Feeling Our Way:
Emotions and the Politics of Global Citizenship in Study Abroad Programming

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Abstract:

The terms 'solidarity' and 'ethical travel' were used to frame a one-week study abroad program to Guatemala. The students involved came from a Canadian university and were primed through pre-trip meetings and program materials to expect their trip to produce good feelings of connection and support. However, many of the students experienced bad feelings that were variously described as frustration, disappointment, shame, and guilt. In this paper we take the 'bad feelings' of this trip seriously to understand the relationship between this study abroad program and the (re)production of privilege. Based on interviews with student participants, we identify a trio of emotional responses –shame/guilt, frustration/anger, and critical empathy– that highlight the variability of student responses and their political implications. We argue that this critical analysis of emotional politics is an underutilized tool for examining how study abroad programs can simultaneously (re)produce and challenge privilege.

Introduction

Promotional materials used the terms 'solidarity' and 'ethical travel' to frame a one-week study abroad program to Guatemala focused on learning about the politics of the coffee economy. The students involved came from a mid-sized university near Toronto and were primed through pre-trip meetings and program materials to expect a trip focused on solidarity to make them 'global citizens' and to produce good feelings of connection and support. However, many of the students experienced bad feelings that were variously described as frustration, disappointment, shame, and guilt. In this article, we take the 'bad feelings' of this trip seriously to argue that privilege is (re)produced through multiple emotional processes during study abroad programs that highlight the inequality of the social contexts in which they are designed and implemented.

To realize this analysis, we open this article with a discussion of the politics of global citizenship in higher education. This provides a context for our analysis of the way the program was framed for students and the types of expectations that were established. After a short discussion of our methods, we turn to the heart of our analysis. Based on student interviews, we identify three different emotional processes that were common amongst the students: shame/guilt; frustration/anger; and critical empathy. We draw on critical theories of emotions to situate these processes in larger social contexts to avoid the individualization of the emotional experience. We

conclude with a discussion of how critical analyses of emotions can inform the way study abroad programs are framed and evaluated.

Global Citizenship and the Politics of Ethical Travel

The term 'global citizenship' is a relatively new concept, entering into educational parlance in the late 1990's as an attempt to explicitly include social justice issues in global education programs and curricula (Davies 2006). Todd (2015) promotes the term by arguing that the concept indicates a focus on issues of human rights and democracy in an era of globalization, but others critique the concept for being vague (Snider et al. 2013) as well as for leaving unquestioned the very inequalities that allow differential access to global citizenship programs (Andreotti 2014) and for perpetuating neoliberal agendas through the individualization of responsibility and the focus on global citizenship as a marketable skill (Smith & Laurie 2011). Despite these critiques, the rhetoric of global citizenship has been adopted by many universities as a way of not only selling their study abroad programs, but also of selling their universities (Anderson et al. 2006; Snider et al. 2013). Students are informed that in a globalized economy being culturally aware and sensitive is a marketable asset and therefore the strength of a university's study abroad program is promoted as an educational advantage for the student (Andreotti 2014; Mitchell 2003). In the program studied for this article, university staff members exemplified this trend by providing students with an article pre-departure that discussed the tendency amongst employers to prefer students with study abroad experiences. These trends in higher education programming for global citizenship provide support for the critiques of global citizenship mentioned above, particularly the prioritization of neoliberal agendas over social justice initiatives.

That global citizenship emerged in conjunction with discourses and processes of globalization, as mentioned above, begs a more considered engagement with the latter concept. Globalization has been theorized in many distinct and varied ways, but for the purposes of this article, we are situating our understanding of globalization at the intersection of what is commonly referred to as (little-g) globalization and (big-G) Globalization. The first concept, globalization, refers to the compounding economic, political, legal, cultural, and ecological effects of intensifying global interconnections. In contrast, Globalization is used as a code-word in political speech that indicates a particular set of economic and political policies that support pro-market neoliberal agendas (see Sparke 2013 for further discussion). While processes of globalization can be used to promote transnational solidarity focused on social justice, Globalization is focused on promoting capitalistic expansion that is often at odds with such projects of transnational solidarity. Which definition of g/Globalization is being invoked in calls for global citizenship, therefore, has significant implications for the political orientation of a study abroad program claiming to facilitate global citizenship for the student participants.

On a related note, we are particularly attentive to how the idea of 'the global' is produced in relation to global citizenship. Critical and feminist geographic theory has led us to understand scale, and particularly the distinction between the global and the local, as social constructs that are used to perpetuate particular agendas (Marston 2000; Herod & Wright 2002; Massey 2002). Rather than viewing the global as something 'out there', we understand it as constructed in and through the multiple and intersecting locals that make up our world (Massey 2006). Given this understanding of the global, the idea of 'global citizenship' becomes problematic when it is not clear which definition

of g/Globalization is being invoked and when the localities involved become abstracted into representations of the global.

