The Educational Challenge of Unraveling the Fantasies of Ontological Security

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ABSTRACT

In this article we address the current context of intensified racialized state securitization by tracing its roots to the naturalized colonial architectures of everyday modern life—which we present through the metaphor of "the house modernity built." While contemporary crises are often perceived to derive from external threats to the house, we argue that in fact these crises are a product of the violent and unsustainable practices that are required in order to build and sustain the house itself. As the structural integrity of the house increasingly comes under strain, there are different possible responses, three of which we review here. We conclude by asking what kind of education might enable us to imagine and practice alternative formations of existence in a context where the house appears to be crumbling, and, indeed, has always been a fantasy.

In his introduction to this special series, Shirazi describes how "discourses of 'safety' and 'security' construct threatening populations and rationalize practices of racialized surveillance, policing, and pedagogy" (p. x). Many of these discourses circulated in the 2016 U.S. election campaigns, falsely identifying various non-White populations as threats to the physical safety and economic security of U.S. citizens. Though these discourses are employed across party lines, Donald Trump's promise to "Make America Great Again" in particular affirmed the anxieties of many White voters of nearly all income brackets that the American Dream was under attack, and pledged to restore it through intensified policing, tougher immigration policies, and more aggressive military action. If some found this promise reassuring, others read it as an effort to rationalize the expansion of state and state-sanctioned racial violence, and a not-so-subtle commitment to "Make America White (and Christian) Again"; and in response they offered competing phrases: "Make America Native Again," and "America Was Never Great."[1] Within the first week of his administration, Trump had already started issuing orders to expand the already sprawling U.S. "national security state" (Arshad-Ayaz & Naseem, 2017). Although the durability of these orders remains in question, we suggest that they are not new but rather intensify existing racialized discourses of safety and security, and the practices and appratuses that they rationalize as necessary.

In this article we deconstruct and historicize these practices and discourses of securitization, and trace their latest expansion to the perceived loss of the promised securities of modern existence.[2] To do so, we develop the concept of "fantasies of ontological security" and use the metaphor of a house—the house that modernity built—to illustrate the different dimensions of this fantasy (see Figure 1).[3] We describe this as a fantasy because the security and sovereignty that the house promises for its inhabitants is made possible through various violences (exploitation, expropriation, displacement, dispossession, ecological destruction), which are constitutive of the house itself but projected outward as if they were external to it. As a

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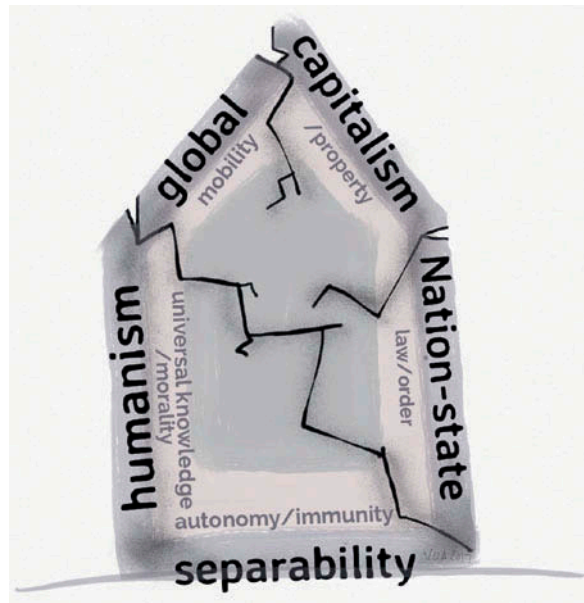
Figure 1. The house that modernity built.

result, although contemporary instabilities in the structure of the house are largely the result of its own making, for those invested in the promise of stability it appears that the threat is coming from outside of the house and must be therefore forcibly contained or eliminated according to the logics and material practices of what Arshad-Ayaz and Naseem (2017) describe as the "essentially militaristic and law-and-order framework" of the national security state (p. 11).

