Conferência

Intersecções letais: raça, gênero e violência

Por Patricia Hill Collins

Hola! Oh, wait a minute. That is Spanish. Oi. How are you all? Tudo bem? This has been a wonderful visit for me. I would like to say that. I would like to thank Melvina Araújo and the faculty. But I especially want to thank those of you who are students, because I have found the students here to be quite wonderful. I think you are smart. I think you are energetic, and I have thoroughly enjoyed being here.

What I am going to do tonight is tell you about my work that is coming. It is not yet published. Let me show you what we have been doing. So this is my talk today "Lethal intersections: race, gender and violence". This is the title of my newest book. This is a book that takes the ideas from black feminism, from intersectionality, from my work and uses them to think about the issue of violence much more broadly than just violence that you think of immediately. I am bringing to you an analysis of an important social issue.

The fourth lecture in a series on intersectionality builds on black feminist thought as foundational to intersectional violence. Because the framework of intersectionality sees race, gender, class, and sexuality as interconnected, all of these systems inform different expressions of violence that affect all our lives. By taking up the social problem of how violence shapes the lives of Black women, Black feminist thought offered an innovative approach to violence. Grounding my work in the particulars of black women and black feminism allowed me to see broader issues. And we have spent the last two weeks talking about intersectionality, "Intersectionality", the book, and "Intersectionality in terms of theory". So you are probably thinking: "That Patricia Hill Collins, four books. I mean, come on, she needs to go take a break". Maybe I should take a nap. But it is too important. This particular work is too important because what you see

[0] A conferência foi proferida em 05 de junho de 2023 no Teatro William Silva Moares, do campus Guarulhos da Universidade Federal de São Paulo, como fechamento de um ciclo de quatro conferências de Patricia Hill Collins durante sua visita ao Programa de Pós-Graduação de Ciências Sociais, financiada pela Fundação Fulbright. Agradecemos à professora Collins a autorização para publicarmos a conferência, transcrita por Marcelo Perilo, doutor em antropologia pela Unicamp, e revisada por Lilian Sales e Liana de Paula, professoras da Unifesp e editoras desta revista

DOI:https://doi.org/10.34024/csr.2024.60.1.18916

here are the three books that are “Intersectionality”.[1]

Now, here is what I am going to argue in general and what I have been arguing over the last three weeks. This is a very powerful set of ideas that enables people to think about how they are connected to each other, how race is connected to class, is connected to gender, is connected to sexuality. That when you enter through one door, you find other things waiting. You may enter through the door of race and anti-racism, but you quickly discover that in order to be effective in anti-racist work, you have to attend to gender because black women remind you of that if in fact you are doing anti-racist work with black people. Or if you enter through the door of gender, you cannot just talk about some generic man or some generic woman. There is a big difference between Lula and Bolsonaro. They are both men, but they are very different kinds of men. So we cannot generalize with those big categories. We have to look at masculinity and femininity through an intersectional lens that is also including race. So that is just starting with race and gender.

Why these three books about intersectionality? The “Intersectionality” book is content. That is the book that I wrote when I realized that intersectionality was getting popular and that other people were going to take the ideas and define them for their own purposes. We needed a book where we self define what this field is, and where people can find each other in the field. So “Intersectionality" is the first book and it's a good entry point if you are interested in the ideas and want an overview. The second book, “Intersectionality in terms of theory”, is a book on theory. And this one is not just ideas. It is claiming the space of politics and political theory for the work that we do. So we are not just relegated to... as I said earlier, in an earlier talk, data for someone else's theory. We have had enough theories that do not explain the reality of people who experience social injustice. But those two were not enough. The third book is about method, particularly those of you who are doing your own research.