Andreotti et al. (2010) illuminate the implications of such an abstraction in their discussion of a study abroad program at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Canada. They argue that study abroad programs that do not effectively engage with the politics of the home institution perpetuate the very kinds of social inequalities they purport to 'help' by visiting the Global South. The fact that the UBC study abroad program in question did not engage with the implications of UBC existing on unceded Coast Salish territory, for instance, suggests that such study abroad programs function to conceal the local Canadian politics of land rights by focusing on 'benevolent' interventions in distant locales rather than politicizing the connections between systems of dispossession and inequality. This example demonstrates Abdi et al.'s (2015) claim that "anything that is classified as global, especially when it is uni-theoretically conceived and produced, can too easily be coopted into serving neo-colonial, neo-imperial or even neo-patriarchy systems that deliberately globalize neoliberal ideologies which de-legitimate the needs and aspirations of marginalized populations" (p.3).

What happens, however, when attempts at producing global citizenship are explicitly focused on ethical travel and solidarity? Mahrouse (2011) provides key insights to this question in her analysis of what she refers to as 'socially responsible tourism' (which includes study abroad programs focused on global citizenship). Drawing upon Bramwell, et al. (2008), Mahrouse (2011) argues that the common factor amongst the variety of touristic experiences that fall into the category of 'socially responsible tourism' is their commitment to "the idea that tourism-related actors can develop a sense of ethical and moral responsibility that has resonance beyond self-interest, and that there is at least a possibility that this could change behaviours and contribute to more sustainable development" (p.273). The problem with this, however, is that the uneven geographies of socially responsible tourism mirror the uneven geographies of Globalization writ large due to the uneven access to touristic mobility experienced by individuals and groups around the world. The productions of class, gender, nationality, and race are implicated in touristic economies that shape which bodies have access to touristic activities and which are presumed to work in the industry or serve as cultural context. The spatiality of these processes have been theorized by feminist scholars who demonstrate how processes of racialization (and whiteness in particular) are (re)produced through political economic agendas that shape the relationships between places through global power relations (Kobayashi & Peake, 2000; McKittrick & Woods, 2007).

Engaging with ethical, socially responsible tourism is intended to combat the unequal power relations of the mainstream tourism industry. It sells itself as self-aware of its privilege (Mahrouse 2011), but as Roman (1997), Heron (2004) and Ahmed (2004c) have argued, proclamations of awareness of privilege should be attended to with caution as they can reconstitute power imbalances. As Heron (2004) states, these declarations reify the systems that support racial privilege by leaving those who name it "in a place of double comfort: the comfort of demonstrating that one is critically aware, and the comfort of not needing to act to undo privilege" (p.344). Acknowledging one's privilege, therefore, is expected to lead to feelings of comfort due to the performance of one's social awareness. Bad feelings associated with socially responsible tourism have been shown to emerge when this comfort is challenged. As Cravatte & Chabloz (2008) argue, people often expressed

disappointment or dissatisfaction with socially responsible tours when the asymmetrical nature of their relation to locals was made explicit (i.e. when they realized they were perceived as consumers rather than allies by the locals) or when they felt they were misled by the tour operators because the experience was not 'authentic' enough. In our research, we found both of these trends emerging, although the first was by far the more common.

In her study of white Northerners who participated in socially responsible tourism, Mahrouse (2011) cautions that "so-called 'socially responsible' touristic practices can reinstate the very power relations they seek to address" as they cater to the desires of white Northerners that "are often driven by a desire for moral comfort and [the desire to] reinforce positions of innocence" (p.386). While our population of predominately racialized university students complicates this narrative of white innocence, it does not erase it. As Mohanty (2003) suggests, the idea of 'Westerner' or 'Northerner' is a racialized relational positioning that is not necessarily tied to specific geographic genealogies. Socially responsible tourism can, therefore, contribute to the production of tourists as 'Westerners' or 'Northerners' regardless of their racial or ethnic heritage through its embeddedness in global economic and political relations.

Of particular relevance to our argument is Mahrouse's (2011) claim that this racialized process of subject-making is happening on short-term tourist experiences which means that "through 'socially responsible' tourism alternatives, innocence can be more readily attained than ever" (p.387). Our project in this article is to use emotions as a lens into the ways in which privilege and inequality are (re)produced through a particular approach to 'the global' through socially responsible tourism – one that promises solidarity and ethical travel during a one week trip for undergraduate students to Guatemala.

