).

³³ Kameron J Carter, "Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro," *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, Carter identified a convergence and successfully extended Charles Long and with and through Zmabriahayhi's work. Not only were but illustrated how new sites of intimate knowledge were being produced through convergence of disciplines. This not only cemented the desire to embark on a sociohistorical project but further to incorporate mystical christian frameworks and re-conceptualize them through Black feminism. As such, I particularly mobilize Agamben's frameworks of mysticism.

³⁴ Giorgio Agamben and Alberto Parisi, "The 'Dark Night' of Juan De La Cruz: PMLA," Cambridge Core (Cambridge University Press, July 28, 2022), <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/pmla/article/abs/dark-night-of-juan-de-la-cruz/A1BBE37B080CFD887C827CF769E54FB8>. an experience, an "obfuscation and dispossession: a form of not knowing, a kind of presence that cannot be distinguished in any way from an absence." (Agamben, 490) In fact, the mystical nature renders us to understand it through an absence of dispossession. El Camino, thus, is not reducible to an entity but rather a voyage or an experience of perception into the negative abyss. The orientation to the unknowing, dark, dispossessed nature illustrates El Camino not as a subject but as a site. it is always self-emptying and engaging with itself, a matter founded on kenosis. Agamben's El Camino, therefore, functions as a verb and experience, not a noun. Very interestingly, this ontological composition of El Camino asserts how this fluid and dispossessed structure renders it infinite. This infinitude precludes it from being a physical object or state of being that is whole and perfect. El Camino thus parallels this "abandonment of the fantasy of wholeness" of a complete arrival to a state. Such grammatical composition renders it a material and ontological negation of arrival of an end and brings forth the limitations of limiting, measuring and operating through logics of knowing and certainty.

³⁵ Ibid.

separation implies a hierarchy. This theoretical subfield of religion understands the divine love of God as a pursuit of a collective relationality. As such, any modes of separability are understood as antagonistic to God's love.

This framework of analysis was conducive firstly in its ability to centralize and dissect how modes of antagonism³⁶ function against collective relationality and worlding and, secondly, how such modes are reproduced; Not of matter but matter(ing). I expand my understanding of matter with and through tenets of negativity, absence and nothingness in particular, to think through the concepts of collective rationality of my research site. In particular how western metaphysics and their approach to knowledge production precludes the possibility of collective relationality and thus love. He symbolizes his drive to problematize the need for a positive theology but the need for negative theory. Agamben argues how by tracing the genealogy of western science we see through its origin in colonialism.³⁷ By problematizing the naturalization of this knowledge and frameworks we can understand the arche, to be subjected finite, limited, and thus subjected to the parameters of imagination or tenets of the arche's imagination because it operates only within its naturalization of law. The naturalization of that is founded on the framework of capacity, a denotation of positivity, the implementation of a language reflects how value is intrinsic to knowledge in its relationship and operation within the paradigm of the colonial arche.³⁸ For this reason, Agamben understands the colonial arche as a re-imagination, a change in matter. As such I argue how objectivity functions to be especially violent for communities that already experience the least forms of relation. I want to emphasize the need to

³⁶ Ibid. Think within binaries, to be or not to be, to be good or bad.

³⁸ Ibid.

toggle the tensions of the figurative, the material, and conceive of what a transfiguration, of what a co-constitutionalized approach of (im)possibility would allow for especially considering the ethnographic experience of anthropology. This need to expand perceptions about unhoused people is why I mobilize Long's concept of matter, as it covers ontological, epistemological, and historical understandings within the understandings that take place because framing is not only a material but also an ontological interrogation of relationality as such, providing means to interrogate how such ontological shapes thereby rendering the need for how to toggle the tensions of transforming a space to a place when the stakes are life or death. I add (ing) to Matter to understand matter as a site that is consistently reimagined based on the needs of the community as illustrated when I mark and note the existence of multiple instances in which Black Women's practices mark their own and their communities' existence.

1.3 Whiteness, Worlding & Relation:

It is important to note how Blackness and its associated affect is rendered as outside and non-relational to the affect of the "world".³⁹ Black theorists the world, figuratively, as an affect site of white affective construction.⁴⁰ White affect is not antagonistic to the "world," or apart of world, it is the central logic that organizes our understandings of the world. Further it's differentiated from Black worlding from white worlding given Black worlding can function with the drive of love, but white desire is situated on a desire worlds, of ownership. This centralization, is important to mark how whiteness violently renders Blackness through processes of un-mattering, places Blackness into non-wording as sublimations of Black affect. As such it

³⁹ Tyrone S. Palmer, "Otherwise than Blackness," *Qui Parle* 29, no. 2 (January 2020): pp. 247-283, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10418385-8742983>.

understands the world as a site that functions to and the need to disentangle relation from affect.⁴¹ This denotes the basis for Afro-Pessimism scholars for the need for Black worlds and place-making and is through this structuring, I argue, that it is pertinent to understand how multiple worlds⁴² can exist within worlds.⁴³ In fact, while I have uncovered how spatial-based modes of care can re-imagine matter and relationality and thus can shift the affect of matter and the relation of matter. If the world is a by-product of the desire of white affect, a negative theology is necessary, for it functions on eliminating the desire of the world, for Black relation and existence. Desire can not constitute this pursuit of worlding or disworlding. Naturalization of the world as inherent, the world as a structure of white desire. How Black people are situated in non worldness, this impossibility is what positions them most able to engage in worlding. As such, the possibility of relationality exists within the construction of relation outside of the world⁴⁴. “This relationship between affect and World, therefore, takes the status of an organizing law”⁴⁵. How does black affect exist outside of the world? What is the relation between matter and affect outside of the world? If one is not a part of worlding, does this render one antagonistic to the world? Affect can not exist outside of the world because to be outside of the world would be to be outside of desire. How can we understand the structure and function of desire within the confines of the world.

⁴¹Written by Daniel Colucciello Barber and 2017 Published September 18, “On Black Negativity, or the Affirmation of Nothing: Jared Sexton, Interviewed by Daniel Barber,” *On Black Negativity, Or The Affirmation Of Nothing: Jared Sexton, interviewed by Daniel Barber*, 2017, <https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing>.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *ibid.*

⁴⁴Tyrone S. Palmer, “Otherwise than Blackness,” *Qui Parle* 29, no. 2 (January 2020): pp. 247-283, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10418385-8742983>. Palmer inquiries on worlding situate the limitations of thinking of Black desire solely as antagonistic to whiteness. Such framing posits whiteness as the nexus for freedom and capabilities? How does such understanding not juxtaposed Blackness is incapable of worlding. How is Blackness relegated to non-worlding and through white desire and worlding? How is such a process of purity? How does such franking render Blackness as incapable of achieving or being in a state of worlding or capability

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

1.4 *Care, Galaxies and Beyond:*

Wendy's ethnographic research methods of the stories Latina women who care for migrants on their journey of travel were a central foundation of my work.⁴⁶ She mobilizes "en route", stories of people who see migrants, as a way not only to learn of liminal spaces, which she argues are "zones that embody realities, mobilities, and injury" that further to learn of healing, of joy, or relation and connection of liminal spaces.⁴⁷ As such, her ethnographic work I argue shows the necessity of space and place but also time. An understanding of the existence of liminal spaces allows for a mobility of a constellation of justice which the injuries, harm, but also an embodied reality of liminal spaces. However, she argues how care is the ability to weave connection through intimacy. She argues how constellations of care illustrate not only how place-makers have sustained relation with liminal spaces but how they are sustained across time, space, place, and time but how it is this infinity that renders it beyond that. She argues how undocumented people are a site of liminal spaces because of their ability to "not be" through an absence of citizenship and how place-makers that create and sustain care it terrains that "can not be". This understanding of care is central and will be the only theoretical framework of care mobilized.

I argue that unhoused people are situated socially within liminal spaces because of their ability to "not be" through an absence of property. As such the intimacy of care with these liminal spaces can be a crucial zone of learning through justice, but further precisely it being a terrain that "can not be".⁴⁸ I argue how the connection of liminal spaces with other liminal spaces

⁴⁶Wendy A Vogt, *Lives in Transit Violence and Intimacy on the Migrant Journey* (University Of California Press, 2018).

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

can not be understood solely within a constellation of care. Rather, it demonstrates an intimate travel that exceeds that of what is known. It is an ability to weave, travel, and be in relation that is beyond. I argue it is of galaxies because it notes an affect and relation that does not exist in worlds.

Chapter 2: Methodology

My ethnographic methods of inquiry and style of interview was greatly inspired by the work of João's Biehl's *Vita* and his ethnographic research into zones of social abandonment in Brazil.⁴⁹ He argued for anthropology's expansions of methods, site of inquiry, and forms of knowledge and concurrently weaved his understanding of this through a lyrical, intimate portrayal of relations and non-relations in community. In particular, Biehl mobilized the concept "incipient citizens" which functions for interlaces of instances, warmth, but illustrates how highly such of worth, ability to produce and also property.⁵⁰ Lastly, he employs a very emotionally charged language of relations being forgotten that are endured by zones of abandonment. In addition, his most recent ethnography and the ways he mobilized the concept of "house-ing" as a site that functions across time and space through relation and affect was especially helpful for formulating my own research approaches.⁵¹ I argue how Biehl's work in liminal spaces illustrates how affect and relation is the only form to travel.⁵² As such I argue that ethnographies offer a particularly powerful manner, or possibility, of travel because of its ability to challenge affect and relation. To navigate into a constellation of Atlanta's worlds, the reader

⁴⁹ Biehl, João. "Vita." University of California Press, 2013. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520272958/vita>.

⁵⁰ Biehl, João. "Vita." University of California Press, 2013. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520272958/vita>.

⁵¹ Biehl, João, and Federico Neiburg. "Oikography: Ethnographies of House-Ing in Critical Times." *Cultural Anthropology*, 2021. <https://journal.culanth.org/index.php/ca/article/view/4853>.

⁵² Biehl, João. "Vita." University of California Press, 2013. <https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520272958/vita>.

must undergo the task of worlding, that is to unlearn the presupposed logics of matter, and re-imagining such structuring with and through the world in the space being inquired upon, my field site. This act of worlding I argue is an anthropological possibility as argued by Graeber's anthropological work.⁵³ He states the possibilities of unlearning metaphysics and understanding it as a branch, and not a foundation of thought is critical in becoming more open to other ideas, knowledge and ways of life but furthermore even interrogating our fixation on value, capacity and production is essential for this. Through anthropological ethnography and research, we can interrogate conceptions of relationality and affect. In fact, we can come to see how both function in accordance to one another, therefore to interrogate one concept would be the transfiguration of both. Such transfiguration necessitates a form of praxis that necessitates disengages in worlding, an anarchic orientation of world, that allows us to think of affect outside of worlding, across time and space, and such place-making, I argue, elucidates a form of worlding.⁵⁴

The multitude of the presence of such worlds is why I mobilize the term galaxy in my poetic intervention, to assert the existence of multiple stars and worlds within my inquiry. Within such theoretical foundations being laid, I want to provide a few definitions of how I am thinking with and through ideas. I attempt to construct and understand *affect* as an epistemological discourse of knowledge that imagines how matter is structured and thus reproduced within the worlds.⁵⁵ Relation, in turn, serves as an ontological framework, namely how matter or people understands themselves/itself to understand matter outside of worlding, hence the need to differ from affect as transfiguration of material and figurative. Understanding the world in this context

⁵³ David Graeber, *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology* (Chicago, IL: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2004).