Now, you will not find method and methodology written throughout the book “Lethal In-

[1] Nota dos editores: em cada uma das conferências, Patricia Hill Collins apresentou a discussão de um de seus livros. Na primeira conferência, “Por que feminismo negro?”, proferida em 17 de maio de 2023, Collins focou o seguinte:
COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment. 30th anniversary ed. Abingdon (UK): Routledge, 2008.
Tradução para o Português: COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Pensamento feminista negro: conhecimento, consciência e a política do empoderamento. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2019.
Na segunda conferência, “Interseccionalidade e solidariedade política”, proferida em 25 de maio de 2023, Collins focou seu seguinte livro:
COLLINS, Patricia Hill; BILGE, Sirma. Intersectionality (Key Concepts). 2nd. ed. Cambridge(UK): Polity, 2020.
Tradução para o Português: COLLINS, Patricia Hill; BILGE, Sirma. Interseccionalidade. São Paulo: Boitempo, 2021.
Na terceria conferência, “Afiando as bordas críticas da interseccionalidade”, proferida em 30 de maio de 2023, Collins focou seu seguinte livro:
COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory. 1st. ed. Durham (USA): Duke University Press Books, 2019.
Tradução para o Português: COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Bem Mais que Ideias: a Interseccionalidade Como Teoria Social Crítica. Boitempo, 2022.
Finalmente, na quarta e última conferência, proferida em 05 de junho de 2023, e que transcrevemos aqui, Collins tratou de última obra, que foi lançada nos Estados Unidos em novembro daquele ano:
COLLINS, Patricia Hill. Lethal Intersections: Race, Gender, and Violence. 1st. ed. Cambridge(UK): Polity, 2023. (Ainda sem tradução).

tersections", but the entire book was a challenge to me to take the ideas from intersectionality as they are commonly understood, and to take the theory that I was arguing about and spelling out critical social theory, critical of, critical for whom, but to take those ideas and say "How would I go about studying something that is intersectionality and that is needed?" One thing that comes out of intersectionality and the work of black women is the significance of violence as a social problem. It is a social problem that we all experience in some way. It touches our lives. It is global. It touches people very differently. And there is a reason violence is important. The kind of violence that I look at in this book is not violence of being, but political violence. The kind of violence that accompanies systems of racism, heterosexism, class exploitation, nationalism, and other "isms". This is the violence that is a common thread that pulls people together, although it is violence that is experienced quite differently.

What I want to do today is take you through very briefly what is in the book and why I approach the book the way I do. This book is not yet published. It will be published in English in October 2023, and I am hoping by spring 2024 it will be translated into Portuguese. I don't know yet, but we shall see. You can think of these tree books as a three legged stool. A stool cannot stand up if it is just two legs, it falls over. But if you have all three, if you have content, if you have a theory, and if you have a method, you have a very good intellectual program, a research program. But you also have a very solid political program, these are all needed. It is not like ideas are just for scholars and researchers and then the doing of the work is for activists. Not at all. So these three ideas of content, theory, and method are crucial.

So I am going to talk about three things. First, I am going to be talking about conceptualizing violence, not just violence out there. We all know what it is. But when we think about an intersectional analysis of violence as it affects black women, latinas, black men, poor people, and indigenous people. When we start thinking about an intersectional analysis of violence and how it is implicated with power relations, how do we think about it? So I want to share with you that. In the second part, I am going to share three main ideas from the book that should be familiar to you, but hopefully will get you thinking. Three puzzles that come out of the book. And finally, for those of you who are students, something called "Toward a decolonial methodology". When we do our work, whether it is scholarly work or intellectual work, how do we know that we are not just supporting the status quo? How can we hold ourselves accountable through our methods for decolonizing the power relations that are around us? So today, I strongly urge you to write down questions as I go through the presentation so that you can ask them afterward and we can talk about aspects of this presentation.

I really think it is important to think about how we are conceptualizing. What is our mental picture of violence when we talk about this? The way I wanted to do this book was not to start from the top down. "What do scholars say violence is?" I know that. You can go find that. You can read that work. I start from the bottom up. Who are the people who are experiencing violence, who are in something called a lethal intersection? This idea of a lethal intersection has forms of

violence where power relations of race, gender, class, and nation converge. These are saturated sites or examples of cases where intersectional violence is especially visible.

I started looking for a lethal intersection as my guiding metaphor. I am going to start looking for cases. These are cases where that are lethal violence or the threat of violence is used to uphold social hierarchy. So this is where you find violence. “If you get out of line, bam! Upside your head”. “If you don't conform, we'll kill your brother”. “If you don't behave, I will kidnap your child”. But often this form of lethal violence is not that direct. It is buried in the rules and regulations of systems. It is buried in statistics like in the US. Do you know we have higher rates of black maternal mortality than other groups? Black women who die having children. Now, that is hidden in the rules. It is not like someone comes along and shoots that woman, but she is dead nonetheless. This violence is lethal because it leaves evidence. Premature death or excess death. This violence is in the statistics of all the children who died too young. And they did not die too young because they were bad children. They died because they did not have enough food or because they just were malnourished or they were poorly housed. That is violence, but it is often not identified as such.