In this article, we examine the emotional reactions and negotiations of students to make explicit the (re)production of privilege facilitated through this program as well as the potential for the production of alternative emotional landscapes of connection. In presenting our analysis, we do not suggest we are separate from the processes and experiences being studied. We both participated in the program, Charlene Waddell as a student and Nicole Laliberté as a faculty advisor. We spoke often with each other and with other participants about the problems, paradoxes, and possibilities of the program before, during, and after the trip. The empirical data for this article comes from interviews conducted after students returned to Canada, but the motivation for this analysis developed in relation to our attempts to understand our own emotional reactions. We are, therefore, directly implicated in the very social relations and processes we are examining.

Program Description

On the university's website, co-curricular study abroad programs are introduced by suggesting students will have the opportunity to "travel with intention, engage with communities around the world and have a positive impact on the places [they] visit." This rhetoric sets the expectation that university-sponsored international experiences will be purposeful and "positive". The university's website describes co-curricular study abroad programs as "socially conscious travel" that can "better prepare you to solve local and global challenges." The website claims students "will expand [their] global mindset" and "develop an understanding of community development and social change". Each trip is titled suggesting the theme of that trip. For the upcoming 2017/2018 school year trips

are listed as follows: "Peru: Health Care and Traditional Medicine", "Guatemala: Fair Trade and Social Justice", and "Thailand: Alternative Tourism".

The 2015 trip to Guatemala being examined in this article was the flagship program for this growing global initiative at the university. According to the Student Affairs website, this co-curricular trip was "designed to enhance students' experiences with community engagement, leadership, social change and community development." The program was designed and led by an educational tourism company whose promotional materials for the one-week trip suggested that students would have the opportunity to "backpack with a purpose" and be inspired to become "globally active, socially conscious, backpacktivists."

Highlighting the program's focus on the coffee economy, promotional materials suggested students would be "following the coffee bean from seed to shelf, and brewing some social justice with our partners." The program brochure stated the trip would be "a chance to immerse yourself in a new culture by working alongside our local partners and by learning from them." Expectations of what the relationship with these local partners would be was established early; the brochure enthusiastically proclaimed that "Our partners aren't stops on a tour bus. They are our friends! You'll get to meet and speak with them personally. Together we will share stories, break bread, and envision a better shared existence." While the brochure spoke of lofty goals that held the potential to be emotionally challenging such as "transformative educational experiences" and "creating a new generation of travelers who are socially, environmentally, and politically aware of their impact on this world," it was also peppered with upbeat claims such as "the best week of your life is about to begin" and "It's going to be outrageously fun. It's Guatemala. How could it not be?"

The program brochure was not the only source of information about expectations available to students. Students were invited to participate in two pre-departure lunch-and-learn sessions in which Nicole worked with staff from Student Affairs to provide some framing information. The first meeting was focused on the politics of international educational trips and the contradictions of privilege in such settings; the second meeting was focused on providing some historical context. In addition, the organizing tourism company hosted a full 'experiential' day. In this local experience students learned about the culture of coffee consumption in Toronto, the politics of Fair Trade from an academic expert, and spoke with members of the Guatemalan diaspora in Toronto. Despite the emotional weight of some of these conversations, efforts were made to make the trip sound fun and lighthearted.

In May 2015, fourteen students met at the airport accompanied by two staff members and one faculty member to travel to Guatemala for eight days, both authors included. Our first three nights were spent in a hostel with private and public transportation throughout the city of Antigua, and Guatemala City. By picking and roasting coffee ourselves with a "sustainable agricultural cooperative" we learned about "the coffee chain from seed to shelf". We then travelled to the city of Xela by private shuttle and stayed in a hostel for two nights continuing to learn about coffee, as well as an Indigenous Mayan cultural approach to the coffee industry. Our next two nights were spent with former civil war combatants on their coffee cooperative in rural Santa Anita. Our stay in this village was termed a 'homestay' experience as students were assigned and divided into five homes where the woman of the house, referred to throughout our trip as the 'host-mother',

prepared, cooked, and served all meals to trip participants often during shared meals with the entire family. The final two nights were in Lago Atitlán in a more lavish and tourist-oriented hostel. On the last evening we were encouraged to reflect on solidarity and ethical travel at a bonfire on the educational tourism company's land in Guatemala.

