Abstract

This paper gives explanations to the symbols and rituals of sporting events and how symbols, ritually celebrated and performed through song under the guise of school spirit, normalize and allow for the incorporation of white supremacist ideologies into the everyday lives of a community. These racialized ideologies become normalized as every day, taken for granted meaning without much critical reflection. This paper asks how racist anti-black sentiment becomes normalized as heritage or tradition. As the Black American male football players sang this song to a predominantly white audience the tensions of power, racism, and sport overlapped in ways that seemed to go unnoticed and unproblematized by many. This paper explores ritual and tradition as forms of institutionalized racism framed within the context of heritage and school tradition. I argue ritual symbols, and ritual practice teaching anti-Black and pro-White sentiment becomes learned and passed on through subtle and unmarked practices. School fight songs and sporting traditions are part of the on-going interconnectedness of race and sport in American college life. This paper demonstrates how white supremacist values become normalized through mascots, songs and rituals imbued with racist and anti-black (along with anti-Native American) sentiment. If we are to see sport as part of a complicated and expansive practice of leisure, then we must also recognize that sport and leisure are always political. Sport is an integral component to normalization of racism even when sport denotes fun and entertainment.
Key Words: Racism, Sport, Tradition, Heritage, Whiteness, United States

"I once did know a President A way down South, in
Texas. And, always, everywhere he went, He saw
the Eyes of Texas.
The Eyes of Texas are upon you, All the livelong day.
The Eyes of Texas are upon you, You cannot get away.
Do not think you can escape them At night or early in
the morn - The Eyes of Texas are upon you Til Gabriel
blows his horn.
Sing me a song of Prexy, Of days long since gone by.
Again I seek to greet him, And hear his kind reply.
Smiles of gracious welcome Before my memory rise,
Again I hear him say to me, "Remember Texas' Eyes.""[1]

As many Americans re-engage in fights and disagreements about the role and placement of key symbols, like statues and flags, in American life, this paper demonstrates another key symbol and site of tension, university sporting fight songs. This paper offers insight into how differences of meaning come into being and also become contested in everyday university life. Fighting over statues and flags, typically is linked to white southern confederate heritage,[2] has been at the forefront of American discourse recently. As Americans debate over these symbols, much of the discourse focuses on either preserving, erasing or altering historical realities. I do not argue that historical accuracy is important but instead focus on the contemporary meanings derived from historical symbols. Most specifically a university school song and how it reinforces anti-Black sentiment.

But these battles are not always overt. What about the subtle institutionalized traditions that involve participants who fight and resist anti-racist rhetoric? This paper explores the intricacies of a school fight song at an American university, where students, faculty, staff, and members of the community regularly participate yet either ignore or are unaware of the racist, hateful origins of the school's traditions. Sport and education have had a long-connected history in the United

States and mirrors the relationship of sport and education in Britain (Rees and Miracle 2000). Building not only a site for male character building, schools have been spaces where nationalist, and patriotic ideals were embedded through sporting life. Schools developed songs as an intentional practice of tradition building. Typically used at sporting events to keep fans enthusiastic in the game but also used by fans as a means to motivate their athletes. In many American sporting traditions school songs were sung at opposing schools to demonstrate greater school spirit. School fight songs are sung not only at sporting events but also at non-sporting events serving to reinforce loyalty and patriotism to institutions but more importantly to the nation.[3] The song above, from the University of Texas at Austin, is performed regularly at all sporting events, official university functions and excerpts of lyrics from the song are often embedded in email signatures of university officials and sometimes appears on official university documents. I focus on the everyday practices as well as ritual performances of the song to demonstrate how racist ideologies become institutionalized. I argue that tradition is a primary site for re-situating racist ideology not merely amongst white supremacists but even among those who typically fight against them and are sometimes the target of racist attacks.

My research was conducted between 2007 and 2011 in the state of Texas at the University of Texas at Austin as part of my dissertation fieldwork. I conducted ethnographic work on the impact of sport and racism on the lives of Black male student-athletes on a predominantly white college campus. I conducted participant observation at sporting events, pep rallies, team practices, cheerleading practice, band practice, and tailgating events. I conducted structured, semi-structured and informal interviews with student-athletes, administrators, staff, faculty, game and tailgate attendees, cheerleaders, alumni and current students and band members. I also

utilized media resources such as newspapers and websites to gain additional insight into the practices of this particular sporting world. I saw this song performed by every constituent mentioned above and observed or noted the varied instances when the song was referenced. I came into contact with all or parts of this song hundreds of times during my research. I became most invested in the performance of this song by student-athletes of colour, most prominently Black student-athletes, given the directly racist and anti-Black origins of the song.