I want to start off with one case of what it means to be in a lethal intersection so that you can see how I go about building the building blocks of this book. Because each of you can find lethal intersections in your life if you yourself are not already in a lethal intersection. This is the case of Ms. Dhu, that happened in Australia in 2014. Ms. Dhu was a 22-year-old Australian Aboriginal woman, an Indigenous woman, and her neighbors called the police because there was a domestic violence situation. Ms. Dhu's partner was abusing her. The neighbors were concerned. The police came. The police looked at Ms. Dhu. They looked at the partner who was about 17 years older than her, and they said “What's going on here?” They looked up Ms. Dhu's record. She is in pain because she had been beaten. They look up her record and they discover that she had unpaid fines. She had not paid many of the nuisance tickets that Aboriginal people get. She had not had the resources to pay for her tickets, so the police took both of them to the police station. Both Ms. Dhu and her partner were arrested. Now keep in mind the original call was for domestic violence, intimate partner violence. But Ms. Dhu, who did not make the call, when the police came to help her, they arrested her. She is in a lethal intersection.

Here is what happens next. She asks for medical care because it turns out she had a broken rib from earlier days. She was on her going to the hospital when she was stopped by the police. So she is locked up. She says “I'm... I'm in pain”. The police do not believe her because very often people who are at the bottom are disbelieved when they tell their own truth. People simply disbelieve you that there is something called black feminist thought. They disbelieve you if you do not have power. Ms. Dhu is disbelieved. The police say okay. They take her to see the medical professionals. The medical professionals look at her and they say “How much pain do you think you're in?” Ms. Dhu describes her level of pain as high and the medical professionals put it down as low. There was a nurse. [The police] tells the nurse “We think she just wanted to come when

she realized she'd have to stay in the cell all night. We don't think she's really injured". So, she was taken back to her cell. The next day, she complains again "I am ill, I am sick, I am in pain. Please, can you give me something? Can you take me to see someone?". The police once again took her to the medical professionals. They look at her and they say "She's fit for custody. She's healthy enough to be arrested and stay in the cell". She is taken back to her cell. By the third day, 24 hours later, she once again is moaning. They drag her off the bed. She cannot walk at this point. They drag her to the health professionals who once again send her back to her cell where she dies.

How is this being in a lethal intersection? There are many cases like this that we do not know about because the people for whom the violence is lethal do not survive the violence to speak for themselves. But in this particular case, the death of Ms. Dhu in private, hidden, no one took a gun and shot her or anything like that, was carried on by her family and friends who resisted. The official findings about her death were unexplained causes. No one could remember anything who was there because they were guilty. This is what was going on. So the family rejected that particular story. And we have here a case of a lethal intersection that is resistance from below, people decided to resist. Her grandmother and her mother have a march for her. The artists who project... started an art project projecting onto the buildings – pictures of Ms. Dhu saying "No justice for Ms. Dhu" and projecting the images on the buildings that were responsible for the official findings in this case. We also have the project called "The Deathscapes Project" of academics and activists who begin collecting evidence of cases like this and create an archive on deaths... and disappearances of Aboriginal women both in Australia and globally. So this one incident... and Ms. Dhu makes it onto YouTube where someone has a song about Ms. Dhu. And what you find is many facets of resistance to violence from below. This is a case we would not know about had there not been resistance.