⁵⁴ Palmer, Tyrone S. "Otherwise than Blackness." *Qui Parle* 29, no. 2 (2020): 247–83. <https://doi.org/10.1215/10418385-8742983>.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

as a product of white desire, I analyze world-making through Atlanta's history of housing to show how and why the concept of matter is particularly useful to utilize. Pro arch how we understand matter within the colonial arche it is affect's desire for world and thus separate ability that situates it to worlding. Understanding matter as a site acted upon and constructed through relation and affect is critical to situate the ontological & material stakes of such an endeavor allowing us to understand the nexus of imagination as the nexus of matter, one founded on a principle of difference but not separability.

I am continuously navigating the tension of employing praxis within the discipline of anthropology. It is through the ethnography discussed in chapter four that I found a negotiation threshold of both. Through these tensions I embarked on this voyage that is unfolding on our perceptions of "change" to expand it through the modalities of imagination. Thinking through and with the racialized temporalities of matter, change, and love, I ask in what ways can my research, this thesis, may transfigure the way in which the reader acts on and employs within these domains? To a smaller extent, close attention will be placed on the ideas that are excluded within the state and the collective imagination by situating spatial-based modes of resistance. This inquiry has also caused further interrogations of the affect surrounding the three core principles of the non-profit discussed in chapter four. I explore what it means to situate love through different relations outside of the self, to think of love for and through all forms of living matter.⁵⁶ I want to stimulate the dissolution of the inherited limited parameters from which the reader operates, approaches and mitigates such issues. The interviews and archival materials I

⁵⁶ Written by Daniel Colucciello Barber and 2017 Published September 18, "On Black Negativity, or the Affirmation of Nothing: Jared Sexton, Interviewed by Daniel Barber," On Black Negativity, Or The Affirmation Of Nothing: Jared Sexton, interviewed by Daniel Barber, 2017, <https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing>.

engage show how communal forms of organizing and living can serve as solutions to the seemingly timeless vacuum that is the “homeless”, and therefore undesirable, social status placed on certain individuals. I want to stimulate the dissolution of the inherited limited parameters from which the reader operates, approaches and mingles such issues. As I delve deeper in my thesis research, I hope we as a discipline can continuously reflect, re-imagine, and interrogate what constructs the conditions of possibility and impossibility within our theoretical practices. I ask -in what ways can my thesis blur the need to distinguish material realities from theoretical worlds as related to the needs and experiences of unhoused people? My research inquiry is a demonstration of both, concurrently however, inciting the reader to partake in the paradoxes of (dis)orientation and (un)learning through my voyage of becoming a part of the community of my research.⁵⁷ To achieve this goal of asking readers to (un)learn about unhoused communities, my writing style itself functions as a space for the reader to engage in forms of imaginative praxis. This exposure to tangible material forms of liberation (via oral histories) but also through a mobilization of stimulation of an internal mechanical process of unlearning, re-learning and wandering (via poetic intervention). My non-poetic intervention asks what does it mean to be a part of a community where everyone no one is seen and heard? I argue this is a non-poetic interventions because it elucidates the lack of care and affect that has to be mobilized so these groups can be in relation to the world. I position my writing in a way in which the reader is a part of this transfiguration of worlds, of what is known/unknowable, of thinking through and with Black feminist modes of liberation situated from impossibilities to possibilities.⁵⁸ Such questions

⁵⁷ Giorgio Agamben and Alberto Parisi, “The ‘Dark Night’ of Juan De La Cruz: PMLA,” Cambridge Core (Cambridge University Press, July 28, 2022), <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/pmla/article/abs/dark-night-of-juan-de-la-cruz/A1BBE37B080CFD887C827CF769E54FB8>.

⁵⁸Ibid.

are theoretically between the material realities and imagined dystopias that disorientates from linear temporalities of thought and integrates the timeless possibilities of spatial-based modes of resistance. A more underlying intention within my work is for praxis to transpire within my thesis. In what ways can my thesis blur the need to distinct material realities from theoretical worlds?⁵⁹ My research inquiry is a demonstration of both, concurrently however, inciting the reader to partake in the paradoxes of (dis)orientation and (un)learning through my voyage of becoming a part of the community of my research. Allowing my writing to function as a site that can act as a space for the reader to engage in forms of praxis. This exposure to tangible material forms of liberation but also through a mobilization of stimulation of an internal mechanical process of unlearning, re-learning and wandering. Thinking of We, of public infrastructure models, of relationality of what it constitutes to be a part of a community where everyone is seen and heard? Position my writing in a way in which the reader is a part of this transfiguration of worlds, of what is known/unknowable, of thinking through and with Black feminist modes of liberation situated in anarchism as now, as possible, as negotiations? Such questions are theoretically between the material realities and imagined dystopias that disorientates from linear temporalities of thought and integrates the timeless possibilities of spatial-based modes of resistance. A more underlying intention within my work is for praxis to transpire within my thesis. Through my third-person ethnographic writing I want the reader to be part of the experience with me. If not materially, ontologically through my writing I want them to engage in forms of (dis)orientation and (un)learning and consider what it would be to be in relation with others and the world according to the three principles of the community.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Ibid,

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Chapter 3: A History of Non-Matter(ing): The Collapse of Public Housing in Atlanta

This chapter focuses on the urban-renewal policies of 1960-2000 that saw the re-imagination of Atlanta's local policy, government, and opinion regarding public housing and, by extension, unhoused community members. Atlanta's particular relationship with neoliberal governance resulted in a dramatic re-imagination of urban governance and public opinion. This chapter provides an overview of the destruction of Atlanta's public housing but further centralizes the existence of housing project tenants through centering their place-making practices, echoes, and absences in the archive. I utilize critical fabulation to re-imagine these existences and further note the rhythms of existence to note the absences and affect being silenced, ignored and systematically neglected. As such, I hope this context of local histories will provide more agency to Atlanta's citizens as important interlocutors within the discourse about housing, particularly low-income African-Americans. Further, this historical context shows how urban renewal processes functioned as a racialized project historically, further shaping notions of desirability as was re-imagined under urban neo-liberal constraints.⁶¹ This renders visible Atlanta tenant's unique collective efforts related to relation, affect, and place-making, while contextualizing such efforts within the Atlanta Housing Authority's decisions to render these communities to not matter. I frame Atlanta's current housing crisis as an result of the Atlanta Housing Authority's desire to render unhoused people to not matter⁶².

⁶¹ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

⁶² Kameron J Carter, "Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro," *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, <https://doi.org/10.2979/amerreli.2.2.07>.

3.1 Destroying Public Housing in the Mid-Late 20th Century

Atlanta's housing projects were founded in 1941 and initially experienced great success through a series of investments. Initially it grew through the Wagner-Steagall Act and further through the housing act of 1949. The Atlanta Housing Authority (AHA) functioned as an agency that managed the decisions, control and directions of housing tenants. This investment in housing infrastructure was not isolated to urban centers, rather there was a push in Atlanta and other major cities for a "spatial fix" following post-war construction resulting in the "targeted massive outlays for defense, freeway construction, and suburban real estate".⁶³

Philip McMichael's *Development and Social Change* offers a foundation for how to understand and approach social dimensions of the history of neoliberalism, the nation state, and development. A free-market capitalist system meant a shift from blame and accountability on the nation-state to that of individual citizens. As such this re-imagined desirability rendered neoliberal subjects to understand themselves and their worth as based upon ability to produce and maximize capitalist value. This global market placed the locus of power on corporations and not nation-states, this influx of wealth and power thus re-organized not only global economies but also the very political systems in place that were meant to regulate corporations and markets⁶⁴. This lack of political and financial regulation permitted the rise of mergers and monopolies, allowing the creation of financial service corporations. This led to a huge

⁶³ James SMITH, "Urban Regime Theory' in: Wiley Blackwell Encyclopedia of Urban and," Indiana University South Bend, 2019, https://clas.iusb.edu/political-science/docs/regimes_20210205135747_974267.pdf.

⁶⁴ McMichael, Philip. 2012. *Development and Social Change a Global Perspective*. 5th ed. SAGE. When the sovereign debt crisis befell nation-states, they could not take care of their citizens and consumer citizenship and a special contract. Thus not only have global cities blurred allegiances and loyalties, but also modes of care. The nation-state is no longer viewed as the foundational entity responsible for citizens' well-being. Therefore corporate headquarters are no longer relevant because the national home or headquarters is losing importance as corporations are no longer involved with national societies.

concentration of power under a single roof, resulting in the rise of monopolies.⁶⁵ Globalization as a process was driven by a principle of accelerated development- a seemingly necessary and infinite pursuit for progress and profit. This resulted in a societal shifting to high mass consumption, and further redefined the role of the nation-state.⁶⁶ The vast government deregulation during globalization left nation-states unable, or unwilling, to handle and mitigate varied societal crisis, including housing, while concurrently being unable to meet citizen's needs.⁶⁷ In such re-transformations, from the ashes arose the newly reimagined neoliberal city in which private investment and a tourist industry coupled with neglecting social services. As such, this era of urban development in Atlanta informed by neoliberal policies privileged the needs for space for private investment and housing, while rendering housing tenants as not worthy of equal access urban space⁶⁸

Starting in the 1960s the city was faced with “a decline in traditional public revenue streams—a consequence of ongoing white flight and changes in federal and state funding practices”.⁶⁹ The call to action culminated to fall upon the shoulders of Atlanta's Ivan Allan Jr. who became mayor of Atlanta in 1961 and catalyzed Atlanta's urban, neoliberal transformation.⁷⁰ The need for economic growth in the state of stagnation shifted the public agenda to ideologically and structurally revitalize Atlanta was mobilized through the Forward Atlanta plans. The forward plan highlights not only the use of public funds for the marketing of

⁶⁵ In fact, leading up to the financial crisis of 2008 the most common derivative financial instrument created was a security anchored in mortgage debt. This mortgage debt was packaged & re-sold by financiers, recycling risk leading to very loose credit.

⁶⁶ McMichael, Philip. 2012. *Development and Social Change a Global Perspective*. 5th ed. (222).

⁶⁷ Ibid.

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⁶⁹ Levy, Jessica Ann. “Selling Atlanta.” *Journal of Urban History* 41, no. 3 (2015): 420–43.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144214566953>.