How do we make sense of Black Americans participating in rituals that at their core support anti-Black sentiment? I use an anthropological approach grounded in critical race theory[4] to demonstrate how the use of the school song, its racists origins, and its components to shed light on the role of symbol, meaning-making, and tradition as it creates communal and individual identity. I will give evidence of the embodied surveillance in the lyrics and how the song was used to control the bodies of Black student-athletes. I will also highlight how the process of learning targeted at incoming students serves as a critical site for transmitting racist cultural knowledge. I will then discuss aspects of the sporting community infused with racist and sexist frameworks that evolve out of the already anti-black sentiment in place.

"TEXAS!" "FIGHT!!" "TEXAS!!!" "FIGHT!!!!!" Over and over again the 100,000 Longhorn faithful yelled. One group trying to out yell the other. The sound reverberated throughout the underbelly of the stadium. The sound bouncing off the concrete walls and ceilings magnified the sound to an intensity I felt in my body. The intensity of sound overwhelmed me throughout the season. These football games were what Davidson calls a ‘leisure mega-event’ (Davidson 2012, p. 358). Men, women, children, and college students wearing school colours, burnt orange,

yelling and cheering their way to their seats. As I stepped into the hot Texas sun, I knew the next four hours standing in the one-hundred-degree heat was only part of an already long day. I experienced spectacles of this magnitude at every game I attended. As Carter (2006) demonstrates, "competition reconstitutes the significance of space and place…spectacles that appear as life itself, a part of society and as a means of unification…the spectacle is not a collection of images but social relations between people mediated by images" (Carter, 2006, pp. 151-152). I knew how the game would end, regardless of a win or a loss. The football team would gather in the end zone and face their fans and salute them with their arm outstretched singing the song 'Eyes of Texas'. It was the singing of this song that drew my attention to the ways ritual teaches racist ideology. I argue that it is the institutionalizing of rituals in leisure moments that make racism implicit. Lipsitz (2018), refers to whiteness as 'unmarked' and thereby never having to make explicit the racist foundations accompanying whiteness that structures social relations (Lipsitz, 2018). Whiteness here does not merely refer to essentialized ideas about race based on biological and arbitrary anatomical features. Instead, I employ whiteness as a culturally constructed yet socially relevant system of practices imbued with values and behaviors that privileges lives that align themselves with the principles of white values (DuBois, 2017; Roediger, 2007). The ritualized singing of this song contributed to the process of marking racism and whiteness as the governing structure despite the presence of non-whites in attendance at the game. Fans rarely, if ever, discussed the racist origins of the song in these moments. The song was normalized as tradition and did not need any justification. As I stood watching the football team saluting and singing to the predominantly white audience, who sang along as well, I felt a certain unease. I began to question the role tradition (Hobsbawm, 1983), or heritage, along with ritual had in reinforcing ideals of whiteness. The more I encountered the

song the more I began to see how heritage and hate are neither separate nor distinctive but rather are mutually constitutive practices linking anti-black sentiment with sport.

These racialized ideologies become normalized as every day, taken for granted meaning without much critical reflection, in much the same way Gramsci defines hegemony (Gramsci, 1975). This paper asks how racist anti-black sentiment becomes normalized as heritage or tradition practiced by both the targets of racism and those that benefit from racism. As the Black American male football players sang this song to a predominantly white audience the tensions of power, racism, and sport overlapped in ways that seemed to go unnoticed. I explore ritual and tradition as forms of institutionalized racism (Omi & Winant, 2015) framed within the context of heritage and school tradition. Hobsbawm (1983) situated the university as an essential site to engage discussion on the role of ritual and tradition. Building on the work of King and Springwood, I argue that the songs and traditions of this particular school are part of the then on-going interconnectedness of race and sport in college life. The history of tradition building begun in the late 19th century and into the early 20th century solidified and codified white supremacist values through the creation of racist mascots, songs and rituals imbued with racist and anti-black (and anti-Native American) sentiment (Kind & Springwood 2001). Following the work of Falls (2013) and Newman (2007a, 2007b) the symbolic production of whiteness through contemporary sporting environments and mascots as insight into the construction of white southern identity we see the continuing necessity of whiteness as a valued commodity and its placement into the lives of both whites and non-whites alike. If we are to see sport as part of a complicated and expansive practice of leisure, then we must also follow Rojek (2005) and recognize that sport and leisure is always political. This only complicates sport and leisure when it is conceptualized