Points of Departure: Emotions, Motivations, and Positionality

At one point during this experiential day, uncomfortable with the display of privilege our ability to travel to Guatemala represented, Charlene asked one of the organizers, "What is the benefit to the people in Guatemala that we are visiting with them?" From the promotional materials and commentary, it had become increasingly clear to her what the benefits of the trip were to the students: from co-curricular credit for attending the trip, to education on coffee from farm to grocery store shelf, to increased potential of being hired with this experience on a resumé, to the personal reward of social clout by stating or displaying (via social media) global travel to peers. She was unclear, however, where the reciprocity of the relationship was. She was hesitant to take the claims of ethical travel at face value. The program leader's response was slightly evasive; they told her to ask their Guatemalan hosts that question. She initially took this response as an indication of the program's commitment to creating relationships with their partners in Guatemala – of not wanting to speak for them. It helped calm her concerns before going on the trip.

However, when Charlene was in Guatemala, asking the question and the responses it generated made her uncomfortable. The first person she asked about how they perceived her presence was her host-mother whose home she was staying in for two days. Through a translator, Charlene was told her host's response was that she loved to have them there and that she was very happy they were with her. She said that she loved having different people stay in her home and to talk with them made her happy. While asking this question seemed appropriate in the moment even to Charlene, she quickly came to realize that expecting an answer that would get her closer to the truth of her host-mother's experience was flawed because of the power differentials that existed in this scenario. Charlene wrote the following notes about this experience:

> As a white-skinned, postsecondary-educated, non-Spanish speaking, fluent English speaking guest in her home, who has paid to be there, and is asking in front of three other women in the same position including one who is responsible for bringing us to her home (as a representative from the tourism company who speaks Spanish and is translating) places our house-mother at a unique intersection. She may feel pressure to appear kind, congenial, and polite as she is hosting people who she will be in close proximity to for the next day. Or she may express joy to encourage our comfort and perhaps our return. When words like 'ethical' travel are used to frame our trip, it calls into question the exploitive nature of homestay practices. Engaging in hosting because you want to versus opening up your intimate space because you need to for financial reasons is quite different, yet the line between the two become quite blurred in these situations. The power dynamics of money are rippled through the interactions many of us had during our homestays.

Through her personal reflections on this particular encounter, Charlene sets up the relevance of our approach to analyzing this trip. The realization that expressions of emotions are tied to economic, political and social constraints and expectations begets an analysis that takes seriously how emotions

are used to both 'sell' the program as well as the emotional negotiations of students in shaping what they took away from the experience.

Despite feelings of discomfort, Charlene continued to ask her original question of how the trip benefited the people we met in Guatemala throughout the remainder of the trip. At one point, she asked an ex-combatant coffee farmer this question. He explained that he wanted us to go back to Canada and share his stories. To share the story of the land of Santa Anita, Guatemala, where a self-sustaining coffee farm community lives after swapping their guns for coffee in the fight for social justice. To share the story of how, after the peace treaty with the army was signed in 1997, this group of Indigenous Mayan people gathered and bought a parcel of land, land which they are still paying off. To share the story of how they built their community over years from the ground up, including homes, a coffee processing plant, and a school for children that is supportive of their Mayan heritage. This story was the story they wanted shared.

Charlene accepted this charge, coming back to Canada ready to share stories. The following excerpt is her reflections on this process:

> When I came home I did not know how to share their stories. To whom in Canada, in Toronto, were these stories best shared so that I could gage my actions as solidaristic? I spoke to my immediate circles but the story fell flat in my middle-class suburban community. My audience appeared just as bewildered as I felt. In which context would I be acting in solidarity? As a non-coffee drinker, buying direct-trade coffee or asking for it from local coffee vendors would be inauthentic. I felt frustrated and angry that we were promised a trip that was based on solidarity and yet I did not feel solidaristic, nor did I understand how to be in what felt like new space for the story the Guatemalans I had met expressed desire for me to share. I was empathetic to the stories but I could not figure out how 'feeling' was beneficial to either party.

Charlene is still looking for ways to share the story of Santa Anita and other communities we visited in Guatemala during our brief trip. She understands this as part of her responsibility to the people she met, but she also feels strongly that her university needs to take responsibility for their role in perpetuating inequality by promoting travel abroad opportunities that only superficially engage with 'ethical travel' and 'solidarity.' This paper and the research associated with it are another important aspect of how she is defining solidarity on her own terms – trying to understand how 'feeling' is part of the politics of educational tourism.