We begin the paper by addressing the current context of political, economic, and ecological uncertainty, insecurity, and instability in which narratives of White loss tend to dominate, even as the actual effects are disproportionately experienced by racialized and Indigenous populations. We then outline the metaphor of the "house" and its various constituent parts and costs, and consider how shifting conditions have led to structural instability, and various possible responses to it. We conclude by asking what kind of education might enable us to imagine and practice alternative formations of security in a context where the house appears to be crumbling, and indeed has always been a fantasy.

Uncertain times

It is always tricky to assign a temporality to the present. But if there is a certain perspective that can only be gained by peering into the past, there is also a need to provide an account of the present, even as that account is inevitably unstable and partial. Some have described the current moment as a time of late capitalism, late liberalism, or late modernity (descriptors of "postmodernity" having gone somewhat out of fashion). Such an appellation may suggest we are nearing the end of capitalism, or liberalism, or modernity, which at this point remains a speculative assessment; however, many people have theorized this possible end (e.g., Harvey, 2014; Moore, 2015; Streeck, 2014). Many, including some of the same people, describe the present as a moment of crisis, but crises are in many ways endemic to capitalism. Rather than signaling its end, crises have often served as opportunities to reorganize and reinvigorate capital. Others note that crisis is relative—what looks like a state of normalcy to some may in fact be a state of crisis for others, and the question of what qualifies as a crisis is highly racialized.[4]

With all of these caveats in place, there is nonetheless considerable agreement that the present moment is characterized by widespread political and economic instability and uncertainty about the future. Blackburn (2005) suggests that uncertainty is "characteristic of the experience of late modern subjects in the era of flexible accumulation and post-Fordist economics, and it needs to be understood within a broader set of anxieties over economic security, citizenship entitlements, and national sovereignty" (p. 587). We would add to this diagnosis the volatility of financial capitalism, the continued intensification of global climate change, and growing numbers of refugees fleeing affected environments, armed conflict, dispossession, economic ruin, and other forms of displacement (Sassen, 2016). Bauman (2012), following Gramsci, suggested that we are in the midst of an *interregnum*, a time of transition in which

> the extant legal frame of social order loses its grip and can hold no longer, whereas a new frame, made to the measure of newly emerged conditions responsible for making the old frame useless, is still at the designing stage, has not yet been fully assembled, or is not strong enough to be put in its place.

Within this general sense of instability and uncertainty, however, there remains significant disagreement about the exact nature and precise causes, the question of what is to be done, and associated "horizons of expectation" (Scott, 2004). This means, in other words, that even if there is agreement about the growing insufficiency of old frames of reference, there is significant disagreement about what the new frames should or could be (as well as questions about how they should be developed, implemented, etc.).

Indeed, there is more than one way to narrate the relationship between the past, present, and future, and the choice of any particular narration tends to be oriented by the narrator's political concerns (Scott, 2004). In the contemporary U.S. context, we can identify at least three primary narratives (no doubt there are many others): (a) the American Dream is being taken away from those who are rightfully entitled to it (in particular, White heterosexual men) by inferior populations, and it must be reclaimed at any cost ("Make America Great Again"); (b) we must preserve America's noblest ideals, and democratize the Dream ("The American Dream Is Big Enough for Everyone"[5]); and (c) existing problems are getting worse and affecting more people, but still disproportionately affect racialized and Indigenous populations who have forcibly borne the costs of the Dream from the very beginning ("America Was Never Great"). From the perspective of narrative A, the system is ideal and universally valuable, but its greatest benefits should be reserved for certain, superior people and protected from the encroachment of others; from the perspective of narrative B, the best parts of the system are under threat (from narrative A), and must be reformed to become more inclusive; from the perspective of narrative C, the system isn't broken, it was built this way.