as fun and entertaining. Hartman (2010) demonstrates we need not separate entertainment from violence and pain. Hartman describes slave life as a complex intermingling between enslaved Black people and their masters. The enslaved were required to perform happiness with the ever-present threat of violence if their happiness, demanded for the performative event, was not delivered to the satisfaction of their owners (Hartman, 2010). In relation to Rojek's (2005) claims that we recognize sport and leisure as always political we must also acknowledge how sport and leisure are often believed to be apolitical by its participants. Here I follow Carrington's (2010) work which carefully demonstrates that because sport can be viewed as a site of "transcendence and utopian dreaming" it masks the relationships of power (Carrington, 2010, p. 14). My paper demonstrates the mechanisms of this de-politicizing yet simultaneously making it explicitly political as both Rojek and Carrington argue. The rituals and traditions of sporting worlds are practiced and articulated as events of belonging, friendship and community. The overt entertainment aspect of 'leisure mega-events' mask and erase deep historical conflicts. Football in the American south has been an important site to examine racial attitudes and white racial pride. Following Borucki's (2003) work on football and southern identity, this paper situates itself within a narrative of American football's role in developing Southern racial identities of whiteness through the inclusion of Black male athletes into university football programs. After the Civil War and Reconstruction, "… lacking political power and social esteem, Southerners sought new ways to prove their superiority to Northerners. In the 1920s and 1930s, college football became a novel means for Southerners to rekindle their sense of honor in a sport rich with martial images and language" (Borucki, 2003, p. 479). Linking Orey's (2004) work on the state flag of Mississippi and the response by white college students in favor of the Confederate flag connects with the literature on the American South, American football, white southern

racism and the interrelatedness with symbols and sporting culture as sites of white racist production. My paper adds another component to this dialogue on traditions as vehicles of learning racist heritage (Arai & Kivel, 2009; Falls, 2013; Kivel, Johnson & Scraton, 2009, and Roberts, 2009).

Insert Figure 1 here. The school salute. Photo by author.

The commitment I witnessed to the 'Eyes of Texas' song, irrespective of racist and violent foundations, mirror the debate of Native American mascots. King (2014), describes the logic used by both fans and those in power to justify the continued use of Native American imagery as mascot symbols. According to King, fans and owners claim the symbols are invaluable markers of honor and heritage. To remove them would adversely impact the organization (King, 2014). Following Michael Herzfeld (2010), I ask how 'dominant interpretations of history spatially [and aurally] reinforce current ideologies' (Herzfeld, 2010, p. S259).[5] As the ideal, whiteness supplants other racialized subjectivities making the Other (Wright, 2004). Contestation over public symbols, such as Confederate statues and flags, elucidates how symbols come to serve as the heritage for one group while simultaneously embodying the symbols of slavery and white racial privilege to others (Newman 2007a and 2007b; Orey, 2004; Upton, 2015).[6] Normalization of such practices is projected unequally at black student-athletes that heighten their otherness. Whiteness and white supremacy situates the black athlete as a spectacle that allows for the simultaneous framing of blackness and race onto the bodies of black people (Andrews, 2000). Whiteness can still become situated at the pinnacle of society covertly (Lipsitz, 2018,). These covert strategies occur in spaces of leisure and entertainment of sport. The school traditions and songs teach whiteness as the norm. This allows us the opportunity to read how various racialized bodies become attuned to white privilege. Whiteness constructs a binary to non-whiteness, often

primarily designated as blackness, this sets anything as non-white as less than, and oppositional to white authority resulting in the establishment of systems, such as a song, employed to re-shape and re-direct subjectivities to the authority of whiteness.

The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin)

UT Austin, a premier public institution in Texas, is considered the flagship institution of the state. It is a tier-one research facility with undergraduate and graduate programs. Its undergraduate student population was slightly more than 50% white with only a 4% Black population between 2008-2012.[7] The undergraduate population was over 39,000, and the graduate population was over 11,000. It is one of the largest universities in the country. It has a full complement of colleges and schools including Liberal Arts, Communications, Business, Fine Arts, Law School, Engineering, Nursing, and Natural Science.

UT Austin until very recently overtly reflected its southern heritage. It had several statues of Confederate leaders (Robert E. Lee, Jefferson Davis, John H. Reagan, and Albert S. Johnston) dotted around campus.[8] Due to the recent national attention directed at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA,[9] as a site of pro-white supremacist activity, UT Austin removed all of the statues on its campus overnight in the fall of 2017 to avoid any possibility of protests and potential violence. Before their removal, students, staff, faculty, and visitors were reminded continuously of UT Austin's Southern heritage by this concentration of the Confederate soldier statues.

Over the years several initiatives led by faculty, staff, and students of colour changed the landscape of the campus with additions of statues of Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez and Barbara Jordan. These attempts did not impact the removal of the Confederate statues. Despite these advances, there were acts of vandalism against the MLK statue. As the first of the new statues, it was egged multiple times soon after its unveiling. Security cameras were installed to deter future attacks. The absence of cameras on the Confederate figures highlight the necessity of cameras on the MLK statues serving as additional daily reminders of the power structure and dominant culture on campus. Surveillance, or lack thereof, would continue to play an essential role in the performance of the school song that helped explain why some statues needed cameras and others did not. Upton (2016), details the burden of icons created to counter white supremacist Confederate statues. They are unable to evoke the same meaning as they attempt to accomplish too much in the face of the historical realities of oppression. In their attempt to say too much they undermine their ability to say anything at all. As will be described later, student-athletes, especially black student-athletes, were keenly aware their performance of the school song at the end of sporting events were scrutinized by alumni and university officials to ensure student-athletes exhibited the appropriate demonstration of school spirit. These moments of vandalism dismissed as insignificant college pranks by some reflect how non-white forms of heritage are attacked while those that have a pro-white legacy do not even need protection. The names of several buildings at the time of my research bore the names of Southern Confederate leaders, and a campus-wide debate flared up over the name of a residence hall after it became public knowledge that it was named after a former faculty member with Ku Klux Klan affiliation. The university, under pressure from the community and student body, renamed the dorm.