Emotional Narratives: Politics and Power

Our analysis of the emotions produced in and through this study abroad program draws heavily upon Sara Ahmed's work on the cultural politics of emotion (2004a; 2004b; 2005) and work inspired by Ahmed in which emotions are conceptualized as embodied "circuits through which power is felt, imagined, mediated, negotiated and/or contested" (Pedwell 2014, p.34). We are critical of individualized narratives of emotion because such individualization can mask how emotions "can be expressions of power, appropriations of others' experience, and falsely oversimplified understandings of social and cultural relationships" (Jurecic 2011, p.11). We are motivated by the political realities of the unequal social landscapes that allow certain emotions to more readily 'stick' to certain bodies (bodies marked by race, class, gender, sexuality, and other forms of difference)

than other bodies, a process of emotional 'stickiness' that is shaped by histories of political, cultural, and economic contact (Ahmed 2004b). Our choice to focus on emotions in relation to an international educational program is, therefore, a political one. Paralleling Laliberté & Schurr's (2016) discussion of emotions in research, we suggest that "to attend to emotions [within study abroad programs] is to attend to the ever-shifting social landscapes in which we and the knowledge we produce is embedded" (p.74).

Eliciting Emotional Narratives: Methods

We draw upon Charlene's journal and reflections to frame this article, but the majority of the empirical data comes from interviews conducted by Charlene with Nicole's supervision. The trip occurred in May 2015 and interviews were conducted during the subsequent summer – from June to August. Of the original fifteen students, eight were available during the summer months and participated in the semi-structured interviews for this study. These eight were generally representative of the larger group in that they were predominately female-identified (6 of 8) and from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and racial identities (5 of the 8 were from racialized minority groups). None had ever been to Guatemala before and none spoke Spanish (although in the full group, there was one student who spoke Spanish).

The research upon which this article is based draws upon participant responses to the following three questions. "What stands out for you? (What did you take away from this trip?)"; "What did you find as your challenge or personal struggle on the trip?" and "Where does this leave you moving forward?" The desired goal was to discover without explicitly asking, "How did the trip feel?" for the first two questions, and "Did the trip create a desire for action?" for the third. While we did not explicitly ask about emotions, these questions successfully elicited emotional reactions which we then probed in more depth.

Despite Charlene's attempts to create a comfortable atmosphere during interviews and her ability to foster comprehensive feedback from her fellow participants, it would be hypocritical of us to assume that we were able to eliminate any power relations that would influence student experiences of the emotional dynamics of the interview. The fact that this research was done on campus and under Nicole's supervision reinforced an educational hierarchy; a hierarchy that had not invited students to participate critically with trip design or implementation. This may have inhibited some students from speaking freely. We are attentive to the fact, therefore, that our interview data reflects what students were comfortable sharing within the context of a formal interview embedded in the hierarchical relations of the university.

A Triptych of Emotional Responses

Using a grounded theory approach, we coded interview transcriptions to illuminate trends in students' descriptions of their experiences. Through this work, we developed a triptych of emotional processes employed by students to frame their study abroad experiences. We refer to these expressions of emotions as shame/guilt, frustration/disappointment, and critical empathy. In identifying these three processes of emotional engagement, we are not suggesting that this list is comprehensive nor that the different responses identified are entirely distinct. However, these three processes were the most common in students' reflections. We have chosen three individuals who best represent these different emotional responses to make our argument clear, but we found

evidence of these three processes amongst multiple participants, sometimes mixed together, sometimes tempered by other emotional contexts and negotiations. The distinctions between the emotional arcs that we draw here are not meant to be definitive, but, rather, to act as a heuristic to facilitate our analysis of the political processes at play in the emotional landscapes of study abroad programming and experiences.

Shame and Guilt: Aisha[1]

In other work on bad feelings, Ahmed (2005) discusses shame as a feeling that "feels like an exposure" as an onlooker sees the 'bad' or shameful act. This revealing-of-self causes the subject to want to 'hide' and "turn away from the other and towards the self" (p.75). In our study, we saw expressions of shame and guilt most often tied to experiences where students were faced with their privilege. Aisha, in the following description of a conversation around the dining room table of her homestay, illustrates this emotional process clearly.

> "The biggest one was for me when we were sitting at the dining table and you know how … I had the big camera with me. I had my camera on the table and the guy was like … 'My daughter wants to go into journalism and she can't go into journalism because I can't buy her a camera.' Yeah that really shook me because my camera was like private and I felt like oh my god, what do I do? You know. It was just like ugh. What do I say, what do I do? And then you know for him also he can see that thing and he can know that he can't give it to his daughter. I thought like oh my god that was a huge thing. That was a blow I guess."

The "blow" that Aisha mentions here is her emotional reaction to a direct challenge to her assumption that sharing a meal with the aim of building solidarity would produce positive feelings. Instead, she experiences shame and guilt that make her want to hide her privilege, to avoid exposure by taking her camera off of the table.