⁷⁰ Charles Rutheiser, *Imagineering Atlanta: The Politics of Place in the City of Dreams* (London, UK: Verso, 1996), 153.153

investment into the city but also how it was an essential pillar of Forward Atlanta that did not directly benefit citizens. Atlanta's first black mayor, Maynard Jackson, and his successor, Andrew Young, implemented extensive urban-renewal policies that centered these public-private partnerships. As Jason Hackworth explains, within neoliberal urban governance a highly conducive public-private partnership is a central pillar to its success.⁷¹ But further neoliberal-governance particular to Atlanta harbors a distinct “evolution of Atlanta politics—from radical protest to pro-business, multiculturalism” within Atlanta urban renewal policies of 1970-1990s”.⁷²

I emphasize how this was a time of high financial deregulation that occurred in the late 1980s where it shifted into financial transactions such mergers, acquisitions, derivatives and away from goods and services production.; not only did the economic system shift but social attitudes and perceptions were further re-imagined with and through this project centralizing ideas of worth, merit, and the role of the state in social programs. Often undermined within the understandings of the globalization project is the permeation of these logics into the social subconscious of American citizens. Not only were economic and political systems transformed but social understandings of citizenship with citizen's value and worth became understood through notions of merit, productivity, and value. The advertisements for Atlanta were widely circulated within national circuits in the form of visual, public media from *Newsweek*, *Business Insider*, and the *New York Times* and contributed to his re-imagination of Atlanta as a place of grandeur, but more importantly a city that desired private investment. . By 1996, the city of

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Jessica Ann Levy, “Selling Atlanta: Black Mayoral Politics from Protest to ... - Sage Journals,” Saje Journals , 2015, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0096144214566953>.

Atlanta had “undergone over 9,000 illegal arrests of homeless people and in all, roughly 30,000 Atlantans were evicted or displaced by other means between 1990 and 1996.”⁷³

3.2 Re-imagining Desirability through Atlanta’s 1996 Olympics:

The mobilization of the neoliberal project in America as “an ideological rejection of egalitarian liberalism” influenced Atlanta’s urban renewal policies of the 1970s-1990s and rendered the unhoused undeserving, marginalized from the category of full citizen.⁷⁴ As Thatcher further explains, within urban models of neoliberal government, one of the central elements of neoliberal governance at the local level is strong public-private cooperation. These alliances can vary considerably in form but constitute a common feature present in urban cities as Hackworth argues, “Cities have moved to an entrepreneurial one under neoliberalism.”⁷⁵ The critical necessity of public power within urban centers states an analysis of neoliberal at this level as especially dynamic and experimental, because of how often it shifts. As such it reflects the on-going transformation of urban space as central to neoliberalism and power and presence of private enterprises. This understanding is central as it acknowledges how spaces and places are continuously to both private and public power and by the 1990s, neoliberalism had become naturalized as the proper mode of governance for a variety of geo-institutional contexts.⁷⁶

The positioning of this form of neoliberal government cemented the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta as one of the most visible moments when the city embarked on several

⁷³ Seth Gustafson, “Displacement and the Racial State in Olympic Atlanta 1990–1996,” *Southeastern Geographer* 53, no. 2 (2013): pp. 198-213, <https://doi.org/10.1353/sgo.2013.0016>.

⁷⁴ Hackworth, Jason. *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism*. Ithaca, n, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007. chapter 1

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Hackworth, Jason. *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism*. Ithaca, n, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.
city

redevelopment and construction projects following Atlanta's successful bid to host the 1996 Olympics.⁷⁷ In specific The Central Area II Study of 1986-1988, was a plan of downtown revitalization that reflected a shift to private investment and public "roll out phase" necessary of neoliberal, the expulsion of unhoused people from public spaces.⁷⁸ This act symbolized the forthcoming destruction of public services and infrastructure but further foreshadowed which communities would be rendered to matter and which were not in the production of the desirable citizen. Further, the act serves as a historical moment that highlights how spatial knowledge production by Black women organizers can also provide modes from which we can learn, unlearn, and imagine. The understanding of not only the state's absence of care but further the unhoused community how sustained care renders visible the knowledge of places but also place-makers.

3.3 *Critical Fabulation, or Re-Narrating Atlanta's Urban Renewal History*

I re-imagine the standard history of urban renewal to bring tensions to claims of Atlanta Housing authority tenants by mobilizing the concept of absent-presence through analyzing two documentaries that focus on public housing in Atlanta *What the Sands Remember* is a journal article by Agard-Jones that argues for the concept and methods of "absent-presence" which weaves through the concept of sand as the existence of traces, memories and physicalities of people who demanded their existence through a written archive of the history of a queer geography.⁷⁹ Agard-Jones focuses on ephemera, traces left behind from moments of queer relation, which explains how such a process functions as a site, but further how multiple relations

⁷⁷ Charles Rutheiser, *Imagineering Atlanta: The Politics of Place in the City of Dreams* (London, UK: Verso, 1996),

⁷⁸ Hackworth, Jason. *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism*. Ithaca, n, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007.

⁷⁹ Vanessa Agard-Jones, "What the Sands Remember," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 18, no. 2-3 (January 2012): pp. 325-346, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-1472917>.

of seeing multiple forms of Black queer kinship' pasts, presents and futures produce the interstices of sand.⁸⁰ I was inspired by her idea of desire to note these absences. As such, I re-conceptualize Long's idea of matter to think through absence-presence to illustrate existences of absences and interlaces. I wish to create a space for my participants modes of existence, but their affect, their relation, heir echoes, fragments of want to note the existence and absence of Black place-makers within these places. By taking this approach to analyzing the documentary, I assert that Black place-makers' memories remain and should not be forgotten or rendered to not matter. I center these sources because they mark the existence of Black kinship and Black places in spite of the actions of the Atlanta Housing Authority.

The first source, as mentioned, is the documentary *East Lake Meadows by the Public Broadcasting Station*, contains a collection of oral histories, historical archives, and inclusion of newspapers to illustrate how a housing project with one of the worst social reputation was also a space of kinship.⁸¹ The documentary offers an extensive use of a diverse set of modalities, therefore acting as proof of tenant archival records which are extremely scarce, as discussed in the documentary in Atlanta. The East Lake Meadows consists of multiple oral histories, but further a focus on the story of Eva Meadow, a Black woman who served as an East Lake Meadows union President. She created networks of care, politically mobilized the community, and further successfully obtained external sources of funding for public housing projects to mark her existence. Her rhythms of life were not docile, she was witty, harbored a strong worry presence but most importantly, was foundational for the thriving for tenants to create places. Her persistent calls to the Atlanta Housing authority, the demands for adequate shelter, and even the

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ *East Lake Meadow* (PBS, 2020).

rendered her not only negotiate better but is particularly why. She negotiated with her their ways of life and praxis to serve as an essential component of community building and place-making, and further collectively mobilized to render archaic spaces of neoliberal notions of relationality inoperative through love and intimacy and demand space and existence for herself and her community.⁸² As the documentary *East Lake Meadows* illustrates, in spite of the difficult living conditions housing projects tenants faced Black placemaking nurtured a strong sense of place that sustained life.⁸³ Further, the destruction of these housing projects and the physical dissolution of this space, to this day residents continue to be in kinship with one another, showing how places transcend spaces.

The second source is the documentary *Atlanta Way*, which depicts the processes by which the last housing project is destroyed in Atlanta.⁸⁴ The film in particular shows the resistance of Techwood Home tenants as it shows how in all of the Atlanta Housing Authority, the on-going plans, meetings, and places of decision making tenants were actively prohibited from entering.⁸⁵ In particular, it shows the meeting in 2009 that voted in favor of the collapse of the space of the housing projects. A vote for the destruction of this site reflects how the Atlanta Housing Authority rendered housing projects as spaces of un-matter-ing. It illustrates the visible collapse of public housing, not as a linear and passive process, to arrive there. These meetings were not did not reflect the time, effort and labor to create places in this space, and as such highlights the emotional labor of tenants.⁸⁶ Though the tenants were not in the meeting where the

⁸² Marcus Anthony Hunter et al., "Black Placemaking: Celebration, Play, and Poetry," *Theory, Culture & Society* 33, no. 7-8 (September 2016): pp. 31-56, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276416635259>.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ *The Atlanta Way*, 2015. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3755556/>.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

key vote took place, they were together, outside the room rather one demanding existence and recognition through their community organizing.⁸⁷ Most importantly, it cements the idea that their community is limited to space, and renders in non-existence the relations of moments of joy and kinship no longer exist but these archives show the existence of those echoes. These documentaries precisely recognize how connections, joy and moments were and continue to be integral to place and to the community.⁸⁸

I focus on the oral histories and archival records provided in the documentaries *East Lake Meadow* and *Atlanta Way* as narratives that have not constituted a large part of the discourse on public housing history.⁸⁹⁹⁰ The housing projects of Techwood homes and East Lake Meadows render visible the absence, existence and the relations or otherwise of the world; in other words, the films show how spaces can be places, pockets or otherwise.⁹¹ I also want to be cautious of reading resistance on to the people represented in the films, and as such is the reason I focus on analyzing place and place-makers, to allow a form of iterative informative praxis on how we perceive ourselves and others.⁹²

There is a growing understanding of kinship and its role in individual and communal health. Urban researchers argued how “residents' sense of place as a resource for renovating and revitalizing public housing communities rather than continuing to demolish and and relocate.” Residents of public housing projects actively worked through and against the systemic neglect of

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Marcus Anthony Hunter et al., “Black Placemaking: Celebration, Play, and Poetry,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 33, no. 7-8 (September 2016): pp. 31-56, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276416635259>.

⁸⁹ *East Lake Meadow* (PBS, 2020).

⁹⁰ *The Atlanta Way*, 2015. <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3755556/>.

⁹¹ Kara Keeling, *Queer Times, Black Futures* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2019).

⁹² Davis, Angela. “Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR.” JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

maintenance, the refusal to allow both tenants and tenants union members in meetings, and the continuous disregarding of the existence of a strong Black sense of place.⁹³ Further, recent urban health studies support a growing understanding in the field of health of a sense of place that occurred in Atlanta's housing projects.⁹⁴ Their findings illustrate the existence of place attachment," but also noted a "real sense of loss among the residents".⁹⁵ As such not only does the re-imagination of historical archives allow for a centering of tenants' experiences, but also an acknowledgement of community, kinship and place to allow more agency, autonomy, and mark not only the existence, presence and absence of community and places, but also the absence of the place-making but further that the knowledge, practices, and abilities of place-makers to sustain a sense of place.