The Eyes of Texas

The ‘Eyes of Texas’ song directly connects UT Austin’s heritage to the United States’ racist foundations in slavery and oppression of not only Black people but other people of colour. The song is sung at all crucial events from convocation to graduation and the conclusion of every sporting event. The song was first introduced, in 1903, at a school minstrel show.[10] Two students wishing to honour their university president, incorporated his favourite form of address to the student body, “The eyes of Texas are upon you” into the song. The UT Austin president had been a student at Washington College when Robert E. Lee was the school president. The UT Austin president modified the greeting he had learned from Lee to address his student body. Lee was known to address the student body with "The eyes of the South are upon you." Robert E. Lee was the commander of the Confederate Army during the Civil War in the United States. Upon his loss to the Union Army, Lee was awarded the presidency of Washington College in Virginia. Named after the first president of the United States, George Washington. It was later renamed to include the name of Lee changing it to Washington and Lee College.[11]

The debut of the song by the university quartet at a minstrel show organized to raise funds to support an athletic team permanently linked the song to sport and leisure. The performance immediately won over the student body and all those in attendance, including the president of the university. The song was immediately adopted as the school song. Before the first part of the song was completed during the first rendition the crowd was said to be in an uproar which only increased as the quartet finished the song. The song was sung several more times in succession before the minstrel show could continue. Only when the ensemble complained of strained voices

were they allowed to stop. By the next day, the university band had learned the song and was performing it around campus. The university president referenced it at the following spring graduation, and later his family requested the song played at his funeral. On UT Austin's official athletic website in their section on "Traditions," the origin of the song is referenced to an earlier date one year earlier when the eventual composers tried unsuccessfully to debut a different song at a "talent" show. There is no mention of the debut of the official school song during the minstrel show one year later. The university provides a link to the alumni site, and further investigation into the state historical society website does mention that the song debuted at a minstrel show, but neither give any historical information of the role of minstrel shows' role in the production of whiteness and anti-black violence in the late 19th and early 20th century in the United States.

Minstrel shows were instrumental during the era as part of solidifying and re-establishing white authority. Minstrel shows sedimented racist inferiority of African Americans for white America's security. As Blacks made significant social, political and economic gains after emancipation, minstrel shows served to quell white fears of Black success but also gave legitimacy to violent anti-Black sentiment (Cockrell, 1997; Gubar, 2000; Lhamon, 2000; Lott, 2013; Mahar, 200; Roedieger, 1999). Lynching became a normalized response by white America to assuage their fears and reclaim white authority (Goldsby, 2006). The debut of the song in 1903 comes at the very time lynching was used as a critical strategy to instill fear and submission in the Black community. The themes, content, and context of the song are not independent of the history of racial violence against Blacks, Native Americans and Mexican Americans in the years around 1903 in Texas and the South. It would be unlikely and improbable none of the men in

attendance were unfamiliar with the practice of lynching against people of colour. As Goldsby's work demonstrates, lynching was a public, well-attended and recorded (through lynching postcards) event. In some cases, thousands were in attendance. These events included all members of white society, including children, wives, and mothers and entire families along with the adult male leadership of the community (judges, sheriffs, and mayors). As college men in 1903 representing the male elite of the state, it is likely many of them had some encounter with lynching before enrolment at UT Austin, and as lynching only increased after 1900 until the 1950s, they were likely to have attended or become more familiar with it later in their life. Minstrel shows served to educate white America's false notions of Black Americans' inhumanity allowing the logic of lynching to permeate into white society's justification for terrorizing and murdering people of colour.

It is also important to note the athletic site's omission of the 1903 song debut. It only mentions the names of the individuals who wrote the song. One can surmise that in the era of recruitment of Black athletes having this information connected to the athletic department could impact their ability to recruit Black athletes. Keeping in mind the historical necessity of Black athletes' role in solidifying whiteness mentioned earlier. Following the work of Handler and Linnekin "… we must understand tradition as a symbolic process that both presupposes past symbolisms and creatively reinterprets them. In other words, tradition is not a bounded entity made up of bounded constituent parts, but a process of interpretation, attributing meaning in the present though making reference to the past" (Handler & Linnekin, 1984, p. 287). Over one hundred years later, this song serves as the primary voice of school pride. The normalization of the song through time and custom as it became tradition and heritage helped conceal the overt racist

context of its origins. Carol Spindel's (2002) work on the use of Native American imagery for mascots in American sporting traditions sanitized and erases the practice of genocide on indigenous populations in the United States. It also reframes the mascot into safely consumable images for white audiences. An image that does not remind the fans of the violent past. The contemporary explanations demonstrate the desire for symbols of bravery and nobility (Spindel, 2002). The 'Eyes of Texas' is transformed from a slave holder's rallying cry into a demonstration of school allegiance conforming the bodies of both white students and Black student-athletes but maintaining the logic of white supremacy.