What I decided to do in this book, in the book "Lethal Intersections", was to look for cases like this. What is the lethal intersection here? Racism. Racism against Aboriginal people is deeply intertwined with indigeneity and colonialism. Australia is a place with a very ancient indigenous population that has suffered under colonialism and continues to suffer with the racism in the institutions that are there. There are many places like that. Australia is very far away, but its story is very familiar. Gender, sexism, the fact that Ms. Dhu was experiencing gender violence from her partner. She was 22 – I think I said that –, she could not get away, she was being abused and she was not protected by the agencies that were supposed to protect her. This was a gendered case, very much so, because of how the police viewed her not as a victim. They did not believe her when she said she was in pain because she was experiencing violence. They did not believe her. This lethal intersection also has a class dimension to it. The fact that they kept her because she had not paid fines is very significant. Those of you who are familiar with Ferguson, Missouri, in the US, which had a big protest, once they investigated the fact of poor people being in debtors' prison. All the people who get locked up, who cannot get out, who cannot post bail, it is like being in a debtor's prison. So using the police to control a population, Ms. Dhu was swept

up in that. The whole notion of paying fines for a government that did not protect her and would not support her and their nation, nationalism, and the laws in this particular case matter. Do not let anybody kid you that laws do not matter. They matter profoundly.

I looked for cases, this was my methodology. The case of Ms. Dhu opens the book because everything is in this case. People defined violence as a social problem and took action in response. Critical theorizing through case analysis. People defined violence as a social problem and took action in response to it. This is a book that rests on resistance to violence that does not start from the fact of violence or start from the fact of what we think we know about it but starts from what people did and learned as a result of resisting violence. Their actions could be visible or invisible, actions could be individual or collective, and actions relied on multiple strategies. They tried everything: courts, lawsuits, public protests, the internet, art. All of that is political, particularly if it is resisting violence.

This is a bottom-up view versus a top-down view of anti-violence projects. So what I try and do in this book is uncover the view from below and write the book grounded in that view. Another example, just for comparison, because you can get deep into one case, but you cannot see how one case is connected to another case until you place those cases in dialogue. Now, two years after Ms. Dhu, in 2016, we have the case of Philando Castile.

There are many cases that are ordinary of police violence. Ms. Dhu was held in police custody and died alone. Her death was not witnessed. But there are also cases of police custody, of being taken into police custody or the police treating you a certain way where the violence is visible and unexpected in a lethal intersection, like the case of Philando Castile, what should have been a simple traffic stop of a young black man who is riding in the car. He is a food service worker who works in an elementary school. He is black, male, working class, no prison record. But he had been stopped 49 times by the Minneapolis Saint Paul police in the US. 49 times because the police had the power to do that. This is the differential treatment. In this particular case, Philando Castile was shot seven times while he was sitting in the passenger seat by a police officer who felt threatened by him. This particular case did generate outcry, but it did not generate a social movement like Black Lives Matter in 2020. This is one of the pieces of violence, resisting violence from below that leads up to the movement. Because what happened in this particular case was that a young woman, Diamond Reynolds, who was Philando Castile's girlfriend, and Diamond's daughter, a four-year-old daughter, were also in the car. So the police officer shot into a car that had two additional passengers, one of whom was a four-year-old girl. But what happened was Diamond Reynolds took out her cell phone and began filming. And she filmed while she was talking “I can't believe it. Oh, my God. He just shot him. Oh, look”. She is filming, and her daughter in the back seat is clearly upset. Both of them get taken and put in the back of the police car where the police cam picks up the footage and picks up their conversation. Diamond Reynolds is extremely upset, she does not know if he is dead or not. It turns out he did subsequently die en route to the hospital. All she knows is she is in a police car and they were just going home one night. This is how this happens, you

know. And she is really upset, and her daughter says to her “Mom, mom, calm down. I don't want you to get shot too”. Now what? Four-year-old. I want you to hear that. “Mom, calm down. I don't want to get shot too”. In her four-year-old language. This is a child who has seen violence. This is a child who understands that she lives in a community where some people can get shot and die. Philando Castile was an ordinary-looking guy. He could have been anyone in here. Two years later the police officer was acquitted. It is sometimes not just the violence, it is the institutional response to the violence that is of concern. So the point that I am making here is that each of these moments creates, makes a contribution to a larger discussion about resisting violence, even if it does not... it is not aware that it is making that contribution.