Chapter 4: A Non-Poetic Intervention

This chapter departs from the scholarly and policy-centric approaches to issues of housing and societal desirability discussed in previous. Instead, I ask the reader to trust the process and the ride as I weave together poetic and ethnographic interventions. To recognize existence is to the absence of matter is to recognize matter, but to recognize the absence of matter from the echoes of places, renders visible not that matter left but rather that was rendered to not. First, before getting to the ethnography, you must travel through my non-poetics, as an astronaut I have unlearned light and can perceive the non-knowledge to create passageways. I argue that Long's conception of matter(ing) through Agamben's conception of negativity

⁹³ Marcus Anthony Hunter et al., "Black Placemaking: Celebration, Play, and Poetry," *Theory, Culture & Society* 33, no. 7-8 (September 2016): pp. 31-56, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276416635259>.

⁹⁴ Griff Tester et al., "Sense of Place among Atlanta Public Housing Residents - Journal of Urban Health," SpringerLink (Springer US, May 13, 2011), <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11524-011-9579-0>.

⁹⁵

can allow for an attunement of places.⁹⁶ How it is only through places that non-matter can be re-imagined to matter because material worlds do not allow so. How re-imagination allows for a new attunement to darkness that leads to the possibility to be in multiple worlds; How it is only when non-matter unlearns, re-imagines, and darkens to be in attunement can it be in attunement to worlds; How it is only through the drive and not desire that allows for the possibility of travel. I argue that Black Women's place-making practices turn placelessness into places, showing how non-worlds can be in worlds. How once you travel to a world, you can always be in relation to such a world because non-worlds cannot leave. How Olamina planted a seed with me when we were in relation but as I had only un-learned and not re-imagined, I could not feel the effect of Olamina

Celestes's rules of Astronaut School of Flying:

Known ways of flight:

Empathy-the ability to use stardust t

When there is an all or a nothing or a something nothing of-

Known Constellation:

(Universe-existence of EarthSeed)

Extinguished Matter: Matter in non-time

⁹⁶ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

Celeste Astronaut Guide to Worlding: Un-Mattering Through Non-Relation⁹⁷

Time: The only known energy source of

Imagination

(ing).

Matter:World (ing) (ing)

Non- Matter

..

(ing)

(Non)Matter

Light: the energy of matter; the extraction of energy

World: Non-Matter that can not use stardust

Matter: The energy of Matter

Stardust: The energy source of non-matter

Travel: The ability to fly though stardust

Imagination: the process of converting energy into matter

Time: The energy source of Imagination

Travel: the ability to use of stardust

Relation: The ability to be inhabitation

Darkness: not much is known... that is why reveal why must explore

⁹⁷ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

4.1 *Octavia Butler's Earth Seed*

If the place-making practices of Black women can function as worlds of non-knowledge that we can learn from, what can ethnographies of Black Worlds teach us about love? How if places can heal, can Black worlds heal as well? How when spaces, and places cease to exist, worlds exist. How the more the world is scorched or burned, the more we need to be for worlds of love. How it was only in my moments of most pain that I recognized the need to heal not for myself, but for all. How it was Olamina who taught me what it meant to love through empathy. How if one un-learns, un-feels, and re-imagines them there exists the possibility to travel to worlds, where there is a new possibility to feel. The crisis not of life and love demands it. How Black Worlds and Black Worlding and Black Place-making as the sustainer of life, as I argue discovered places and worlds through Anthropology, the more I learned to travel but the more I understand; allows for non-relation and non-matter, which results in the ability to travel to worlds. How the ability to travel to worlds means an attunement to healing. It is important to learn but further how the more one unlearns, to then re-imagine. This can allow for the use of matter to create, through re-imaginings we can create passageways the more we travel the less to mark them so others can navigate these terrains. The Black imagined worlds of constellations of care across time and space and across galaxies of imagined and un-imagined worlds are the basis of my ethnography.⁹⁸ As such I argue for, or rather use, imagined worlds, to allow the place-making practices of Black Women to guide this work and analysis. Black Worlding, that is including excerpts pages and quotes, to include not only the modes of perception, but the non-modes of speech, the echoes. This method not only allows us to incorporate the voices,

⁹⁸ Butler, Octavia. "Parable of the Sower." Format: ebook Publisher: Open Road Media, 1993. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Parable_of_the_Sower/8thMLkahggcC?hl=en&gbpv=0.

knowledge, but in particular the absence of modes of perception of Black women, speaks to modes and ways of life that exceed what is rendered visible.⁹⁹

Poetics: The ability for non-worlds to seep to worlds; not as a desire to be in world but a demand for life

I argue the poetics of Octavia Butler's worlds, through *Parable of the Sower*, allowed for love, because of her intimate knowledge of world-making.¹⁰⁰ This ability to travel the sky allows for an expansion of perception and how it is Black World's drive for love that allows us not only to inhabit worlds but heal. This can result in new methods of anthropology recognizing the existence of Black worlds as sites with intimate knowledge. As I researched, I found myself thinking through how forms of matter-non/matter, relation-non/relation non-world/world exist; How it was only in my moments of most non-relation, in an inhabitation of grief, in my moments of most relation that I understood the need to venture into a new world, and if you do travel, you venture into new worlds. However, the more in relation to the world you are, the less you can be in the non-world. As I previously said, there is an understanding of matter(ing) converting and rendering itself to exist through the burning of matter. How non-worlds and non-knowledge can always exist because they are inherently infinite, because they are not limited to time and space.¹⁰¹ How the more non-world demands to be in the world. How precisely because they must travel the most to be in the world, and contend and burn the most in relation to the world, how

⁹⁹ Marovich, Beatrice. "Hearing Nothing: A More than Human Silence." *Political Theology*, 2022, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317x.2022.2035957>.

"there are many overlapping and intertwined genealogies of spatial thought, ways of knowing, and modes of knowledge production"

¹⁰⁰ Butler, Octavia. "Parable of the Sower." Format: ebook Publisher: Open Road Media, 1993. https://www.google.com/books/edition/Parable_of_the_Sower/8thMLkahggcC?hl=en&gbpv=0.

¹⁰¹ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

world, precisely why I created such a thesis, even if I could not explain it. A crisis of love, but it is precisely as non-matter with relation to world and non-world because the world cannot love, it can only desire. However, I argue such are not poetics but non-poetics. How poetics are to be in love with all and how while this is a study of love, it is still rooted in desire. I desire to love because I desire to heal. I want to unlearn desire so I can love. How to unlearn requires a lot of stardust, but it is precisely by un-learning, re-imagining and now worlding that I have found such happiness. The more I travel, the more I learn of how non-matter, how the more I learn of non-matter it is only when non-matter unlearns it is in kinship with one another. How I used to want to travel, because I did, I don't want it, I feel it. How ownership and self-hood function to separate how to love I must not be. But it is precisely by feeling, I learned of spaces, places, and now worlds to heal. How this is a non-poetics of travel because as I started to choose to travel from fear of fire because the fire of my brother's death scorched me so much, I was catapulted to non-relation I can never be in. How it was through traveling to constellations of non-matter and eventually to worlds I healed. How it took so much stardust to write this because I had so little left. The more in non-relation you are, the more you perceive light when you are in attunement with darkness, you heal because of the intimate and vast knowledge found in other worlds

I wonder if matter remembers we were one, at one time. it would have to feel all that non-matter has felt. Because the more the world exists, the more matter has to extract stardust. It has the weakest stardust. How matter does not realize that when stardust ceases to be, then non-matter will remember where home is, and return home. How if all of non-matter returns, matter will burn, because matter necessitates the energy of non-matter. How non-matter has not learned to travel cannot leave the world. How the world has less stardust because matter extracts it. With such a premise, reader, this non poetics can allow you to travel to places. As such the task falls

not from a desire for worlds, or knowledge or to recognize and matter but precisely for the demand of World in non-world. How as non-matter in places of light, I recognize how it has slowly extracted my stardust. The more stardust it takes to create worlds - but if Olamina created universes, how much stardust did she use?

4.2 Celeste's (Non)-Poetics:

Matter: the fabric of the sky. New forms of travel, infinites within infinites.¹⁰²

Stardust: A form of energy that constitutes an essential property of non-matter

Fire: The burning of non-matter to extract forms matter. This is the consequence of separation, of burning, of forms of matter burned of their stardust.

Non Matter: forms of matter that have the potential to use darkness to create energy from their non relation nonworld; This allowed them to create and discover new ways to love.

Matter: forms of matter that extract stardust to create energy from non-matter

Matter with relation to Time: Stars

Matter with relation to NonWorld: Worldlessness

The endeavor of sustaining a community is a collective endeavor.

Traveling: the use of fire or stardust to travel

Hidden Matter: Forms of matter that have been rendered non-perceivable.

Extinguished Matter: It is the existence of all forms of non matter that were burned to note the existence of matter.

Empathy: The ability to be with and of stardust, more form of energy

You un-learned. Y

You re-Imagined,

Now you must un-matter.

To can recognize the one can not desire for other worlds

To-unmatter and be in relation, a drive of love through nothing.

Careful!

you'll be in the place of Dark Shine

disengage!

¹⁰² Ferreira da Silva, Denise. "ON DIFFERENCE WITHOUT SEPARABILITY." Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, 2016. <https://grsj.arts.ubc.ca/profile/denise-ferreira-da-silva/>.

Unlearn-Re-imagine-Unmatter out of time (all at once)

Intergalactic Travel¹⁰³: Non-Matter is burning. The fire of desire burns to ashes forms of non-matter, but more importantly the extraction of stardust for non-matter. What does it mean to have worlds sustained by the energies of non-matter.¹⁰⁴ My brother was extinguished by matter. As communities of non-matter I've always been cognizant of the forms of affect, relation but particularly of love within places. How the extinguishing of Forms of non-matter happens so often.

The ashes had already settled, fire burns the more it desires. The warmer the skies are, the less visible constellations and stars are, the more non-world must engage in non-world and create darkness. What does it mean to love from the new world? ¹⁰⁵

Each time I require more to heal, the more I require imagination to travel to worlds of healing.
Matter with relation to world, Earth
Non-matter with non-relation and non-time: EarthSeed
As a possibility of love, is a love for all.¹⁰⁶

Astronauts! Far and wide! Stardust is here. Allow us to search and be more in tune to these other forms of existence.

Non-matter with non relation can darken the skies, understanding dark is a form of care because it is in relation with non matter. Nonmatter in relation with nonworld is a form of healing: how connection persists through non matter remembering how it can be in connection not through worlds but universes. creates constellations of caring through non relation in non matter. How nonworld creates universes but functions as a universe of multiple Black infinities. The darkening of skies allows nonworlds to travel and leave nonworld. How forms of non-matter that use non-relational and non worlding allow, which for modes of affect that can travel the farthest. As darkness can never be fully but an understanding of love through darkness is a collective habitation of matter to love. The demand for life and universes.
Hope: a recognition of the unknown. Known is world as such I centralize the universe of:

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ M. Jacqui Alexander, *Pedagogies of Crossing: Meditations on Feminism, Sexual Politics, Memory, and the Sacred* (London, UK: Duke University Press, Combined Academic, 2006).

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

As astronauts, we must travel and expand the terrain of knowing and unknown. Of being and not being. I want to be one of the first astronauts of non-matter to travel to galaxies. I attended the Octavia Butler academy of Galactic travel.¹⁰⁷ I'm traveling to find other forms of non-matter.