Narrative A receives substantial media attention and wields disproportionate political power relative to the number of people who actually subscribe to its tenets. This narrative scapegoats racialized and non-American populations as the cause of White Americans' economic insecurity and reproduces myths about White physical unsafety: Undocumented immigrants are accused of stealing jobs *in* the United States; China is accused of stealing jobs *from* the United States; Muslims and Arabs are conflated, and both are assumed to be either invovled in or supportive of terrorist actions; Indigenous peoples are said to be impeding economic progress when they protect their lands from resource extraction; and affirmative action is attacked for purportedly enacting "anti-White racism" in the competition for jobs and spots in higher education. At the same time, there is growing fear that conflicts abroad will affect U.S. security, with little consideration of the role of the United States in creating those conflicts in the first place. Meanwhile, racialized narratives about threats to domestic "law and order" that originated in the 1960s have been recycled for decades to rationalize "racial discipline, carceral criminalization, and racist state violence" (Rodríguez, 2014, p. 35), against Black populations in particular.

Collectively, these racialized discourses of insecurity have also rationalized the continued expansion of the national security state, including the further militarization of the already militarized police forces around the country (Nopper & Kaba, 2014), and massive military budgets (nearly $600

billion in the United States in 2016). As Arshad-Ayaz and Naseem (2017) point out, "the [national security state] negotiates with the subjects of the erstwhile welfare state to bring them into its fold," even if this comes at the cost of some of their own privacy, freedoms, and services (p. 13). The nation-state also conditionally invites the participation of its Indigenous and racialized citizens in defense of its sovereignty, even as elsewhere it treats them with suspicion, as in the following statement from Trump's inauguration speech: "It's time to remember that old wisdom our soldiers will never forget, that whether we are black or brown or white, we all bleed the same red blood of patriots." While the national security state has been substantively expanded since September 11 and the subsequent launch of the "War on Terror," many of its characteristics are endemic to the structure of the modern nation-state itself. Before we elaborate these connections by describing "the house that modernity built," we outline the fantasies that undergird the idea that the state will ensure (White) U.S. citizens' security.

Fantasies of ontological security

As the promises of the state to provide for the social welfare of citizens, and the promises of capital to provide opportunities for social mobility and economic stability, appear increasingly out of reach, there is a growth in the perceived threat to the *fantasies of ontological security* that animate particularly the White U.S. citizen, and more broadly, the modern liberal subject. This concept has parallels with Mackey's (2014) "fantasies of possession" and "fantasies of entitlement." Mackey develops these terms in the context of Indigenous challenges to settlers' land ownership claims in colonial contexts, which destabilize the "sense of certainty" that has developed through processes of settlement:

> This certainty emerges from a set of stories that are grounded in delusions of entitlement. . . . They are socially embedded, unconscious expectations of how the world will work to reaffirm social locations, perceptions, and benefits of privilege that have been legitimated through repeated experiences across lifetimes and generations. Even though they are "fantasies," they have powerful effects in the world. (p. 242)

Modern fantasies of ontological security depend on a series of presumed entitlements to the false promises of: autonomy, immunity, and hierarchy (promised via separability), social mobility and property accumulation (promised via global capitalism), law and order (promised via the nation-state), universal knowledge and morality (promised via Enlightenment humanism), and others. The stories that animate these "delusions of entitlement" materialize in social institutions that are structurally organized to protect White people, particularly White men, from various violences that are endemic to the existing social system but which are framed as external to it (and indeed, as a threat to it). Like a safety blanket whose fabric consists of threads of power and entitlement, Whiteness hides the conditions of its own production and coddles those who seek safety within it. Those wrapped in the blanket of Whiteness develop little resilience and a strong expectation of control and certainty that is fragile and easily shaken (DiAngelo, 2011).

Mackey (2014) suggests we should not be surprised that when perceived entitlements and promised futures are not fulfilled, people "feel endangered, uncertain, and angry," while at the same time, "to say that such feelings are not surprising is not to condone them" (p. 239). Indeed, without condoning them, there is a need to further trace these responses, and the source of the perceived entitlements that underlie them. The need to do so is underscored by the fact that these responses often result in aggression or frustration directed at racialized or foreign populations who are deemed to be, in their very existence, a threat to White security (Judge, 2017). Trump's appeal was largely premised on his promise to reclaim "lost ground" taken by these groups, as was summarized in his inauguration speech: "We will bring back our jobs. We will bring back our borders. We will bring back our wealth. And we will bring back our dreams." Yet, responses to White fragility cannot be premised on appeasing that fragility, as this would only further naturalize White entitlements and validate narratives of White victimhood. In order to consider how educators

might attend to these responses without condoning them, we first trace the source of the fantasies of ontological security that undergird them.