This is a picture of a young woman, a nurse who did not witness anyone die. She has a five-year-old son. And she... it was the killing of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. She said, “How can I look my child in the eye and talk to him about this? I must do something”. She is a very religious woman. So armed with her faith, she drives to a protest and stands proud with her back straight, knowing that this is a righteous cause to resist power that is inauthentic or wrong. Now look at what... how the state is, the people of the state are dressed. These are stormtroopers she is facing and she is in a sundress. That is the power of conviction, and this is the power of conviction that many people who have a view from the bottom who are dealing with violence have. This image is a metaphor for black feminist thought. Armed with the power of ideas, you go up against a formidable foe who has guns, who has the power of the state, and who has the authority to inflict violence on you and your loved ones. All these examples, from Australia, a woman; from the US, a man, there are examples from many places in the world because state-sanctioned violence is a common issue. It is not particular to any one nation, but it takes a specific form. In the cases that I chose, sometimes individuals reacted even if they didn't know anybody else was reacting, or sometimes it was collective action. All of these cases have dual uses of intersectionality as critical social theory, because I wanted to come back to building my ideas, and all of the cases have a transnational context. The book includes examples from Australia, Brazil, Germany, Ireland, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Vietnam, and the USA. We live in a global world, we are surrounded by local stories and cases like this that when we begin to analyze them, we can get greater depth.

In the second part of my talk, “Dimensions of Intersectional Violence”, there are three main ideas that I want to talk about, that come from the book, and I want to introduce them through the cases. Each chapter has a signature case. In chapter one, the signature case was the case of Ms. Dhu, and there are other cases in it where I can build an argument. The first main idea is violence and the... power of ideas.

There is the case of Marielle Franco, who was visible, vocal, and resisted multiple forms of intersectional violence. When I came to Brazil, I believe this was 2018, she had died and I went to Rio shortly after. So I was meeting people who were still hurt by it, resigned to silence dissent. But does it work? When you kill the messenger, do you kill the idea or does something else hap-

pen? The common interpretation of Marielle Franco's death is that she was assassinated. Not just street crime, she was assassinated for her political beliefs. But what were those political beliefs that were so threatening? She took on the government and police power about the policing in Rio and the policing in certain neighborhoods. She spoke up about violence against LBGTQ people and trans people, she spoke up about the violence against black women, she spoke up against the violence against poor people. Her work is very much an intersectional analysis. And some people found that so threatening, certainly based on her activities in the city council where she raised these issues on International Women's Day shortly before her death, that they felt perhaps killing this messenger would kill her ideas. But what is interesting to me is that before coming to Brazil, I might not have known about Marielle Franco because there are many people who are like her, who are working for change. But it was with her death that her ideas traveled because people claimed those ideas and kept them dear. They wrote about it, they talked about her, they put pictures of her up on street art. There is an effort to remember her in ways that keep her ideas alive. And this example as the signature case of chapter two opens the door to how I handle in this chapter the power of ideas.

The notion of the power of ideas in resisting violence is an important theme in this particular chapter. I take on what I call “resistance to durable ideologies of white supremacy and heteropatriarchy”. I focused this chapter on how people resisted these ideas. And when I began to look for intellectual resistance, I found it in what appeared to be impossible situations.

Surprisingly, looking for resistance to violence through ideas took me to the 1933 book burning in Nazi Germany, because one of the first things that the Nazis did and that Hitler did was to burn books, and to tell people “We have the truth. We, Nazis, have the truth”, and to install propaganda and conspiracy theories, and use media spectacle as a way of convincing the public to support a regime that was deeply violent and intersectional. There are parallels to today. Many people make the same parallels between the fascism of the 20s in Italy and the 30s and 40s in Nazi Germany, and the re-emergence of fascism today.

What I found was there was resistance even in a situation that was extremely difficult. Some people survived, and even though Jews, LGBTQ people, and political dissidents, many people were locked up and killed. And some were so traumatized that they could not even talk about it. But then the memoirs began to come and the books began to come. Are you familiar with “The Diary of Anne Frank”? The diary of a 13-year-old girl who keeps a diary. She is witnessing the violence that she is experiencing. We have testimony from witnesses who are held in prisons, not like Ms. Dhu, who died, but who find ways to tell their story. And when they die, others tell their story for them. That's the case of Anne Frank with her father [who published the diary]. I am interested in how ideas travel to create a critical education in response to violence. You have here the example of Mano Brown, the rapper. I started watching his videos in Portuguese and he was talking about the exact same thing, the origins of hip-hop. In the US, coming from resistance from below, the voice of youth, coming from below through art and creating through

poetry, spoken word, and rap, and dance, and music. Resistance to violence. There would be no need for any of that if there were no violence. For me, people are very resilient in finding ways to resist the ideas that are imposed upon us and to find ways to find a voice from below.