Intergalactic Travel: The ability of non-matter in non-relation to feel non-worlding and thus travel to universes

Universe: forms of non-matter that were burned the most into non-working and non-reaction, their place-making through their terrain marks the existence of impossibility, not the existence of worlds but of universes. A recognition of the unknown terrain fueled but the desire to be in love. In love would be to travel across time and spaces, galaxies, and more. What would it mean to feel from the non-world?

Intergalactic Travelers: nonworld place-making that functions across time and space, imagined and material words.

Stardust as seeds: non matter in non relation that has traveled to universes because the stardust of their community. But how the affect of being in relation with forms of nona: Of uncovering modes other forms of existence , echoes, that reflect to perceive and be in relation

Fire of matter

The burning of stardust that results in the ability of matter to travel worlds of desire and separability.¹⁰⁸ have too often relied on the affect of non working through pain, however the worlds of fiction holds the most powerful affect of all, that is to heal.

Non matter through non world and non relational world heals, the more nonworld can travel, the more the affect of love. The more non-matter loves, the more the non-world is in relation with the world by healing submerging into darkness. The use of love to create worlds. The use of love by non-matter to love beyond a world of separability.¹⁰⁹

But traveling to love is to feel all, not rooted in desire but demand for life of all. How demand of life all.¹¹⁰

World: The affect of universe: love for worlds and non worlds

How to love non-worlds is a terrain of darkness that are assigned to non-worlds. While we can not be in non worlds we can be in relation with universes.

I always wanted to be an astronaut. I remember how there were teacher shortages, and we didn't have a math teacher for one year. And then again. And then again. But I'm in the skies now.

¹⁰⁷ Ferreira da Silva, Denise. "ON DIFFERENCE WITHOUT SEPARABILITY." Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, 2016. <https://grsj.arts.ubc.ca/profile/denise-ferreira-da-silva/>.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ashon T Crawley, "The Lonely Letters," Duke University Press, 2020, <https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-lonely-letters>.

As a form of non-matter, I re-imagined what it mean to use love and not desire as my course of energy. A desire for pain, revenge or some form of affect, you can heal.¹¹¹ It's why we are astronauts.

Intergalactic travel is a demand for life. Affect of universe: a Infiniti of collective matter:

Light

Darkening is affect of care from creating relation.¹¹²

The more we darken the more we can care.

Remembering: to remember what dark, where home was, where we were

Remembering and Dreaming: the creation of stardust to expand what is not known on the drive for love

Recording but a travel and such all forms of matter. The damn love. The demand of dreaming

Remembering:

A family of astronauts.

We see extinguished matter and hidden matter but also we can feel dark, and be in relation.

How being in relation with the imagined world teaches us learn to love through intergalactic travels.

As such but such intimate knowledge of non worlding allows for the affect of non worlding.

Imagination when by non matter because its existence reflects the memory and echo of life of

Marks, notes, sighs

My love, why are you flying?¹¹³

Intergalactic travel.

Remember the worlds, remember the connections of worlds of fictions inspire or can transcend the imagined realm and have direct, material inclination. As such I work and think through the place-making of Black women not only as but further one that collapses the boundaries of real and imagined Black worlds. These constellations exhaust galaxies of imagined and material worlds, a galaxy of imaginations. I emphasize¹¹⁴ intergalactic travel because I show how through engaging in the pedagogy of praxis and modes of poetics.

Desire or love?

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Giorgio Agamben and Alberto Parisi, "The 'Dark Night' of Juan De La Cruz: PMLA," Cambridge Core (Cambridge University Press, July 28, 2022), <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/pmla/article/abs/dark-night-of-juan-de-la-cruz/A1BBE37B080CFD887C827CF769E54FB8.4242>

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ Ashon T Crawley, "The Lonely Letters," Duke University Press, 2020, <https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-lonely-letters>.

Careful! Meteor strike.

As nonworld, his relation, I felt the scorching of his extinguishing. He was a part of my constellation of care. This absence of love is a crisis of the non relation of non-matter. I argue in the same manner that worlds of love, Places of desire, there are worlds of desire.. too many of my stars have been scorched there. Matter renders form of matter into the light. Limits the possibility of travel and thus can only travel. I came from a non-matter relationship. Stars in my constellation of care nurtured fields of thought and warmth. But fire, Extinguishes across time, on matter is relegated into complete light, as such it can not move because there is no darkness. Re-imagination brings forth but a tool that expands the possibilities of travel; existence of such travel.

What should I name my handbook of worlds? A Constellation of ()

Do you think if I travel far enough, I'll see my fallen stars again?

Matter can only desire.

Stardust is running out.

Encompasses the modes of existence that have been marked.

It is our role as a non-matter to restore the memory of travel and worlds.

This is a collective endeavor.

How unless we travel to all worlds, such stakes lie in people with most relation to matter and worlds. How the travel of and to non world, then we could love

How when we can travel everywhere, we can be anywhere how when travel ceases

Stardust is running out. Matter attempts to travel, but can not. Matter as a fixed and defined state can not travel, only burn. How matter functions to preclude the possibility of affect that precludes the opportunity. But what if it leans?

How beautiful is it that the universe is so vast it can not be named or limited.

To feel, is to be.

To feel be with all is to

As such, to love we must.

The longer we fail to love, the longer non-matter is stripped of stardust;the affect of pain and separation; the existence of attunement to darkness. Careful! Do not get scorched.

How each time light penetrates, non-matter is stripped of stardust

Darkening: the process of becoming more attuned to mystic worlds, places and otherwise¹¹⁵

Even if they can not be seen or felt, the affect of non-matter

How non-matter and includes animals, plants, life. As such I root the intervention in worlding and offer the intervention of travel but the need to explore imagined worlds.

How the more we expand the existence of worlds and places of non-matter to unlearn
 How traveling to such worlds can teach us to be in relation to
 How the worlds we visit the more we destabilize
 When matter reaches the home of non-matter, will it remember we are family now?
 We have been taught to fear darkness, but did we not burn with light?
 Matter is very small, finite, and in pursuit of wholeness
 Sky: the terrain of matter and non-matter
 Desire: a site that encourages non-matter and matter to pursue

The more time passes, the stronger the light gets.
 When non-matter is home everything will be dark, because when all of non-matter is home it means. How if light continues, then the sky will no longer exist. Matter desires to light, and it sees it is all consuming and the more It deploys; The more starlight is required separate matter from other matter.
 Desire necessitates the labor sustained;
 Such sites of othering
 Black Holes: Portals to worlds

Matter as whiteness; It necessitates all
 Time as a source in which non-matter across time and space:
 But the non-matter with relation to time
 But further time functions as a mode to darken the light to remind matter of love
 A relation to time allows this form of matter to work across time and space to retrieve stardust.
 Non-Matter with the highest relation of can travel. To worlds of darkness that do not necessitate stardust. To cease because matter can not create because to create would be to imagine,
 Stars, places where astronauts can since matter relies the energy of non-matter, a complete return to home; Non-matter.
 Non-world to create, because the darkest part allows for the most stardust.

As an astronaut, I hope one day I can be in non-relation with non-forms of matter. Non-matter in relation to time functions to have the darkness sufficiently be in time. Of darkening not only functions to all forms of non-matter but weakens the because it shows how non-matter precedes matter and its relation time provides it the most ability to travel the skies
 But while all dark night skies, matters exists to be, to desire
 Time and Imagination as controlled by matter
 Matter exploits. They exploit. They extract. They want more

Stardust is the unifying fabric that renders all forms of matter to be.
 Can all forms of non matter remember where home is and once the pathway is marked?
 Can it collapse the world of matter and dissolve through stardust
 The combining of time and stardust is the most powerful form of un-mattering to happen
 The separation of matter results in spaces, not all worlds sustain the life of all matter.
 Non matter non world; Non-relation. A feeling of absence. venture; the plant of time is dying.

All forms of matter were all one and the nurturing of plants of lives, worlds, and skies.
 The longer light is in darkness, the more it weakens us and renders us visible.
 The need of non-matter to engage in processes of safety
 Intimate knowledge to use stardust: the unbound terrains.

Do more astronauts remember home?
 How forms of non-matter engage in darkening as means of care; how non-matter how the more
 we travel, But rather argue the process of remembering functions to create, to be, to remember
 how us as forms of matter that were one separated. The light of matter separated us. We must
 travel and darken.

Do you have enough stardust to travel?
 We must travel as much as we can. The more light the more matter has power to
 Affect: Not a desire to be in world, but desire to be apart and feel of worlds

How the more you look, the more fire you see. Why must we travel?
 Through utilizing stardust to make matter that undergo separation to remember home.
 Allowing intimate knowledge of plants of life allows for these forms of matter to bury other
 forms of life. Imagination:the processes in which forms of matter sustain existen uses the
 darkness
 Matter: uses the light of stardust to be in desire. Only to navigate the skies and reach home.

To find the world of love. To reach the galaxy. But because sometimes I wonder, if one day I
 will remember how to get home. Forms of matter and stolen imagination, my heart in the sky.
 The more we can travel and the more we can learn to darken. But forgotten as a way to name
 how matter mobiles light to make non-matter forget their darkness.

The more fire, the more absence of darkness. Light can not sustain worlds of desire and is not
 sustainable; love is the only sustainable source of energy. Only non-world can love. Intergalactic
 travel.

To be, is to have

To not be is to not have
 No not have while you not be is love

How matter can never not be.
 So it will never learn how to fly.
 Tell me matter, what will happen if all non-matter travels to the sky or if you eventually burn all
 of the world? Then tell me,
 Where will you be?
 Because as matter, you always will be.
 You chose that matter.

Chapter 5: Ethnographic Interventions & Planting the Seeds of Place:

Dark Sunshine (name change) is a non-profit organization run by Monica (name changed) which supports the unhoused community in Atlanta through a community garden that functions as a meal distribution. She also serves meals at Geck, a physical non-profit that supports the unhoused community through housing alternatives. Monica is a Black woman in her 40s who is originally from New York. She became particularly passionate about food as a site of healing, change, and love after noticing the high levels of food waste but further, the very evident absence of affordable, healthy meals.

I wasn't trying to be a food hero or anything I was just trying to not waste my food. Literally someone could receive this, even if it wasn't a lot of food it was something somebody can get. A couple of folks, we had a case of juice and little things can just start with that even if they're just feeding 5 people. So initially it was just what can we do?

