

A Method to Analyse Invisibility

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ABSTRACT

This article starts by considering how 'the talk' that black and non-black minority families give to their children comes as a requirement to transfer the wisdom of the way to be invisible forward through generations. It isn't uncommon to believe being visible as a social good, but this is often almost so straightforward when one occupies a body deemed as 'other.' This text exposes this tension to explore how invisibility are often understood as an independent, complex, and nuanced social dynamic in its title by considering literature that uses invisibility as an analytical lens, providing a synthesis of that literature to provide a preliminary multidimensional model of invisibility to extend extant tools for sociological study. This literature considers race, gender, sexuality, various presentations of power, and different social systems to demonstrate a model that identifies how the intersection of power, affect, presence, and voice fluidly transfigure across time and space to form an overall social construct of invisibility. This suggests that deeper development of a multidimensional construct of invisibility can provide a reasoned and valuable additional lens to affect a spread of social dynamics.

Keywords: Invisibility; Methods; Social Theory

INTRODUCTION

Two weeks after a mass shooting in Parkland, Florida, Wal-Mart self-imposed restrictions on ammunition sales. It had been a business decision with far-reaching social and political implications. Though not nearly the first US mass shooting, somehow, a tipping point had been reached. Even living outside of America, this carries import for what it says about contemporary dynamics of mattering. In an opinion piece written for the ny Times, described it because the increase of 'woke capital' in response to 'a perfect storm of articulate student outrage and savvy online activism, merging with a flood tide of resentment'. Corporations felt forced or perhaps enabled to step outside of their public-secret practice of supporting 'both sides' equally to not lose favour with one or the other. But as suggests, 'Uber isn't an immigration firm. Disney isn't a climate-advocacy organization. Merck isn't a civil-rights group.' Cynically, one could argue that's use of the term 'woke,' then, is both an appropriation and an abomination. It elevates how less visceral magnanimous market calculus outside of how the term 'woke' is more typically won't to capture the rising consciousness of marginalized subjectivities. Yet, it's possible that it are often both a cynical strategy of becoming differently visible and a state of necessary consciousness to understand how one is viewed by and thus must approach others. In both ways, this 'wokeness' mirrors what historian describes because the catalysts for the 'Wide Awakes' who combined consciousness with action before the US war. They made this consciousness material by mustering resistance to partisanship that created egregious wrongs, often felt but not

spoken. Being 'woke,' then, is and was about seeing you in situ combined with urgency but not a prescription to act.

Prior to the Parkland shootings, the movement '#Black Lives Matter (#BLM) was founded in 2013 in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin's murderer'. Trayvon Martin was an unarmed 17-year-old black teenager, also in Florida, who was shot to death by a person where Parkland inspired an instant and pervasive corporate wokeness, the killing of Trayvon Martin created how different but wider movement. Initially situated in African American communities, its spread well beyond, become global, and has redoubled with each tragic repeating of the murder of a black-bodied person at the hands of a summarily punitive authority. Writing about the murder of another Black man in 2014, Eric Garner, considers work like what #BLM does because the embodiment of a responsibility to form coalition against precarity, too often unseeable at the 'edges' of society. In her reference to Eric Garner, Pérez invokes variety of his powerful last words, 'I can't breathe,' to elucidate how his dying voice issued a clarion breaching a collective and willful seeing but ignoring of the suffering of black lives.

And yet, in 2020 this pattern of violence against black bodies persisted, rearing its head repeatedly, erupting most prominently again within the US on three occasions: in March with the murder of Breonna Taylor; in May with the murder of George Floyd; and again in August with the murder of Jacob Blake. Each variously at the hands of police and sadly not the only three. These events

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Received: June 08, 2021; Accepted: June 15, 2021; Published: June 19, 2021

Citation: Listin P (2021) A Method to Analyse Invisibility. Social and Crimonol 9: e116.

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prompted new waves of 'wokeness' that migrated well outside of the black community Breonna Taylor's murder added a layer to #BLM, by invoking her intersectional position as black and also a woman through the campaign #Say Her Name. George Floyd's murder stretched the width of 'wokeness' beyond the edges, and sparked public outrage when his last words echoing, exactly, the last words of Eric Garner, 'I can't breathe' were captured on video and uncontrollably circulated as a double-edged hyper-visible appropriation of his death to both honour and disavow his life, casting him as a logo and not (at all) an individual.

Further into the height of the pandemic summer, the murder of Jacob Blake brought this question of 'wokeness' full circle to the corporate level noted at the outset. This was particularly prominent during the re-start of the National Basketball Association (NBA)

season where players, coaches, and thus the league, reflected their collective outrage on their bodies, through their words, and emblazoned on their courts. Yet, as Toronto Raptor Fred Van Vleet noted with the death of Jacob Blake, 'corporate wokeness' cannot be limited to 'what we show,' but must even be measured by action. 'Do we actually provide a [expletive] about what's going on? Or is it just cool to wear BLM on the backdrop or wear a T-shirt?' His very simple question, 'What are we willing to supply up?' seems rhetorical, but addresses the need to believe how seeing, saying, feeling, and having the power to undertake something must work hand in hand to make changes in time and space. This text considers how these elements on the brink of make a fertile liminal space by watching them because the negotiation of multiple concurrent levels of invisibility.