The next chapter talks about violence and national identity. And in this chapter, I take on a different puzzle. Intersectional violence presents itself as permanent and invincible. It is so powerful you cannot defeat it. The army is so big, it cannot fall. It seems to control every aspect of your life. And power can be like that, slavery is like that, colonialism was like that. But is it really that powerful? If we look within national histories in terms of how nations tell their story, do we find resistance?

One of my favorite stories is about Robert E. Lee. It is the statue of Robert E. Lee, a general from the Confederate Army. This was the army that defended slavery. The Confederacy lost, but the backlash after the Civil War was such that many white Southerners refused to accept the end of the war and did everything they could through violent means to suppress the black population in the US. They had pretty much stripped black people of their rights to vote, education, health, housing, and security. Taken over, similar things are trying to... happen now. And they did it through violence, something called the KKK, the Ku Klux Klan, a vigilante group that rode at night, and lynched people. Now that'll scare you half to death, right? But what happens is just because no black people spoke up and protested does not mean that there was no resistance. There has been incremental resistance to that violence every single year until today.

Now, 2020 comes. The statue of Robert E. Lee was erected in the capital of the Confederacy, which was the losing side of the war. The statue of Robert E. Lee up on his horse on a pedestal, looking down on a whole section of town that has monuments to white supremacists. And it was meant to be permanent, it was meant to be “This will never come down”. It took over 20 years for them to put this up. But in 2020, the catalyst of George Floyd, which had been building on all of those cases you never heard of, the outrage of it all, not just in the United States, but globally, came to a head. And in 2020, things started to look really different for Robert E. Lee. So here is what people did. There are the artists. Now, for those of you who are artists, most times people think of artists as just painting flowers and blue skies. And I don't know, that is not what artists often do. Artists are often cutting-edge cultural critics. They are the ones who bring the criticism before the scholars and before the papers. So here is what people did. Well, first of all, the graffiti artists wrote all over Robert E. Lee. They covered the base of that statue with slogans, with Black Lives Matter, with names of people whom they wanted to memorialize, who had been killed. They changed the meaning of the statue by saying “We no longer see this statue as an authoritative story of America”. There are so many things in the US named after Confederate victors: streets, universities, buildings, all kinds of things. This is one thing: public art. People took pilgrimages to this particular monument and what happened next was even more remarkable: the monument became a screen for video installation. And the artist superimposed images of black people on this palette and presented an alternative history. The one on the top far left is George Floyd, who is sporting the phrase “Black Lives Matter”, that is his face. And to give you a sense of the intersec-

tional nature of the discussion, we have on… next to George Floyd in the middle, this is an image of Breonna Taylor, who was also killed by the police in Louisville, Kentucky, in her own apartment, who were executing a drug raid to the wrong address and shot her. So there she is, raising the question of "it's not just black men's lives that matter or black women's lives that matter, all black lives matter". If you look further down on the left, you see an image of John Lewis, who was a pioneer in the civil rights movement. He's the one who had his skull cracked during a march at Selma, Alabama, and he served in Congress. And next to him, we see Harriet Tubman. Harriet Tubman is particularly egregious to Robert E. Lee because they were contemporaries, and what Harriet Tubman did was… she is called the Moses of her people. She is described as being a general who took enslaved black people from the South and helped them escape to the North. So this is a very powerful image to superimpose on the statue of Robert E. Lee.

These artists are beginning to rewrite the American national story. Because if a statue that is designed to be permanent – the built environment that we live in confines us and teaches us to see the world in a certain way –, if a statue that was designed to be permanent is not permanent, what does that mean about the power relations themselves? They too can be resisted and taken down. And just so you are convinced the statue came down. It came down, interestingly, by an African-American firm because white contractors were afraid that they would become targets of violence if they took the statue down. So this is the period to write the new story. That is what is happening in the US and that is why it is so contentious. They are now writing a new national story that does not paper over the old one, but that says "No, that official story is not the official story. That official inquest that looked into the death of Philando Castile is not legitimate. That official inquest that looked into the death of Ms. Dhu may be official, but it may not be the truth". There is an effort to rewrite that story, and here we have the power of ideas joined with the significance of political power.