The house that modernity built

In this section we outline how the architectures of modern existence are premised on promises of ontological security that are, at their core, racialized, harmful, and unsustainable. We suggest that the house that modernity built sits on a foundation of separability, which enables the production of categories and modes of valuation and measurement that divide, separate, and create the world as we know it inside the house, thereby foreclosing other possibilities (Silva, 2014). The structure of the house is further formed by the load-bearing walls of Enlightenment humanism and the nation-state, and a roof of global capital, with decorative walls that vary depending on the specificities of time and place. In offering this metaphor, we recognize that different people may place these elements in a different order (e.g., placing global capital as the foundation and the nation-state as the roof), but regardless of the precise makeup of the house, it assures those within it (especially those on its upper floors) security, safety, and certainty. However, the house is actually quite precarious, given that its externalized costs always threaten to undermine its structural integrity. This is not because what is external to the house is itself violent, but rather because violence is the condition of possibility for the house itself: claiming ownership of land, cordoning off the rest of the world, and engaging in highly toxic methods of resource extraction and social (re)production to build and maintain it. All of these activities that built and keep the house running have long been poisonous to those outside of it or in the unmaintained parts of its own interior, but now those poisons are starting to seep back into the walls and foundations of the house and its main floors, leading to a variety of different responses. Before we consider those responses, we consider the different elements of the house in more detail.

The foundation of separability

The organizing architectural principle of the house is "separability" and the modern categories that it institutes. Beyond categorization, different entities are put into hierarchical relation to each other—that is, they are assigned unequal values within the house's organizing grid of knowledge and existence (Silva, 2014). It is this grid that provides the basic tools for structuring the rest of the house, and the world outside of it, which it treats as a source of raw materials and labor for its own upkeep, instituting and reproducing further hierarchical relations in the organization of political, economic, and social life. In particular, the organizing colonial grid separates humans from one another, ranking them into racial and civilizational hierarchies, which then justifies expropriating the land atop which the house sits from its previous inhabitants, forcing certain people to build and maintain the house for those inside of it (especially those on its upper floors) for little or no pay, and building walls to keep unwanted people out. The house also separates humans from the land by treating land as an object that can be accumulated as property and stripped of its resources for utilitarian purposes—pouring concrete to "protect" the house from the earth below it. These separations are a product of the colonial "cuts" that created the enabling conditions and possibilities for the house to stand: the looting and subjugation of the world that surrounds and sits under it to serve its own ends.

The foundation was poured in the context of European colonialism and slavery, and the owners of the house are White, because within the grid of unequal value that they instituted, they alone can master and wield the (supposedly universal) knowledge needed to manage the house. This ability also translates into the unbridled authority to instrumentalize other humans and other-than-human beings into one's service, to forcibly contain their movement (through militarized borders, incarceration, etc.), or to simply eliminate them. While we develop this further in the other sections, the irony here is that the ongoing extractive dependence on external resources to build and keep the house running inside gives the lie to the supposed separation between them, and to the immunity of its owners from their entanglement with the world they falsely deem "outside." In fact, these efforts

of containment are always incomplete, and the perceived threat posed by this impossibility only further rationalizes the need for separation ensured by violence. In other words, this denial of entanglement works at two different levels. First, it seeks to externalize the violence of extraction, dispossession, and destitution that are necessary for the upkeep of the house. Second, it creates the illusion that the only way to remedy this violence is to either expand the house or further fortify itself against "external" threats.