She nurtures a community garden located in East Atlanta in a site that is a food desert. This community garden concurrently functions as a community pantry and is located in a food desert in Atlanta. Monica states,

“We have the right to grow food. This food doesn't always get to the people who need it. It's a challenge, it's like a gift and a curse. The curse part is that people are going without. The rich are getting richer, and the poor are getting poorer. I hate to even say this but a case of a have and have nots and there's going to be many more haves not. Just with the cost of housing, it's just so crazy, so ridiculous, people are having to move out into the other borrows, the outer counties”

Stacy is the director of Geck, the physical non-profit that serves as the space for physical foods and resources such as immediate housing needs for the unhoused community in Atlanta. Together, Monica and Stacy both work to address and support unhoused community members through a highly varied form of place-making that actively adapts, shapes, and expands to the needs of unhoused people.¹¹⁶ Given Stacy's role consisted of data management, intake, outtake process, in addition to donor and networking, her data was deemed too risky. As a case study project, the possibility of being traceable should be very little to non-existent. To adhere to such protocol, Monica's practice of placing is the one centered in this section, especially because her interview functioned more as a series of vignettes regarding her experiences with unhoused people. In addition, Monica directly tended the gardens, prepared the vegetables, and cooked

delicious meals to partake in her place-making practices to the needs of the community, her modes of place-making are not rigid or fixed.¹¹⁷ As such my ethnography is designed more as an experience of affect and relation, but also to record the very valuable knowledge she has as a place-maker within the unhoused community in Atlanta.

As a case study, I argue how the existence of Black women's place-making demands for a safer world has an effect that works across time and space in Atlanta, but further how it is apart of a constellation of imagined and un-imagined worlds.¹¹⁸ Monica's place-making consists of engaging in two mobile meal distributions, the cooking and distribution of meals at a physical site, and the nurturing of the urban food farm that functions as a community pantry. I asked Monica if she could describe what her vision was when she first founded this nonprofit in 2011 and more importantly, how did she envision her modes of place-making. Monica states,

“When I first started it really was to just show people what one person can do.

You know? One person can make a change, we all can make a change. It's why I say *I'm a community steward and I provide food.*

When inquiring with Monica about founding this nonprofit and what she envisions. She expresses frustration in the state's absence of care through its inability and the meeting of its citizens' needs. Further Monica states she does not wish to envision a future where she should just continue to engage in this place-making work. Monica states it was through her practices of

¹¹⁷ LATOYA E EAVES, “Black Geographic Possibilities,” JSTOR, 2017, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26367644>.

¹¹⁸ Ashon T Crawley, “The Lonely Letters,” Duke University Press, 2020, <https://www.dukeupress.edu/the-lonely-letters>.

place-making she acquired intimate knowledge of these Black spaces and shared her first-time distributing meals in a food desert in Atlanta.¹¹⁹ Monica states,

“We should be out of business; the country should take care of its own people, but it doesn’t.”

5.1 Hidden Matter: Expanding the Discourse of the Unhoused People

Through Atlanta’s period of urban renewal, the city criminalized unhoused communities through the principle of public safety. It re-imagined unhoused communities outside the legal realm of protection thereby rendering them a site of discipline, punishment and surveillance. This rendered visible how low-income African American people were rendered to not only not matter but further how white knowledge-making the re-imagination of physical worlds.¹²⁰ incarceration. The War on Crime further allocated public funds to be used for policing. The concurrent displacement occurred both through the forced removal under the police state or the incarceration thereby colluding with the prison-industrial complex. As such this rendered unhoused people as undesirable but further, as sites in need of discipline. In fact, Monica states that she internalized prejudices of unhoused people as violent, chaotic, and unsafe. However, it was through her direct practices of place-making she acquired intimate knowledge of these Black spaces and shared her first-time distributing meals in a food desert in Atlanta.¹¹⁹ Monica states,

You know it was an experience because I was thinking that there was going to be a mob [when she first commenced meal distributions], there was going to be crazies and it was nothing like that, it was very sane. They were all seated, I felt like a waitress in a restaurant because I was walking around I had a literal plate on

¹¹⁹ Douglas L Alleen, “Black Geographies of Respite,” Way Online Library, 2020, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/anti.12658>.

me and I was just asking around “would you like this” or “would you like that.”

The understanding of the state’s absence of care and its inability to meet its needs is reflective of a larger, national, neoliberal project. This project was a social re-imagination that shaped people’s understandings of themselves and each other. These stories Monica discusses contradict assumptions of unhoused people in terms of safety, and employment. Monica states,

“I remember one time I was going through my route and one of my stops had a guy with a whole Chick Fil A outfit, and I was like what are you doing? And he’s like I work at chick fil a in the day and in the night, I am out here and sometimes people do not have places. Those are things you have to be considerate of if you can be employed as he was, he did not have a place to live. You see people doing what they have to do to survive”

“I will say in terms of feeling safe as a woman, I have never felt unsafe as much. I come out there and as long as I act, I just have a good attitude about it and people recognize that and they feel safe with me and so I feel safe with them. It's a give or take. If I were to come in shady or shifty, or act as if I'm afraid of them, I get that energy back. But I treat people as if they're family, being kind, giving eye contact, what do you need? Being open? With that I have never encountered any adversity.”

5.2 Health, Wellness & Food

I mobilize Elmore’s anthropological environmental framework within the history of land development to elucidate the explicit links between space, mobility and race through low-income African American communities in Atlanta. Elmer illustrates the necessity of an environmental perspective to mobilize a framework that understands “the geography of segregation in cities that were rebuilt after the war”. Elmer’s research traces a genealogy of the reconstruction period in Atlanta and illustrates how city officials actively modified, changed, and knowingly relegated

Black people to the most environmentally unsafe, undesirable spaces of Atlanta. This render visible how low-income African American people were rendered to not matter but further how white knowledge-making resulted in the ¹²⁰[OBJ]. Furthermore, this emphasizes how knowledge-building and world-building practices were employed by Atlanta city officials. Elmer argues Atlanta thus functions as a great case study to understand how “white manipulation of the natural landscape, not just the built environment, helped to solidify Jim Crow boundaries.”¹²¹ I mobilize Elmer’s research to show the need to expand and understand the intrinsic links between health, race, and space in Atlanta.¹²²As such Monica’s place-making could be simply such knowledge functions at addressing the physical structure of place..”¹²³It is particularly why I mobilize and discuss the importance of imagination. While matter(ing) is a theoretical concept, it renders visible more forms of relation and affect for matter and non-matter.

“I was working there [An Atlanta Kidney Transplant Location} and I saw people needing liver transplants, kidney transplants, heart transplants, lung transplants, and eventually even the hand transplants. The people coming in needing kidney and liver transplants (pause) (sighs) there were soooo many folks, and there were so many Black folks coming in needing it and the thing is. If you do not have the proper resources, even after you get the transplant, then it’s important because you have a new organ in your body. You can’t go back to an unhealthy diet”.

¹²⁰ Elmore, Bartow. “Hydrology and Residential Segregation in the Postwar South: An Environmental History of Atlanta, 1865-1895.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (2010): 30–61.

¹²¹ *ibid.*

¹²² Imore, Bartow. “Hydrology and Residential Segregation in the Postwar South: An Environmental History of Atlanta, 1865-1895.” *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 94, no. 1 (2010): 30–61.

¹²³ *ibid.*

In a recent health study conducted USC indicates African Americans constituted the largest majority of kidney related transplants. Furthermore, researchers argue that while systemic health disparities cannot be mitigated by health professionals, they can engage in “the adoption of new care and patient engagement models that include education, enhanced practice-level cultural sensitivity”. Monica further discussed the importance of centering mental health within communities particularly those that are unhoused. She states how we need to address both the physical and mental health concerns in an unhoused community first and then address the issue of housing to better adequately meet the needs of the African American community¹²⁴. As Monica shared,

I had one guy who used to come out with us, he was serving out there with a different group and then he started to hang out and serve with us. This is when I was serving at [confidentiality] in 2016 or 2017. He allowed us to come into his job, he told his boss about us (because he worked at a meal prep company) way back in 2016 or 2017. Since they used to do food deliveries he told his boss, and his boss allowed us to come in and use their equipment to do quick heat ups. He would donate food to us, he would give us so much food (Pause) shortly after he [the man who would volunteer with Monica and aid her in meal preparation and distribution] stopped taking his medication and we did not know that he had anything going on. He had schizophrenic bipolar and when he stopped taking his medication, he just became another person. He lost his job because he [the recently fired man] thought they were trying to set him up.... so he ended up losing his job.....

He ended up being unsheltered exactly in the locations where we used to serve.

I went out one day and he didn't even have shoes. I asked him where his shoes were. He responded “they took them from me. I fell asleep and when I woke up, they were gone.

¹²⁴ Kimberly Harding et al., “Health Disparities in Kidney Transplantation for African Americans,” *American Journal of Nephrology* 46, no. 2 (2017): pp. 165-175, <https://doi.org/10.1159/000479480>.

And so you never know how fast the tide can turn, and he's a tall big guy, and sometimes he would even act as security and now here he is sleeping, literally sleeping outside with shoes stolen and everything so you just never know.

Further, Monica illustrates how Food and place can also function to address such needs.

I

“Well food is healing, we all have happiest moments with food. Our saddest moments are with food. When we have birthdays we celebrate around food, at weddings there's always food. Bar Mitzvahs are all of these things. **When you look at even our saddest moments with funerals and deaths, food is always present because food is communal.** We will forget our sorrows for a minute because by the time you get to the weep box your energy has changed. So you're not as somber by the time you get to the dinner table or the meal table, wherever you are going to eat it. Food is celebratory, food is communal, food is important, food is culture, food is love.

So we are looking to add and integrate it into a sensory garden. Eco-therapy and horticulture garden because we know that there is such a thing as garden therapy and bring people in there and bring real therapists and trained folks and come in there with their clients and cultivate that type of atmosphere for them. As well as giving them the ability to grow food and stuff. And people are dealing with so much, there are so many mental health [issues].

It is only one of the ways in which the needs of the community are addressed that life is sustained. Not only does she argue there is a high prevalence of health issues but further there is a high prevalence of mental health disorders. These groups further heighten the stakes of her need to engage in her role as a community steward. She states how most of the people she shares meals with will oftentimes only have that as their source of food. Monica states,

Your attention always is to hold healthy and nutritious meals because that one meal is so critical. That is the only meal you will have. We wanna make sure it's

the best meal to possibly serve because we know that people are dealing with so many different health issues and so many things going on that are important...

Monica describes the essential role that the quality, freshness, and diversity of food plays within. As such, mitigating the gap of food does little to address the systemic differences that result in access to food. Monica emphasized that it was not an absence of knowledge about which foods are healthy or not. The community was aware of this, but it was not the absence or access to resources but more, the community seeking to engage in healing. She argues how food functions as a mode to toggle with the absence of communal support precisely because of its mobility. Monica states,

...What that is going to make the new organ malfunction. So you have to have a healthy diet prior and post-transplant. You have to be nutritious; your support system has to be on point because you need support.