In this book, this is what I had to do for invisible violence. Violence that you do not see because it is taken for granted. Violence that is hidden in the rules and regulations of everyday life. Violence that is hidden in your own behavior. But what about the violence that happened in the past that people say we want you to forget? This is the whole notion of the invisible violence. "That was then, get over it". The signature case from chapter four is called "The Children of Tuam, Ireland". And this is a case that I would like to describe. This was a case where, about 20 years ago, 20, 30 years ago, two little boys around eight years old were playing in this town, Tuam, Ireland, poking around and they came across a slab of concrete in the ground. They pulled it aside, they looked in and they said, "I think those are bones!". They went to the elders of Tuam and they said, "We think we found bones". And the elders said, "Yeah, those are probably famine bones from the 1830s" when there was an Irish famine and Irish people migrated from Ireland to many places in the world. The beginning of the Irish Diaspora, and so many people died from the famine. 20 years go by, they've forgotten, no one investigated. But there was a woman by the name of Kathleen Corless who was disturbed by those bones, and she began

to investigate because she had gone to school with children who were the children at a home. This site had housed a home for mothers and babies, and they were in a lethal intersection, which I'll get to in just a quick minute. Kathleen Corless investigated, she said, “On the site, the Mother and Baby Homes building is no longer there. It first was a workhouse, and then it was a barracks, and then it was a mother and baby home for unmarried women and their babies”. She started checking the records and she discovered that 99 children who were born at the home did not have registered deaths, so she began to wonder whether the bones that the boys had discovered were the bones of missing babies. This is real. She begins to follow the story. She is the one who, as a child, noticed the treatment of the home children who went to school with her, which was very bad treatment. They were ill-housed, they did not have good clothes, they did not talk, they had to hurry back to the home. And she began to wonder, “What happened to the children at the home?”. And that got her started investigating this mystery of the bones, and this began a very large investigation in Ireland.

First, people blew her off. Blessed the journalists they did not. This is why I think more favorably about journalists these days. They began to publish her story. People wanted it to remain buried, but when this story came to light, finding the bones of the children, you began to see an entire institutional infrastructure where girls went to Mother and Baby Homes. They were told they could give birth, they had to work in the home for a year, their babies were taken from them, they were not allowed to take their babies with them because they were unmarried. They carried the stigma of the pregnancy and not whoever had fathered the child, whether it was legal or not, or a child of rape or some other situation. They had shame, so the girls left the home and tried to forget their sins, and their shame, but they never forgot their babies. And many of them wondered what happened to their babies, so that is one way of coming at it. And then there were children who were adopted because that was considered a good outcome from the home, to have babies adopted. Many of them were adopted by Catholic families in the US, so this was not a small thing. But when they began to investigate whose bones were they, they came to the conclusion that this was a mass grave for babies who had been buried in a cistern, an unused water cavity or cavern when nuns – because this was a Catholic establishment – decided they would simply put the babies who died there because they were illegitimate, they did not deserve a proper burial. So this opened up a tremendous scandal in Ireland.

The connection between the Mother and Baby Homes, institutions where young, unmarried women were sent to work in the laundries for free for some transgression, whether it was illegal childbearing or they were simply too poor to live on their own. So much poverty that they worked for free and provided laundry for the government, for the Catholic Church. And for that, in exchange, they had a place to live. So this particular case is a lethal intersection. My point here is this violence was invisible and buried for decades, but it eventually came to light. And when it began to come to light, we discovered many, many people who knew parts of the puzzle, but not the bigger puzzle. So this particular case opens the whole chapter on invisible

violence and children. It was really important to write about children and invisible violence because this particular case tells me about that.