The wall of enlightenment humanism

In addition to its cement foundation, the house requires various additional supports, including the wall of the European humanism that emerged in the Renaissance and fully formed in the Enlightenment. This humanism presumes a linear and universal path of human progress that positions European/White people (particularly men) at its head, while all others are deemed to have a lower "degree of mental (moral and intellectual) 'development'" (Silva, 2007, p. 123). The "head" of humanity (i.e., the house owner) is believed to be a master of universal reason (who deploys the foundation's timeless categories, measurements, and classifications to predict and control the world), and a sovereign self-determined individual (who is separate from and not affected by external conditions or beings, except for those constraints that are agreed upon through the social contract that produces the wall of the nation-state). When the wall of the nation-state takes the form of a popular democracy, the wall of humanism is called upon for its "universal reason" as a means to achieve popular consensus that can transcend supposedly false particularisms. Within this framework, difference is suppressed and certain ways of knowing, being, and relating remain illegible and illegitimate, because they fall outside of humanist norms (for instance, by affirming the affectability and entanglement of all subjects, honoring human and other-than-human interdependence, recognizing the partiality of all human categories). These other possibilities, which persist both within and outside of the house's walls despite efforts to contain or extinguish them, challenge the house owner's claims to epistemic certainty and to self-determination by revealing that he is in fact just as affectable and entangled as all other beings, and that the universe does not conform to his categories (Silva, 2014). It is precisely for this reason that these other possibilities are perceived as threatening.

The wall of the nation-state

The wall of the modern nation-state is said to be built out of a social contract in which human individuals freely and rationally decide to cede certain freedoms for the promise that the state will secure and protect their life, liberty, and property (Mills, 2015). In other words, those in the house consented to live by house rules in exchange for the promise of protection. The social contract is what granted the authority for the state's law-instituting violence (the appropriation of resources, land, and labor to build the house), as well its law-preserving violence through the police and the military (defending the house from threats to its structural integrity). However, in the U.S. nation-state, the law-instituting violence of Black enslavement and Indigenous colonization were not only *not* consented to by the affected populations, they were subjected to it. Yet these histories are largely positioned as external to the "proper" formation of the nation-state through an exceptionalist narrative that inverts the source of violence by painting the country as a bastion of freedom that is always moving toward greater perfection and is constantly under threat from "unfree" peoples— Black and Indigenous peoples in particular (Byrd, 2011; Lloyd & Wolfe, 2016). This exceptionalism further affirms the state's right to make war to protect that freedom and its territorial sovereignty, both domestically (Manifest Destiny, "law-and-order" policing, etc.) and abroad. Thus, the nation-state weaponizes itself against the very threats that it has created: having deemed certain peoples external to the law (and outside of Eurosupremacist humanity), the very existence of those populations is understood as a perpetual, violent challenge to the stability of the nation-state, which then rationalizes the use of violence against them. State violence is framed as self-defense (Harney &

Moten, 2013; Silva, 2016): for example, "We have to keep them out of our house to stay safe"; "We have to attack their house before they have the chance to attack ours"; "We have to maintain order inside our own house."

The roof of global capital

The house that modernity built would be incomplete without the roof of global capital, which in many ways holds the house together and keeps it running. Capitalism keeps resources flowing to and from the house, and makes the living quarters more comfortable. It seems fair to many people inside the house that they are rewarded with a roof over their heads; employing a merit-based lens, they see their own hard work and effort as what enables the roof, and the house more generally, to keep standing and running smoothly. What is made invisible from inside the house is the work that those who live outside of it, or in tight quarters in the basement, are forced to put into its upkeep. Instead, it is assumed that those people simply haven't worked hard enough to earn a spot in the house, or a bigger room within it—thus naturalizing their exploitation and expropriation. The foundation of separability and the wall of Eurosupremacist humanism facilitate disavowal of responsibility for subjugation by supporting the fantasy that racialized and otherwise "deficient" categories of people are impoverished because they lack the moral and mental capacity of "proper" modern subjects (Silva, 2007; Wynter, 2003).