As such, her attentive nature and the embodiment of over ten years of histories, stories, Monica's embodies the knowledge of a community she has actively nurtured through place-making practices that sustain community. Her further affective modes of place-making allow for an understanding of matter beyond that found within policy. As such food serves as a vehicle to re-imagine matter within the place. It symbolizes the planting of a new community member, a bond that exceeds the physical limited transaction with and through food. It symbolizes choice and agency within preference but more importantly how the modes of food are important. Monica states,

Preferences are important because they give a person dignity. They receive what they want. In addition, it leads to more food waste because If you give somebody something they don't want they will not eat it, but also giving them the choice allows them to prefer something more. If they knew they had fish over chicken they might've gotten fish if they knew the options. It gives volunteers the option to treat the way they want to be treated, to make eye contact, to make them feel good in the moment.

5.3 Transforming Black Spaces to Places: Love, Faith, and Compassion as a Pedagogy

“I’ve been doing this since 2015 well I will say the first instance was in 2015 I was volunteering there was leftover food and they were throwing it away and I was like why are we throwing away all of this food? And so they were a little hesitant because they just weren’t aware of thee samaritan act, that’s a feral law that was passed in 92 by then president bill clinton, who then he made it to where you can donate and not be seaweed, we live in a world or society or country at least and in order to allow restaurants and organizations to give through this law so they were hesitant to give but then they realized and they allowed me to get it and not take I tok it to[confidentiality]and I took it to [confidential]n I served folks”

“I can provide that sense of community, but also the food. And I feel like in that sense I am a community steward and my contribution is food and someone or somebody else might have something different or somebody else might have food as well okay we both are bringing food together and that way the whole community can eat. So we live in a sense of giving?”

Monica weaves together the stories, comments, silences, and conversations, and through her role as a community steward that loves and nurtures through food. It is her attention to communal memory and kinship that she actively nurtured, how different modalities of matter function in different relations. In particular, she engages in the practice and importance of love, especially as it is situated as the most powerful through food from a place of collective inhabitation. She notes it was not her intention to engage in this practice, rather it arose from need and she learned to love and heal through hood. It is her drive to share these forms of knowledge to nurture and attend to create life. The effect of such creation is love and love is essential because to love all, would be to be in matter with all, and the existence of the unloved.

“In terms of community stewards, I think we are all stewards and so I am a community centered person period. And thus I am one of those people that reports back to the village. We treat everyone as a tribe, as a village, this is the village and we have to provide whatever we can. So somebody might be a seamstress and they might make the costel or the gowns for folks, somebody might be the person who is doing the hair, somebody might be the person watching the kids”

The essential role of care place-making cannot be isolated to an understanding of within the realm of labor. Rather, it is the particularity of care and the demand of love for all that allows her place-making to re-imagine community. The more constellations we create the móre we learn through the creation of pathways worlds reflecting how Black women are harbor intimate knowledge of love through non-relation and nonworlding. The more there is need for relation, as the farthest away from home and thus love; To love and be in relation with worlds and what constitutes matter, to constituents how an intimate knowledge of non-worlding provides the ability to learn how to create worlds but the combined creation of loving even with no relation, no world, constitutes the longest journey, the journey home. I argue why this form of non-matter because it increases the possibility of fully non-mattering because its relation, but time still works within the confines of matter, time provides new ways in which we can understand and perceive matter but A relation to time indicates that time for now remains grounded in affect functioning of perception that forms of matter and non matter harbor positions it to be. These forms of matter exist because of their demand for love as reflected by Monica’s adherence to praxis. *Monica states,*

“If I’m ever in a place longer than 3 days I serve [food]”

“I just picked up a school we’re doing a pantry program with the school so now we’ll be able to give kids school and healthy heaving it to where we can have their families as well get some of the things they need from the school so that’s a fairly new program that we started”

“ it doesn't have to be a skill or trade you go to school for but just like innately what you can provide”

When I asked her what the community has engaged with the community pantry she stated,

“We want them [residents of a low-income Black neighborhoods in atlanta that is located in a food dessert] to feel safe because in these areas people have not been made to feel safe”

In particular, Monica's mobility ceases direction as her needs, activities, and actions vary daily. This movement functions in direct parallel to the traditional racialized geographies of Atlanta as I argued in my previous chapter. Her mobility does not have defined terrains, rather we see the creation of tunnels of support based on the needs of the community.¹²⁵ Further, this direct I emphasizes mobility not an by-effect of place-making, but a central modality that is shaped, adapted, and provided to the needs of the people. As she says, to be a community steward, necessitates this mobility and adaptability. As such I argue this is reflective of the genealogy of Black Women’s placing across time and space that re-imagines matter through food to nurture community and sustain life.¹²⁶ As such to situate her mobility as fixed, and rigid

¹²⁵ LATOYA E EAVES, “Black Geographic Possibilities,” JSTOR, 2017, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26367644>.

¹²⁶ Davis, Angela. “Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR.” JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

would be to disregard the intent behind her mobility which is a drive for love for all and could be understood as directly sustaining in human and nonhuman environments through matter. This elucidates the myriads of importance of her role as community steward, as a place-maker to her mission but renders visible her ability to provide and have intimate knowledge. Further, food as healing as a central tenet of place-making would be to ignore her place-making even through the historical colonial legacies of violence that have rendered Black Women placeless, non-human, and deprived the most of love in spite of being the most central to communities.¹²⁷ As such, McKttrick argues they operate on Demonic grounds given their and allowing for the most radical power to transform spaces to places. Food as a site of learning also provides means to toggle some of the tensions of unlearning and re-imagining what it means to love yourself and others through food within the community. Food has the ability to transfer knowledge, particularly cultural knowledge with and through place-making. Food as a site of learning also provides means to toggle some of the tensions of unlearning and re-imagining what it means to love yourself and others through food for a community that Monica argues is ignored and not taught. She discusses,

We are changing minds. Those types of things, that is the goal to introduce stuff and you know hopefully also stuff their bellies, make them feel good and just have fun while we are doing it with the people that came together. That's why I love volunteers and I love the people I meet through them. Those are different types of people. There's somebody who can take time away from their lives to do something for someone else is so special. It's the greatest thing. I love the people that I meet. meet some of the best people, including yourself.

We also want to make sure to serve culturally appropriate foods and culturally relevant foods so we make sure there is something about the community we're serving that they may be familiar with. You know? Sometimes we've had

¹²⁷ Ibid.

chickpeas or falafel, and some people might not know what that was. Because it may be the first time they've had it so we're introducing these foods as well.

Through this collectivist view she situates the relationality of food as an international site of knowledge which functions to expand our love of others and their culture, with and through food.

Food is international you know? and you are giving someone its livelihood, you are giving proximity to that. You are giving someone's love and intention that started from the sea. I remember this one time this one guy said I don't eat food that comes from the ground. Then what are you eating? If you don't like food that comes from the ground where do you think it comes from? From a bag?

She further discusses,

Yeah, that's conversation pieces. When they love it they let you know, when they don't love it they let you know. So we just try to make good food, good environment, good times, you know? With positive intentions and definitely food is healing.

It taught me that people have different diets and everybody does not eat chicken, and there were people asking me. I remember this guy who asked do you have any vegetarian. Thankfully we did because we are vegetarian but there still has cheese and stuff like that. So I was able to get that to him. As someone who has an alternative diet, I'm pescatarian, I was more vegetarian at the time and I could relate to what happens when you are unsheltered and someone comes with food

Monica discussed her upbringing with her aunt in New York City as a crucial moment of leaning about the importance of community, place-making, and care. As such she attributes her own work and place-making as being taught by older Black Women supporting people. Monica states,

I got this early on intro with my aunt and here 25 years later i'm doing the same thing in Atlanta as my aunt did I'm serving people, the unhoused and I'm serving the senior community as well

As such Monica's place-making is not simply isolated spatially, or to place, but rather a collective assortment of her early upbringing learning about community, kinship, and care with black Place-makers. She discusses how food serves as a reflection of care and love as further re-imagines matter by tracing each act with and through food, as an essential component of creating connection¹²⁸. The function of food can not be isolated to physical, symbolic and spatial properties but also one of healing, one that addresses the communal memory of violence of being rendered an unsafe site of unlove. As such, functions as a process to maintain matter, to "bring life" into people by centering how Black people are rendered to un-matter within health spaces; the importance of the types of food are emphasized. These vehicles of food are functioning to physically sustain and prolong these spaces and its people. As such understanding the importance of space elucidates the necessity of food. For a space to exist, it must be nurtured. As such place-making, space, and food are co-constituted as essential pillars reproduced with and through love, faith, and compassion. She states,

Food is healing, food is nurturing, food is love, food is medicine, food is nutritious. This is what people need, which is why we need to be in a good space. It's why I make sure I am in a good space, because if I am serving you, I am transferring my energy into your food. So if I'm in a bad space, I am kind of tainting your food a little but which is why I try to come in super light, or super happy it kind of it makes my day it's like a Christmas for me whenever we do aa serving because i'm so excited to give them this food

¹²⁸ Kameron J Carter, "Anarchē; or, the Matter of Charles Long and Black Feminism - Anarchē; O, La Materia De Charles Long y El Feminismo Negro," *American Religion* 2, no. 2 (2021): pp. 103-135, <https://doi.org/10.2979/amerreli.2.2.07>.

Food as a site or vehicle in which matter is reimagined but more importantly food as a site that is physically and spiritually healing. As a nexus of matter it morphs the possibilities of what food can serve as the foundation from but illustrates how the stakes are worldly. Interestingly, she notes how food functions to transfer energy. As such, space is not only physically reconfigured, but symbolically and spatially and as she coins “the transfer of energy.” All molecules of matter are understood equally, collectivity across time and space with no separability.¹²⁹ They are not isolated to a hierarchy, as such value, if such language is to be implemented, serves as all. This presence can also be understood through absence. Either we all have everything or we all have nothing. I emphasize the role of place-makers because to create a community, necessitates a collective relationality of it because such a dogma, precludes the possibility of success.¹³⁰ As success or finalization is not understood with a product, or a state of being The mission of Monica’s adaptable mobility and praxis is reproduced and located with and through food. Each space in which she becomes mobile becomes a part of her network of spaces in which she delivers food. As such these spaces become a part of a border network of care in which she engages in meal distribution, distribution of groceries and moments of kinship. Once a space is added to her network of care, it remains integral to her place-making practices. Such spaces are reflective of a larger constellation of Black women re-imagining, but further I argue her particularity to place-the nurturing of the community, a seed. It is this very adaptability to the modes of food that further reflect the essential role that the principle engages in. Monica states,

¹³⁰ Written by Daniel Colucciello Barber and 2017 Published September 18, “On Black Negativity, or the Affirmation of Nothing: Jared Sexton, Interviewed by Daniel Barber,” *On Black Negativity, Or The Affirmation Of Nothing: Jared Sexton, interviewed by Daniel Barber*, 2017, <https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/on-black-negativity-or-the-affirmation-of-nothing>.