'*I once did know a President A way down South, in Texas'*. The opening line of the song sets a framework for both the importance and role of memory listeners and singers are meant to adhere to. The song established the acceptance of the power of the president as the foundation of morality. Symbolically this power rests not merely in the President of the university, but given the origin of the song, power rests in the leadership of southern white, wealthy males. The predominant demographic of UT Austin in 1903. Males who require constant honouring, even after their death. This song becomes a song of lineage and legacy not only to the then UT Austin president but also Robert E. Lee the former head of the Confederate army.

'*The Eyes of Texas are upon you, All the livelong day. The Eyes of Texas are upon you, You cannot get away'*. This next line has become the unofficial opening line of the song in contemporary performances. Resulting in an unmarking of overt authority and relegating it to a generic reference of eyes. This phrasing also demonstrates multiple meaning of surveillance in the lives of the members of UT Austin's community. Surveillance was not applied equally but

was applied systematically. It reminded white male students at UT Austin in 1903 of their historical and current white male leadership's expectation of recuperation of southern male authority. This reference to surveillance also speaks currently to the surveillance of Black student-athletes on UT Austin's campus generally but also as it relates to their performance of the school song. Later in the paper, I relate one black female student-athlete's experiences with the song and it's monitoring by alumni.

Approximately 30 years after the debut of the song, UT Austin codified in a building their own panopticon (Foucault, 2011) as the central building housing the highest-ranking officials at the university. Referred in the current era simply as "The Tower", the normalization of surveillance became embedded in UT Austin culture. The song's almost prescient statement that '*eyes are upon you*,' one could argue informed the construction of the building itself. Thirty years after the adoption the song had become central to UT Austin identity. The song as ritual became a dominant force that impacted physical space helping reinforce whiteness as the standard in a physical presence guarding and watching over the entire campus. The interrelatedness of the song and the tower became even more salient later when I witnessed incoming students trained to properly perform the song. Proper performance of the song involved more than memorizing the lyrics but included proper bodily comportment while singing.

'*The Eyes of Texas are upon you Til Gabriel blows his horn*.' This line has become the unofficial end of the song. Rarely is it sung past this line despite additional lyrics. Given the inference of the return of God as part of a Christian motif at the end of humanity and fulfillment of Christian prophesy, this particular line stands out not only for its omnipresent tones but also how it is

performed. In almost all cases the "*til Gabriel blows his horn*" is sung in a staccato with a matching emphasized arm movement as students pump their arms in unison emphatically for each word. The exaggerated arm movement vividly demonstrates one's loyalty and allegiance.

The Eyes of the Alumni

During a graduation ceremony, I was standing with about five students; one of them a Black woman on the volleyball team. The other students were not student-athletes. As they were about to enter the auditorium for the ceremony I told them they should not sing the school song, explaining that it was a slave owner's rallying cry. I suggested they should turn their back to the stage. "Well except you," I said to the young Black woman, "I know you can't do that." The other students asked why. She explained alumni were known to call into the athletic department and complain about student-athletes not demonstrating enough reverence while singing the school song. She informed her classmates student-athletes would be admonished by coaching staff or athletic department administrators. She knew of student-athletes who were threatened with punishment, such as expulsion, reduced playing time, or harder practices, for non-compliance. The other students were speechless. They had no conception that student-athletes, perceived as elites at the University, had restrictions on expressions of free speech. The tension exhibited here speaks directly to Hartman's (2010) work on the connections between entertainment and violence endured by Blacks during slavery. It was not enough that the student-athletes were competitive in their sport, their appropriate demonstration of allegiance to the school was required. But some Black student-athletes did resist. Despite the overwhelming adoption and practicing of the song, there was not necessarily universal performance of the song nor was it always performed with required enthusiasm. While I was writing up my dissertation, I

did occasionally notice a small number of black male basketball players not singing the school song and sometimes half-sitting on the media tables next to the court during the song's performance. I was unable to ascertain what if any repercussions those specific individuals might have dealt with, but they seemed willing to accept the outcomes.