Many students experienced the desire to avoid exposure relating to their privilege during some point of the trip. This was not particularly surprising given the relative privilege of the students in this context. What was noteworthy, however, was that despite the framing of this trip as one of solidarity, we found that multiple students attempted to fix feelings of exposure by turning to the charity model. Privilege was acknowledged but only as a justification for charity, as evidenced by Aisha's comments below:

> "Because it [social status] is a part of you and it will always be a part of you I guess. So instead of seeing it as a weakness, seeing it more as like a strength. So that was a huge thing. Which is why … I want to start this girl's school in India, in like this one region, which is Northern India … I thought of a name it's 'Because I'm a Girl' and it's like my dream for girls. Yup. It's still in plans but, like, I'm starting the thinking of that."

We find this move to charity problematic as charity often covers up the ugliness of systems that produce certain individuals in the position to give without interrogating how they came to be in the position to give in the first place (Shaikh 2007). Rather than challenge the historical socio-economic relations that have created geographies of inequality at multiple scales – such as colonialism,

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1 All names are pseudonyms except for the authors'.

classism, and casteism – charity reinforces the difference between those who can give and those who are to receive.

Connecting this to emotional politics, Ahmed (2005) argues that "the pain of others is evoked in the discourses of charity" (p.74); feeling bad about a situation is thus based on a privilege of feeling good to begin with. It is also a manifestation of the tendency to turn inwards as a reaction to shame and guilt. As Ahmed (2005) states, "[g]iving because one feels bad for someone, or is compelled by a cause etc. makes the individual feel good, another Western-serving advantage that excludes the voices of people in the other countries who are receiving the 'help'" (p.75). Aisha's story complicates the assumed whiteness of this Western narrative. Studying in Canada but originally from India, Aisha's turn to charity is not explicitly shaped by whiteness but, rather, by the mere fact of her role in a Canadian educational program meant to foster solidarity with marginalized communities in Guatemala, she is engaged in systems that reproduce the privilege of 'Northerners' in global relations (following Mohanty 2003). This privilege is reinforced rather than challenged by her turn to charity. Acts of charity inspired by feelings of shame and guilt produced by confrontation of one's privilege are, in other words, a means of promoting the status quo.

Frustration and Disappointment: Angela

In her work on the production of bad feelings, Ahmed (2014) discusses how the expectations of happy events and happy feelings can lead to bad feelings when happiness is not achieved. She argues that "happiness provides the emotional setting for disappointment, even if happiness is not given: we just have to expect happiness for 'this or that' [for those same experiences to then] be experiencable as objects of disappointment" (Ahmed 2014, p.8). In our research, we saw some students expressing this process of bad feeling formation. When events occurred that challenged the expectations of positive relations associated with solidarity, students became angry and frustrated. The following quote, taken from Angela's description of her experience in a home stay, is illustrative of this process.

> "The mom kind of mentioned something to Sara [a Spanish-speaking participant], 'that, well, money was…', and Sara was kind of hesitant to tell us but we were like 'no, no. speak about it because it's bugging you. Tell us what's going on.' And she said, 'like, they're not doing well.' … It was, like, how could you [the organization] put us in this situation? Why would you do that to these people?"

In this quote, Angela is alluding to a conversation in which the host-mother told Sara that hosting them was a financial burden – that they did not have enough money to put food on the table for everyone. The students in the household were made very uncomfortable by this admission and eventually brought it to the attention of the program leaders. Reflecting on the emotional intensity of this experience later in the interview, Angela says:

> "That's not something that stands out to me coming back, but it's something that did affect me while I was there. But coming back I can view it differently and that like Steve [program leader] is working on it. And that's something that happens during these kinds of trips you have to work through stuff. And if something happens with people in another country like that, you have to work around the stuff that comes up I guess."

What is most noticeable in Angela's statement is how her frustration and anger was directed at the program designers; Angela puts the responsibility for dealing with the social relations onto Steve. Considering students had no role in the design of the program Angela's desire to hold the organizers accountable is justified. However, this is not enough. Ideally, students should see themselves as implicated in this process. Angela does not take responsibility for her own role in the process or even the collective role of the group of Canadian students traveling abroad for educational tourism. Instead, she distances herself from the situation by referring to the problems of dealing with 'people in another country like that.' She speaks of the event as something that, while intensely felt while in Guatemala, no longer stands out now that she is back in Canada.