So just a point or two here just to pull this together. First, the refuse to forget. Refusing to forget, memory as resistance. Violence is buried in the silences and absences around us. Who is not there? Who is not speaking? But violence is also buried in the physical landscape. Indigenous groups have discovered whose children who were taken away have discovered the bones of Indigenous children buried in boarding schools. So the bones talk, the landscape talks, the built environment talks, and it matters. Who refuses to forget it and why? Indigenous people and stolen children, mothers of murdered and disappeared children. This is a really important issue right now, and these are the people who refuse to forget. So we have here a case of intersectional violence that was race through ethnicity. It was religious, it was gendered, it affected young people, it had to do with sexuality, normal and deviant sexuality, and it had to do with family separation, and creating some children as disposable and others as not. It is very important that we begin to shed light on violence that is hidden in plain sight. We have all around us in this globe today disposable children who through no fault of their own, are thrown away by the societies in which they live. And we have around us people who deeply care about them and who are doing their best, and many of those people are mothers. This is a very different path to get to feminism than starting in the sphere of violence against women. This is how mothers see children. Their child matters. What will it take to develop a broader discussion about youth, and children mattering? Intersectionality is at that table.

Let's begin to cheer. We have made it to the last section: “Toward a decolonial methodology: resisting intersecting intersectional violence”. There was a March for Our Lives in 2018 that came as a reaction to a school shooting in a suburban high school where the high school students --peaceful high school students-- in a very short amount of time had their world turned upside down. And they are young people. They cannot vote, they are in high school, they were hurt, they got together and they said, “What can we do?”. And in one month's time, using their networks, the networks of existing organizations that were anti-violence came to them to help them. People who are extremely disturbed by the fact that we have a major gun violence problem in New York, in the United States. These young people in one month organized a march called “March for Our Lives”. Now, they did not say “March for Your Lives”. These are young people saying, “This is our future we are marching for”. But, if you look at the multitudes that showed up, and they used social media, they planned local marches, they assembled thousands of people in Washington, D.C., This was one of the largest marches that had ever occurred in this seat of power. And they did it in one month thereby putting on notice all the adults and public officials who said, “Nothing can be done. We are with you. We feel so bad. Let's get more guns to protect you”. This was a march not of white people, or of black people, or of Latinos, or of Asians. This was a march of young people who saw in each other's experiences across a very large country a common shared social problem. Alliance. And they said, “This is enough. We are afraid for our

lives. We are afraid for our future. We will march for our lives". Can you imagine talking to this many people? These were the people on the podium. Kids ran it. And a black young girl, who is like 11, said, "Many people think we are not old enough to speak for ourselves. They think adults are putting ideas in our minds. But I am old enough to speak for myself and my friends, and I know we are for black feminism". This is a little black feminist up here at this march who is talking about joining in solidarity with other youth. A generation of people who did not know they knew each other. You know, if you have your friends, social media is isolating, but you do not know how many people really agree with you until you go to something this big.

So this is my image of how to think about lethal intersections and their methodology. You have, on the one hand, the case of gun violence that was a stimulus to each of these people who felt that they had a shared common problem, but they just did not know about each other. And the multitude is the kind of methodology we need that takes this kind of multitude into account. The joining together of the individual cases, the individual people, the individual cases into something that is bigger.

Intersectional violence is one unifying theme. There are many others. Violence is differently experienced and analyzed by multiple groups. All of the cases that I treated ... they were from different nations, and different groups of people: Aboriginal, Black, Irish, and Brazil. They experienced different forms of violence in different times, but this was a common thread that pulled systems of power together. It is the tie that binds systems of power, of race, and class, and gender. Violence may be visible or invisible.

I leave you with a thought to look for what is not there and listen to who is not speaking because that is often where you will find the ideas and the resistance that may not yet have made it to the front stage but is there nonetheless. And I want to finish by saying resisting violence is an ongoing, open-ended process. None of these cases has an ending. We don't know. This is what history is about. You do not know how it is going to turn out. All you can do is take your piece and carry it a little further and talk to more people, write better dissertations. Get those dissertations written, people, because you do not know how your piece will travel, whether its ideas will travel beyond the national borders of Brazil in this case, or whether what you are saying someone else picks up on like hip hop traveling globally. Who knew that kids in a terrible neighborhood in New York through creativity, would create something that would travel and endure for 30 years? So you don't know. The issue is these people who do these projects have an unshakable belief that violence is wrong and they may not know what to do about it, but they have a belief in social justice and they are moving toward a more socially just world. So as I wrap up my presentations with you at this wonderful university, the overarching theme of this series was "Intersectionality, social inequalities and social justice". And we end up at the end of the four weeks where we started, but hopefully with a deeper understanding of how all of this connects together and connects to you. Thank you.