Cheering Our Way to Racism

One summer evening I headed to campus to meet with the UT Austin cheerleading squad. When I approached the campus building, I saw a few of the cheerleaders outside practicing. Some were practicing individual or group routines. A few were studying. Most of the squad was white. There was one Black female, one Black male, 2-3 Latinas and one woman who was bi-racial (Black and Asian). While the overall total squad was about 60 cheerleaders, there were usually half that many on these summer programs I visited. Typically, on these nights the uniform for the women consisted of very short black tights for the females and t-shirts sometimes tied to reveal their abdomen. The males in the group, about six on most nights, wore t-shirts and basketball style shorts that went below the knee. Most of the young women wore traditional cheerleader style shoes while all the males wore more athletic type cross-trainers. Most of the young women wore burnt orange and white ribbons in their hair. The women in the group took charge of making most decisions and giving instruction. The coach provided some guidance, but most of the direction came from a couple of the female cheerleaders.

The overall squad had three separate but interconnected groups. The Pom Squad. An all-female team, they were regarded as the most elite of the group. At the time of the research, they were the only members to have a Facebook fan page created in their honour. They did less traditional

cheering and more dancing in their roles. They also typically differentiated themselves from the rest of the squad with different attire on game days. They were famous for wearing leather chaps with tight-fitting shorts underneath. Chaps, historically, were worn by Texas ranchers wear their jeans while riding horses. The second group was the co-ed squad. A gender-mixed group of male and females. Characterized by athletic males and smaller, lighter females. The cheerleaders told me it enabled the male team members to easier toss and hold their female counterparts in the air over their head. The third group was the all-female squad. This group was more muscular and athletic than the rest of their female peers on the team and did more gymnastic stunts and tumbling. Grindstaff and West's (2006) work on cheerleading and gender politics demonstrates the layered meanings attached to roles/positions within a cheer team, "because girls "base" as well as "fly," the division of labour is determined by size and strength rather than gender. Although female bases are subject to the same overdetermined feminine appearance and performance demands as flyers, their more "masculine" role complicates their performance of gender and the public construction of gender difference" (Grindstaff and West, 2006, p. 516).

On that night, team was preparing for one of their weekly summer performances. During the summer months, UT Austin invited incoming first-year students to campus to gain academic and school experience before classes started in August. Approximately one thousand students attended each week for six weeks. Students learned about academic requirements, met with faculty and staff and learned about additional resources for success in college. The students stayed overnight in residence halls. In-coming students learned about student organizations such as fraternities and sororities. University representatives spent three days providing information sessions on every aspect of campus life.

The “Traditions” program (the official name) was one of the most popular orientation events. It regularly drew almost 500 students each week. The classroom the event was in had a capacity for 500, and it was almost full every time I was there. The ‘Traditions’ program was why I was there that evening. The session served to introduce students to important school traditions, songs, chants and rituals they would be expected to know and incorporate into their lives. The cheerleaders were brought in as a surprise at the end of the program to solidify their transformation from a mixed bag of high school students into UT Austin community with new identities as ‘Longhorns’. When it came time for the cheerleaders to enter, they waited outside the building to enter the main lecture hall through the back door. As the door swung open, I could hear one of the many fight songs played at football games blaring from inside. I could hear someone from inside the lecture hall saying, "Now we have a real treat for you all tonight! The UT Austin Cheer and Pom Squad!!” At that moment, the squad ran into the classroom and dispersed throughout the room. Some went on stage up front, while others stood in the aisles and walkways. As they ran, they clapped in time to the song that played. Once everyone was in position they immediately went into their first routine.

The Pom Squad, on stage did a dance routine, as the co-ed squad did stunts and lifts in the aisles. The all-female squad also started typical cheer routines. The room was filled to capacity. All the students were standing, cheering and clapping along. As the routine came to an end the students burst into thunderous applause. I picked a corner in the back of the room so I could see everyone and be out of the way. Once the applause subsided one of the young women from the Pom Squad took the microphone. Quickly introducing herself and the rest of the squad, she began to explain

the importance of knowing the school songs at sporting events. She then made some references as to how significant it was that the students had chosen UT Austin to attend instead of a rival. The disparaging remarks against their rivals always received thunderous applause from the students.

The first cheer introduced the students was the "TEXAS!" vs. "FIGHT!" chant. The same chant described at the beginning of this paper. The cheerleaders divided the room in half, designating the left side to be the 'TEXAS' side and the right to be 'FIGHT'. The students stood up, with the rest of the squad yelling to get them excited. Several of the young women on the squad were hoisted onto the upstretched arms of their male team members. They were now eye level with the students standing in the back row of the room. As the left side erupted into a "TEXAS!" the right side quickly responded with an equally loud "FIGHT!" Back and forth they went. The cheerleaders urged them on and pointed to the side of the room that was supposed to say their part. Louder and louder it got. Locked in a room with 500 students yelling at the top of their lungs, made my chest shake. The next lesson taught them how to display their mascot symbol correctly. They were taught that it was important to show it correctly and also demonstrated the incorrect ways of presenting the symbol (typically done by rival schools). Despite the entertaining and fun atmosphere created by the university and sustained by official representatives, the cheerleaders, the teaching of the incoming students served as their first encounter with the instruments of policing and surveillance by the university articulated through their bodies (Foucault, 2011). Their indoctrination into the school community through the guise of tradition validated and consummated their membership into the community. The cheer squad went through a couple more cheers and then introduced one for the students to watch. As the