Angela's ability to emotionally distance herself from the emotional turmoil created in a moment in which uneven social, political, and economic relations were made visible is, we argue, an expression of privilege. She has bought into the messaging that suggested solidarity should produce good feelings and therefore frames the experience of negative emotions as a flaw in the program design that can and should be fixed by the program leaders. Angela was not alone in this framing. During and after the trip, many of the students viewed themselves at a distance from the social relations of the trip. When their experience of strong emotional reactions, particularly those of 'bad feelings,' made it evident that they were very present in these relations, they would re-frame the situation as a failing on the part of program design. In this way, students interpreted their experiences of frustration and disappointment in a manner which left their own privilege unchallenged by reinforcing the expectation that others should do the messy work of relationship building and negotiation for them.

Accepting Discomfort: Samira

Despite these critiques of the role of bad feelings in (re)producing inequality, we also have evidence of bad feelings within our case study leading to productive engagements with difference and inequality. Some students did not attempt to 'fix' their feelings of discomfort but, rather, sought to accept feelings of discomfort as a means of maintaining an embodied and visceral reminder of the unequal social relations in which they lived. Like Angela and Aisha, Samira experienced discomfort in relation to the forms of hospitality displayed during the homestay. Her awareness of inequalities, however, extended beyond the homestays. For example, she expressed concern regarding the working conditions of the man in charge of most of our transportation:

> "We had just gone down [the volcano] but this guy [the driver] …hadn't eaten all day cause he had to wait for us. And it was really hard. I was getting emotional. Because I was sitting right beside him too. And he looks like my uncle too so it was bothering me a little bit more. And I was like this is somebody's uncle …I felt like we could've made more of an effort to get to know him and like talk to him … I didn't feel good. I didn't feel like I was being a good person in a way."

It is worth noting that Samira is one of the few students who explicitly named her emotions as a way of narrating her story. Here she says she "didn't feel good" when thinking about how the groups' activities affected the driver, an apparent expression of empathy. We could champion this emotional reaction by reinforcing the mainstream assumption that empathy is a key component in the fight for social justice, but, like other emotions, empathy is politically complicated. In her analysis of the transnational politics of empathy, Pedwell (2014) shows how "empathy, care and compassion are

generated in the interests of maintaining dominant social and economic forms, such as the nation and the multinational corporation" (p.183). Her analysis of empathy echoes Ahmed's critiques of charity mentioned above; empathy, as a manifestation of feeling bad for others, can perpetuate the status quo when the actions taken in the name of empathy reinforce political and economic systems of inequality.

To demonstrate how Samira's experience of empathy is in fact a critical form of empathy which challenges the status quo, we move to the other aspect of her post-trip interview. Samira reflected on the lessons she learned from the trip and how those have shaped her understandings of privilege.

> "Just the privilege that we have and that privilege follows us where ever we go. So like it's even if you want the experience of not having the, you know, the 'developed' world privilege it doesn't matter, because when you go there and you tell them you're from that country they are going to treat you differently."

For Samira, these lessons were not just about "people from other countries like that," they were also about her and her own identity. After hearing so many people in Guatemala speak about the importance of claiming their Mayan identity after generations of violence against that very identity, Samira reflected on her own identity formation.

> "If people ask me where I'm from, I don't tell them. I just make up some other place in the world 'cause I don't want to tell them I'm from Afghanistan. … A lot of people think I'm Spanish, so I'll say Spain. Somewhere inside of me, I feel like Spain is a better place than Afghanistan is. … And after 9/11… kids kind of yelling names at you. Like if my mom came with a hijab. I just remember this as a kid my mom walked into the school and was wearing hijab and people were like 'why does she have a towel on her head, is she a terrorist?' And stuff like that. And a third grader doesn't know what a terrorist means. Like I don't know what that is … So now I tell people I'm from Afghanistan, but… now I have to wait for their reaction…I wait for a negative reaction when I tell them that. So it's hard … I want to look like I'm from Canada but like I don't want people to ask me."

For Samira, listening to other people's stories of oppression and resistance facilitated her own self-reflection and acknowledgement of internalized racism. Learning from discomfort associated with critical empathy does not imply the discomfort goes away. She still lives with the fear of prejudice and discrimination, but she is tentatively beginning to challenge the assumptions of power and privilege that have influenced her attempts to 'pass' as European in a Eurocentric society. She has chosen to claim a portion of her identity that she previously kept hidden. She has embraced the uncomfortable feelings created by this process because she now sees their political implications.