“Even if the diet is the same, you come across people who do not have teeth because they do not have access to medical care or dental care and can not buy into a whole apple. Therefore if you cut it up or give them stuff that is soft such as drinks or bananas, that kind of stuff makes it easier for them to chew on and to take in so you know being considerate as well”

5.3 White Spaces & Matter(ing)¹³¹

Monica asserts even the physical appearance of food and the space in which she provides food is important. As Monica states,

“Georgia is high above wealth inequality, it's great the city downtown looks beautiful, and you sit at a beautiful campus at Emory and it's wonderful”¹³²

She discusses the druid hills area, located at only approximately three miles difference and how it's visually apparent that that space is cared for and nurtured, she states:

Listen, because Emory, the environment looks good and it's obvious there's money in that community and you see everything looks great, the endowment is doing well and the alumni gives back and there's a lot of funding that comes through and through that school. That's the great part but the unfortunate part is that's not elsewhere.

5.4 Moments of Laughter:

¹³¹ Ferreira da Silva, Denise. “ON DIFFERENCE WITHOUT SEPARABILITY.” Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, 2016. <https://grsj.arts.ubc.ca/profile/denise-ferreira-da-silva/>.

¹³² This was an important moment for me to engage in an instance of un-learning and practice reflexivity. My circumstances *had* changed and now I was perceived with the privilege of being an Emory student. Further, the space of Emory was one of privilege, wealth, and attention. Every crevice of architecture, from white marble to red roofs was intentional and reproduced the fortress of an institution that I aspired to be. Architecture is a symbol of power and Emory has cemented this space, Muskogee land, as a site in which it seeks to reproduce. This connoted success, wealth but also I understood how I had failed to realize both the privilege of perception but the privilege of being a student. It was a multi-billion dollar endowment and the name has carried prestige and opened doors for me in Atlanta, that carried a form of legitimacy given my attachment to this site. I had failed to sufficiently interrogate this role and Monica had reminded me of such positionally but more importantly, how I now had intimate knowledge of navigating white spaces as a non-white person. I had failed to acknowledge how my increased mobility and agency through my acquisition of this intimate knowledge could've offered me privileges in other spaces.

Such nuances within my thesis, I argue, are central in garnering a comprehensive understanding of who and why I wish to offer the nuances to her comfort, ability to nurture warmth and a devotion to not the sustaining of life, but the creation of kinship. Monica's implementation of these modes of perception through eye contact, smiling, laughter, and care constitute an integral part of her place-making. As such I want to bring attention not only to the physical, material qualities of place-making but further what the affect of who she is as a person. Further as someone who loves to laugh, I want to particularly note the moments and few seconds we both collectively laughed, smiled and shared these moments of warmth.

As I was, the zoom call began and she greeted me with immense warmth and interrupted me as "Naomi, you look so pretty! But why didn't you didn't tell me we had to dress up for this interview?"

I laughed and shook my head no.

She smiled and made a funny face giving me a "are you serious" face.

I continued to laugh. "I'm serious, you didn't have to dress up! But what? You're saying is I don't look good when I volunteer? (returning the are you serious face)¹³³

We both laughed.

I assume this meant yes....

When Monica was discussing her status as about the labor she partakes in and the emotional weight of place-making and how she takes care of herself . She laughed. And responded

"I am not a product person, I like coconut oil or shea butter. Rest is important. Clean diet is important. I think (pause) and she commences giggling. I feel as young as you know?"

I laughed and raised my eyebrows.

¹³³ To provide some more context why this is funny, I volunteered on friday nights as it was the with the least volunteers and also given my schedule. It was a lengthy commute, I often went very fatigued at the end of the day but I had good energy. Maybe my appearance was not. Since it was the end of the school week I had most likely been stressed, and running on little food. LOL the fact Erica noticed speaks both to her care, love and attention and perhaps my need to sleep more.

“She laughed and started incorporating several hand motions. When you get to this age, you might be saying the same thing. You’re going to feel. I’m 48 but I feel like I’m 22 sometimes.

She laughed with me and I responded with a wide-eyed face.

“Someone who is 78 might feel like I do or they might feel 40, or 45. I feel young and I think it’s my outlook on life

The role of listening, sharing of stories and respect is crucial in love, however its role within Monica’s work is beyond that. She states,

They have interesting stories, they have lived interesting lives and something happened that brought them to that place of homelessness. Whether it was a traumatic brain injury from an accident, poor decision making, substance abuse, leaving an abusive relationship and I started to realize at that point that maybe I shouldn't feel like dre and say I don't mess with the homeless and I just decided at that time that if I am going to be of service or of help what would that look like? So I started looking at how I want someone to treat me, how I want someone to treat my family members, should they be in this position. So I was able to do a quick time with the salvation army, I was able to increase and add participation, as well as staff retention. I was able to effectively service the clients with dignity, I believe they deserve respect and that is an ultimate for me. You must trust them with respect. I don't care what they look like, what they smell like, suck it up you know?

“more than human form of attention that is enacted or embodied in a ritual and conceptual space marked by a charged and potent awareness of divine absence”.¹³⁴ As such the modalities of listening, eye-contact, and the fostering of kinship but more importantly a form of care. As such, she discusses how while this might be undermined it’s important to note not only the importance of unhoused people sharing stories with her, but further how attention, visibility and warmth function as essential forms of care. Monica discusses absence of networks of care is an especially prevalent issue and it’s why she feels the use of warmth, affection and attention

¹³⁴ Beatrice Marovich, “Hearing Nothing: A More than Human Silence,” *Political Theology*, July 2022, pp. 1-17, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1462317x.2022.2035957>.

is particularly essential within her interactions. Further, the role of stories and storytelling function not only as the existence of a community that has been rendered to not care, but further is illustrative of demands, echoes, and moments of existence for the unhoused community. Monica's place-making is re-imagining what constitutes to be a part of a community, to create a community grounded in Black feminist ways of thinking and change to disrupt instilled notions of individuality through capitalism neoliberal upbringing through the nation state. How have Black Women have always created knowledge and geographies that undermine the nation-state's vision of a neoliberal America that ultimately functions to sustain life.

As my case study, the concept of matter was mobilized to encompass a larger terrain to expand how matter is perceived through relation and affect. How each place I discussed laid root in imagination first and thus was able to sustain life because of their intimate knowledge of place-making, because of their need to create places and to re-imagine matter. I emphasize that an expansion As such, healing as a concept I argue, recognizes how non-matter toggled the tensions for a demand of life not knowing but feeling the pain and love of all, that one can heal and reimagine¹³⁵. This praxis reflects the need to find places that are found as such, Octavia's placemaking of creating intimate knowledge but further of a constellation of care. It is the connection between sites of non-matter I argue, position relation as a possibility that can function alternative modes of learning, unlearn within and through interlocutor to re-imagine how to love all in ways.

As such this series of place-making results in the transformation of space functions not only because it physically, symbolically, and spatially transforms but also transforms communal

¹³⁵ Parable of the sower

memory. It is through their series of practices to transform Black Spaces to places to sustain matter, which is to sustain life, brings forth the intimate knowledge to do so but further the need of love. I argue how Long's concept of matter(ing) can function as a tool, a framework, but how the functions, processes, and impossibilities of such a concept are rendered unknown because of my lack of travel. How I situate the call for action and need to re-imagine and to travel because matter relegated into non-matter is being extinguished so rapidly. Lastly, I want to emphasize the importance of recognizing the existence of a genealogy of Place-makers because it renders visible Black women of mattering in zones of un-mattering¹³⁶. As such, her place-making functions across time and space when you consider the history of atlanta eviction, segregation and displacement of low-income Black communities un-doing the violent historical modes of un-mattering that have rendered Black people in Atlanta as place-less, human-less and outside of the realm of value. The Earth demands it. Remember, further as a concept through the physical, symbolic, spatial, and now that position them as a radical intervention to (Matter)ing is not a process at which one arrives but is an inherent need. These constellations of un-mattering continue to be systemically reproduced through food deserts as such even within constellations of un-mattering, place-making sites can foster a space that renders inoperative the logics of un-mattering. As McKittrick's Black Feminist frameworks allow us to identify, constellations of un-mattering shape the Black community but do not define it through a Black sense of place. As such we can further recognize the agency, autonomy, and its negotiation within space and place. I asked Monica if she had any last concluding thoughts to share about her work.

¹³⁶ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

“I’m a servant, I’m a giver, and I’m nurturing thru food and I’m spreading love, I’m really spreading love through food because I want to share the love that I have and the abundance that I have with someone else through food”

While Stacy commented “To love everyone like family”

5.5 Pedagogy of Love

Monica’s place-making results in the transformation of space functions not only physically, symbolically, or spatially but such particular nuances are understood as necessary tenets that go on to shape a series of practices that are not deemed modes but rather a form of praxis that creates meaning and place. It is through the particularity of these modes that they function to address much more than the absence of hunger and shelter but function spatially as a mode to humanize, to render through absence and nothing a state of difference but not separability. As Monica describes. “Either we all have something or we all have nothing” such a pedagogy functions to universalize matter and situate all people on the same field, as such this pedagogy re-imagines value but what constitutes a rendering of human to matter especially when considering how Black people have historically un-mattering within the unhoused community. As such Monica’s work is not immediate short-term remedies that do not situate long-term life as a priority or goal in addition to failing to address the systemic health inequities that predispose Black communities to greater health risks. Even if such critical health necessities were addressed, longevity, sustaining life long-term is not prioritized. She addressed such concerns within her community because her pedagogy is one of sustaining life and community. As such there is a growing need to center and prioritize the maintenance of love and care of the most affected members, but further ensure their existence of a constellation of care.

Concluding Thoughts

This thesis goes beyond what is easily captured within scholarly, policy, and other structural approaches to questions of housing. In concluding thoughts add the future questions / questions you were unable to explore in this thesis. When exploring place-making, practices want to interrogate the existence of such a crisis to center why there is a need for place-making, a need for imagined and material worlds and why there exists such worldly stakes through mobilizing matter.¹³⁷ I'm particularly curious to study constellations of The Black Lives Matter movement continue to function as a movement that brings forth the need to render visible and initiate a call to action. Further, The Stop Cop City movement in Atlanta is engaging in spatial based modes of resistance but further transforming digital spaces into digital places that serve to transform and render groups and places to matter. As such the forest Defenders continue to engage in integral place-making as part of communities that attempt to be displaced and rendered placeness. This practice of rendering is placeless and rather a part of Atlanta's continuous history of rendering Black communities non-human in particular centering the place-making of Stop Cop City, I am particularly excited about the role of digital geographies and technology as new sites of place-making that can re-imagining of kinship. Further, such geographies also allow for an increased visibility of constellations of matter(ing) not within the city of Atlanta across time and space but also transnationally¹³⁸. If provided with more time I am interested in exploring matter(ing) through the senior through environmental justices frameworks and Indigenous frameworks of food and food sovereignty.

¹³⁷ Davis, Angela. "Reflections on the Black Woman's Role in the Community of Slaves - JSTOR." JSTOR, 1972. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25088201>.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

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