music began, a familiar song started, and I knew what was about to happen. Typically, this song and dance are performed only once, during football games at the end of the third quarter or during the second half of basketball games. The male cheerleaders stepped aside because just the female cheerleaders did this routine. The young ladies began an intricate set of foot movements, hand and arm gestures, all of this along with twirling and high kicks. The dance was reminiscent of what could be an old American folk dance. It was the most complicated routine performed by the squad. Members of the squad told me on multiple occasions that learning this routine took up most of their practice time. In fact, every time I met with them at least a third of the young women were practicing this particular routine in the two hours leading up to the performance. As they danced the audience clapped along in unison and cheered at points in the routine recognized as particularly tricky or intricate. As the song ended to yet another thunderous applause and yelling, the dance reaffirmed itself as one of the most popular performed by the squad.

It was now the end of the program, with the squad looking visibly tired, what transpired next was the culmination of full indoctrination of the students into UT Austin's southern heritage. It happened every time I went to watch the cheer squad perform, but the first time was especially significant because I was caught off guard and unprepared for what was about to occur. As the folk dance ended, one of the squad's captains came to the mic and informed the students that they would be ending the evening with the most important song they would ever learn at UT Austin; the official school song. The cheerleader introduced the song in this way, "We are going to end this pep rally with something that we end every event with…called the 'Eyes of Texas'. You don't know the words. Learn them. Love them. Make them your ringtone…Everybody face the Tower." The students raised their hands, as they were instructed, in salute as the music began. It

is worth mentioning the lack of historical context given. In all of the events, I attended with the cheerleaders that summer they never told the full history of the song's creation that would have informed the incoming students of the racist origins. This erasure served to imbue the racist history of the song with even more authority. These moments of erasure or omission connect directly with Jaime Schultz's (2016) work on violence done to Black athletes by their white competitors and their connection to cultural memory. Like Schultz's description of the erasure of violence done to Black bodies in sport the teaching of the song by the cheerleaders is "associated with communities' efforts to remember and to forget the past…reveals a particular type of cultural memory –racialized memory-a communal form of remembering imbued with racial meaning." (Schultz, 2016, p. 12). Like whiteness, the violent, racist legacy of the song was not spoken out loud, identified or made known. This erasure allowed for the song's racist legacy to shift into invisibility. This performance was a critical moment in the genesis of allegiance not only to the racist southern heritage of UT Austin but also to the contemporary authority of senior administrative officials in 'The Tower'. The students were now facing the panopticon building from inside a windowless room. She acknowledged that this might seem odd since we were indoors but it was important for them to start practicing this rule early on. Unknowingly, the cheerleaders were reinforcing Hobsbawm's (1983) contention that '[i]nvented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawm, 1983, p. 1). In this setting, students were incorporated into a history steeped in racist, anti-black and pro-slavery values.

I panned the room, looking at the various reactions of students as it dawned on them what they were about to do. Some giggled, others playfully nudged their friend next to them, some had a puzzled look. Mostly they were waiting for instruction on what to do next. She instructed them to raise their right hand and make the mascot symbol and to face in the direction of The Tower. That direction was the back corner of the room where I was standing. Now it was my turn to be puzzled. Were they going to stare at a blank wall and sing this song? And then it began. As the cheer squad started singing along with the student staff running the event, the incoming students joined in. Some sang shyly at first, but as they made their way through the song, they gained confidence and lost their embarrassment of singing to the back wall of a lecture hall (and the odd anthropologist standing in the corner facing them). The closest students were less than a foot from me staring at me when they should have been staring at the wall at my back. Lakoff and Johnson (2011) with their work on metaphors emphasize the way in which metaphor shapes reality and informs action but also simultaneously teaches us new things while shielding us from other realities. "Such metaphors are capable of giving us a new understanding of our experience. Thus, they can give new meaning to our pasts, to our daily activity, and to what we know and believe" (Lakoff & Johnson, 2011, p. 128). The teaching and singing of this song to incoming students served to introduce them to a new way of understanding the world that was both explicit yet hidden. Loyalty to the school was clearly articulated, and the students were shown how to demonstrate their dedication physically. Less explicit was the more profound and older meaning of the origins of the song with its rally cry for white authority.