Also invisibilized are the countless outside resources that are required in order to keep the roof steady, which not only prevents other people from using those resources, but which are often processed in ways that create harmful toxins where others live. To many who only see the roof from the inside, it appears indispensable, and indeed without an alternative system of shelter to keep the rain and wind out, and keep the warmth in, they are not entirely wrong. However, the roof no longer offers as much shelter as it used to, and is starting to cave in. In the U.S. context, the middle class is shrinking, and wages have flat-lined. The runoff toxins that were once fairly successfully externalized and kept from view have started to creep into the house and corrode not just the roof but other elements as well. To those inside the house and invested in its continuation, this appears as a betrayal of the promise that the market will reward hard work—that is, the roof has failed to keep the weather and pollution out. Rather than trace these issues to their actual source (the structure of the roof itself), other entities are saddled with the blame, in particular those outside the house, when in fact it is they who are likely to suffer most.

The crumbling house

In the contemporary context we can see that the house no longer looks as sturdy as it once did for those invested in its promised securities. The roof starts to leak and the moisture that comes in leads to mold growth on the walls, which start to rot. Although the different elements of the house are interdependent, often they do not all require repairs at once. It may therefore appear that we can continue living in it forever, patching up the house as issues arise, perhaps replacing a roof or repouring the foundation into the same shape but with fresh concrete. This is the fantasy of the house and its false promise of enduring ontological security. Often when one part of the house starts to weaken, we rely on the remaining elements to provide extra support—for instance, when the promises of shared public reason appear to wobble (the wall of humanism), we depend on the authority of the law to uphold our social relations (the wall of the nation-state). When the wall of the nation-state fails to provide the services it once promised, we look up the roof of global capital to get them elsewhere. What we do not see is the ways in which these constituent parts of the house are all interconnected, and thus, a compromise in the structure of one can dramatically affect the others. In short, the house will not save us from the harms that the house itself has instituted and reproduced.

Although the structure that houses modern existence presents itself as the only viable possibility for housing our existence and organizing our relationships, it is ultimately unsustainable and

and act outside of them—particularly if we are still oriented by the fantasies of individual autonomy and immunity (separability), universal knowledge and morality (humanism), law and order (nation-state), and mobility and property (global capital). If we decide to build a new house driven by the same desires and seeking the same promises, we may end up making the same old house. This does not mean that creating alternatives is not a worthwhile project, but it does mean that there are many lessons to be learned from the mistakes of the old house so that we do not continue to repeat them. In the process of building something new, we will also likely make new mistakes, and have as many failures. This may be a necessary part of learning how to think, be, and relate otherwise, after spending a long time within the four walls of the house. We may need to think about alternatives in alternative ways: not as building predetermined solutions, but as collective, messy, ongoing experiments toward the creation of something undefined. While we are engaged in this process, we will likely still need to make use of and repurpose the resources hoarded in the old house while we create something new, especially as part of a commitment to reduce immediate harm.

Many of us would also need to unlearn our perceived entitlements, and learn how to remember that we are more than just subjects of the house. We would need to reckon with the inadequacy of inherited frameworks and categories, and the violence that is required to sustain an existence premised on separation, superiority, and state-based sovereignty. We would need to commit to cleaning up the mess that is left in the wake of the old house, and to building something else without a blueprint and without guarantees—that is, without the same securities promised by the old house. Affirming our responsibility to other beings and our entanglement with everything cannot bring us to a different place if we remain wedded to the promises that have led us to keep reproducing the same, harmful house over and over again. As part of this process, there is much to learn from those who have intimately known the underside of the old house, and who have not only refused to be defined or contained by it, but who have also sustained, nurtured, and created alternative economies, knowledges, relationships, and forms of sociality in spite of it. There are risks involved in this kind of learning, too; in particular, the tendency to selectively and self-servingly appropriate difference as a way to feed old desires. Doing so would be a clear indication of failing to come to terms with the necessity of loss, instead seeking to transcend the violences of racial capitalism, state violence, and possessive individualism without giving anything up (Jefferess, 2012).