Finally, it is worth noting that Samira was the only student who actively stayed in touch with her host family, using online translation tools to send messages and maintain connection. Her commitment to building relationships and learning from her experiences were indicative of her emotional processing - some of the most sophisticated we saw amongst all of the students. She did not approach bad feeling as something to be fixed or avoided. Rather, she understood bad feelings as produced by complex social relations she was only beginning to understand. Following Kern et al. (2014), we understand the emotional turbulence inspired by this experience to be part of a process that interrupts established subject formations and creates openings for new and varied ways of

being. In Samira's case, the emotional turbulence inspired by this trip allowed her to engage critically with her bad feelings and explore new ways of being within uneven terrains of privilege and power.

Conclusion: Reframing Expectations

As mentioned earlier, the promotional materials for the trip to Guatemala studied in this article were littered with claims of solidarity. There were no attempts, however, in the materials or in the program itself, to define the concept. Solidarity became an empty signifier that could be molded to fit different agendas in very different ways. As the conclusion to this article, we challenge this vague conceptualization of solidarity by drawing upon Chandra Mohanty's (2003) concept of feminist solidarity. Mohanty argues for a model of feminist solidarity "that provides a way to theorize a complex relational understanding of experience, location, and history such that feminist cross-cultural work moves through the specific context to construct a real notion of the universal and of democratization rather than colonization. It is through this model that we can put into practice the idea of 'common differences' as the basis for deeper solidarity across differences and unequal power relations" (p.518). Using this model, solidarity is not based upon an understanding of cultures and nations as separate and isolated but as a frame for agency and resistance that moves across borders and emphasizes connection as an alternative approach to (little-g) globalization. To make claims of solidarity, Mohanty (2003) argues, is not just a focus "on the intersections of race, class, gender, nation, and sexuality in different communitites…but on mutuality and coimplication, which suggests attentiveness to the interweaving of the histories of these communities" (p.522). When claims of solidarity are made without attention to mutuality and coimplication, expectations are easily raised for solidarity work to produce good feelings, as we saw in our study. The spectrum of emotional reactions produced in practice, as we have argued, are not equivalent in terms of political implications and are therefore not equivalent in terms of supporting feminist solidarities across space and place.

Just as we refuse to accept the concept of solidarity as an empty signifier, so too do we refuse to dismiss the idea of global citizenship due to its vagueness. Following Andreotti et al. (2010), we suggest global citizenship should be reclaimed from university branding initiatives and politicized though postcolonial analyses which facilitate students taking an honest look at themselves and how they interpret other cultures. We argue that an explicit engagement with emotions as material manifestations of social and political processes provides key sites for this type of politicization in study abroad programming. Exploring emotional lived experiences that present privilege in its many forms can help center students and their individual experiences in navigating political and social relations that are complex - including those that do not 'feel good.'

Expecting students to be able to negotiate such complex political and social landscapes on their own without falling back upon conditioned responses based on their own privilege, such as reverting to blame or charity, is unrealistic. Realizing forms of feminist solidarity that challenge these conditioned reactions requires support and guidance. Pedersen's (2010) research suggests that students participating in study abroad programs learned more about intercultural development when they received cultural mentoring onsite than when they were left to process their experiences unaided. We suggest that cultural mentoring should be expanded to include *emotional* mentoring to help students from reverting to emotional processes that reinforce the status quo and inequality. For example, emotional mentoring could help students avoid falling into the shame-to-charity narrative.

A mentor could have provided students like Aisha with the opportunity to discuss shame as part of the collective process. This is a way to socialize rather than internalize shame so it can be used to educate and confront privilege collectively.

We realize, however, that centering privilege and systems of inequality without the feel-good anecdote of charity may make it more difficult to 'sell' study abroad programs to students and, for that matter, to universities. Study abroad programs are generally expensive, and there is an expectation that while the experience may be challenging, it will also be enjoyable. While facing one's privilege and the systems that create inequality may be educational, it is often not enjoyable in the moment. Selling study abroad programs not based on the fact that "this will be the best week of your life" or that it will be "outrageously fun" might make them more difficult to promote. We suggest that this is not a bad thing. Despite the many claims made about global citizenship and study abroad programs, research on study abroad programming does not, as of yet, have the data to back up the many academic and intercultural benefits attributed to it by universities (Andersen et al. 2006).

Attending to emotions in the context of international educational programs is not a panacea. It is not the end game. Rather, it is an underappreciated and underutilized analytic tool that can not only facilitate student learning but can also help us assess the ways in which we are succeeding in our attempts to politicize educational experiences and realize forms of feminist solidarity. If our goal is to challenge the social landscapes that (re)produce difference and inequality, then we must be explicit about the ways in which our educational programming (re)produces and/or challenges these very systems of inequality.

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