Witnessing this early introduction of the school's racist heritage to incoming students demonstrated how white authority was taught and transmitted. Students did not necessarily come

in with these particular conceptions of whiteness. Not all of the students were white. However, they learned indirectly that expressions of white authority were linked to leisure events, such as sport. The students learned from cheerleaders who were formally sanctioned by the university to be the official representatives of UT Austin. The cheerleaders told me they were regularly scheduled to perform at not only official sporting events but alumni events around the state and at official functions for the university. The athletic department's website included instructions and contract policies on how to book them for events[12]. They served to maintain the link between incoming students, current students, and former students. The continuity created by their role created systemic enculturation of the song long after students left the campus. As sanctioned voices of UT Austin, they were also the sanctioned and sanctioning voices of white authority.

From Minotaur to Human – Ritual Transformations

Athletic feats, the scoring of touchdowns nor the winning of games generated the most deafening roars of the 100,000 in attendance at football games. For one season, I attended every home football game at UT Austin. Every game I attended there were crucial moments that elicited enormous fan reaction that to anyone passing by the stadium would have assumed they had either won the game or at the very least scored a touchdown. One such triggering factor was displaying the National Championship trophy on the jumbo screen within the stadium. UT Austin had won the national collegiate title in football in 2005. Merely showing the trophy on the jumbo screen would elicit collective yelling and cheering from fans. Another was the entrance of the football team into the stadium. It is this entrance and the symbolic transformation of the players leading up to the entry that I wish to examine here. The liminality, the betwixt and between, the creation of communitas (Turner, 1967) as the student-athletes made their way onto

the field was performed in an opening video montage that culminated in the entrance of the real team onto the field. The video starts with members of the football team shown leaving the locker room. As the screen fades away the singing of the “Eyes of Texas” begins. As the songs ends the display changes from a waving flag of the school symbol to an animation of the running of longhorn cattle as they pass significant parts of campus. The crowd increased their screaming, yelling, and clapping across multiple octaves. As the cattle approach the animated depiction of the stadium, they are struck by a bolt of lightning as they enter the building whereby they are transformed into half bovine half human beings, minotaur-like in their appearance. Except for the lack of a helmet (the helmet would not be able to fit over the horns), they become adorned in football attire. As the minotaurs run through the inside of the stadium, they pass video montages of significant football moments in the history of the program. The hoisting of the national trophy being one of them. Again, the sound of cheering in the stadium elevates. Each time I always regretted not investing in earplugs. As the minotaurs entered the final tunnel the only thing that is apparent is a blinding light. As the minotaurs disappear off screen a cloud of smoke appears at one end of the stadium. The cheerleaders who have been waiting patiently at this end of the stadium begin to run at full speed to the opposite end as the once again transformed team become real football players running onto the field. Often led by one team member carrying an American flag. Another octave is achieved. The entire team runs to the opposite end zone and kneels in front of the crowd as a representation of their benevolence and sanctity as if to say thank you to their fans and to present themselves for acceptance into the community.

I focus on this ritualized entrance because of its significant elaboration of the complexity of liminality. Not quite full persons these young men are changed into acceptable humans in the

eyes of their adoring fans. What I argue, however, is that it only further solidifies their lack of humanness. The repeated playing of this video at every home game never lost its impact on those watching. They never got tired of it, and it never became mundane or boring. The cheers and yelling were always loud and enthusiastic. The playing of the video was a significant moment in the institutionalizing of the players as less than. Given that the team, despite its actual racial demographics, is regularly envisioned as a black team playing a black sport, the Black student-athletes became doubly indemnified as less than human. This media presentation meant for entertainment purposes as well as serving to excite the fans into readiness for the game also continued the tradition of pathologizing blackness as less than human and grounding ideas of race in biology and cultural inferiority (Lipsitz, 2018; Moynihan, 1967; Omi & Winant, 2015; Wright, 2005). Campus culture and discourse often victimized Black male student-athletes as always incompetent, dangerous, lazy and troublesome matching national sentiment that impacted both personal views and actions but also more extensive social discourses in and around Black male athletes (Thangaraj, 2015). This video both taught and supported racialized ideas about the black male body as different.

Conclusion

As public spaces and the conflict over their interpretation come into racialized conflict in the United States over such things as statues and flags I have tried to demonstrate the ways uncontested yet similarly racist practices such as school songs and traditions are meaningful social experiences to examine. If attention is focused only on public contested spaces and monuments such as Confederate statues, what of seemingly less contentious spaces, events or traditions? Spaces and events where some are less aware of the racist underpinnings connected to

their participation in university tradition. Songs, as well as monuments, according to Upton (2015), “have stakeholders who claim a right to determine their content” (Upton, 2015, p. 24). I have used the sporting spaces of American collegiate sports to highlight the mechanisms by which seemingly leisure activities are multi-layered with frameworks of whiteness and anti-black sentiment. UT Austin's school song and various sporting traditions have as much reason to be debated about their place on campus as the Confederate statues that once adorned its campus grounds. However, given how time and distance have erased many of the overt racist groundings the steps to bringing about this kind of awareness requires something other than the threat of tiki torches.

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