Describing the imperative to "give up the fantasy of discrete and individual selves" in order to "claim" our condition of entanglement, which he describes as the condition of being "more and less than one," Moten (2014) has said:

> [I]t's complicated to claim it because in order to claim this thing, there's something really powerful and important that . . . one would have to give up, and that is a normative conception of subjecthood and citizenship. Or another way to put it is: you'd probably have to give up the idea of home. There are a whole range of modes of security that you would be required to relinquish in order to make this claim. And that's what makes it hard. . . . I'm not talking about relinquishing a self that you have, I'm talking about relinquishing a fantasy of self, a fantasy of fullness. It's not losing something that you have, it's disavowing or relinquishing the desire for that thing.

So what? now what?

To conclude, we offer a few thoughts on the role of schooling in the context of a crumbling house, including how the limits of the house itself appear to circumscribe the available possibilities within (mainstream) educational institutions (see also Andreotti, Stein, Ahenakew, & Hunt, 2015. Traditionally, schooling has been framed in ways that overlap with narratives A and B, both of which are grounded upon the same supporting walls and foundations (though with different emphases). As educational systems are tasked to reproduce dominant social structures and hierarchies in both narratives, it is not only extremely important, but also extremely challenging and professionally hazardous for educators in schools to argue for and develop pedagogies that would aim to disrupt the foundations and the supporting walls of the house—that is, narrative C. There is an educational imperative, as Arshad-Ayaz and Naseem (2017) suggest, to host "transformative and

inclusive invited spaces" where difficult conversations can occur (p. 8). However, would mainstream educational institutions (especially under the current national security state) actually allow for the creation of spaces where educators are tasked with supporting disinvestment from existing social structures and structures of the individualized self that *are* the house we live in? We raise this question in reference to the historic experience of many subjugated populations that have attempted to challenge the supporting structure of the house, and whose attempts were almost invariably met with violence, expropriation, and attempted eradication.

Despite these challenges, it is both possible and necessary to develop critical analyses and pedagogical tools that make visible the multiple forms of violence inherent to the house that modernity built—that is, the true cost of its false promises. How educators actually do this work will depend on their own positionalities and capabilities, and what is possible within their own context. This may, for example, entail a pedagogy that reframes the existing politics of individual entitlement toward a politics of mutual obligation so that we might learn to live together differently beyond the false protection provided by the house. This politics of obligation would entail at least three tasks: attend to the violence produced by the house and our complicities with it; make evident the need to reconfigure relationships in ways that specifically and ethically attend to those who have paid the highest price for the house already; and identify and interrupt the desire for the illusory securities provided by the house, so as to potentially relinquish it and dissipate the violence that is required to support that harmful illusion, perhaps by digging an underground tunnel that cracks the foundation of separability so as to affirm our sense of affectability and entanglement. This latter task is perhaps one of the most challenging educational tasks of our time. How can we create educational spaces that challenge fantasies of ontological security? There is no one way to do this work, and no way to do it alone, but in the context of a crumbling house it is the work that needs to be done.

Notes

1. These phrases were coined by Vanessa Bowen and Krystal Lake, respectively.
2. We focus on the United States in this paper, but note that the recent amplification of these discourses and practices of securitization, and accompanying political shifts, are not limited to the U.S. context.
3. We recognize that others have used the house as a metaphor, in particular Lorde (1983) and in the Marxist concept of "base-superstructure," both of which could be fruitfully put into conversation with our paper.
4. For instance, the murders of unarmed Black people by police, and the disappearance and murder of Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit people are ongoing and yet rarely spark an ethical crisis for the rest of the population that calls the legitimacy of the state or social order into question (Silva, 2016).
5. A sign with this slogan was seen by one of the authors at a Women's March on January 21, 2017; it comes from Hillary Clinton's postelection concession speech.

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Vanessa de Oliveira Andreotti, PhD, is a Canada Research Chair in Race, Inequalities and Global Change at the University of British Columbia, Canada. Her research examines historical and systemic patterns of reproduction of inequalities and how these limit or enable possibilities for collective existence and global change.

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