



# [ We are ] The Culture Makers

Month 2, Lesson 2: Who Owns Time?



I live and work  
on the traditional territories of the Sto:lo Nations



# This Week...

We're toggling out to think about *who owns time* – generally, and personally

**Who owns YOUR time?**



# Last Week...

When we're talking about how time is a feminist issue, we're talking about how historically, women did not own their time. It belonged to other people – primarily men, and their families



# Stealing Time

- I first heard the phrase “stealing time” in Trinidad



“White people own time”  
-Dr. Brittney Cooper



# The Racial Politics of Time

- TOGGLE: Who Owns Time?
- “When white male European philosophers first thought to conceptualize time and history one famously declared Africa is no historical part of the world. He was essentially saying that Africans were people outside of history who had had no impact on time or the march of progress. **This idea that black people have had no impact on history is one of the foundational ideas of white supremacy.** It's the reason that Carter G Woodson created Negro history week in 1926 it's the reason that we continue to celebrate black history month in the U S every February.” – Brittney Cooper





# The Racial Politics of Time

- TOGGLE: Who Owns Time?

“Those in power dictate the pace of the workday.

They dictate how much money our time is actually worth.

And Professor George Lipsitz argues that white people even dictate the pace of social inclusion. They dictate how long you will actually take for minority groups to receive the rights that they have been fighting for.” – Brittney Cooper



# The Racial Politics of Time

- TOGGLE: Who Owns Time?

“Those who control the flow and thrust of history are considered world makers who own and master time. In other words, white people.” – Brittney Cooper



# The Racial Politics of Time

“Ta-Nehisi Coates argues that the defining feature of being drafted into the black race is the inescapable robbery of time.

We experience time discrimination, he tells us, not just as structural, but as personal. As lost moments of joy, lost moments of connection, lost quality of time with loved ones, and lost years of healthy quality of life in the future.

Do you see black people in the future? Do black people have a future?

What if you belonged to the very race of people who have always been pitted against time?

What if your group is the group for whom a future was never imagined?”

– Brittney Cooper



# The Politics of Time

- UNLEARN: How is your time being stolen?



# REMEMBER: What is your time for?

- What do you want to be known for?
- What is your life about?
- What are you here to do?

In other words: ***What is your time for?***



# Getting Forensic – and Morbid – about Time

- What do you want your tombstone to say?  
eg here's mine:

**Mother. She wrote books.**

- If you were time tracking last week, is this how your time is being used?
  - My answer in 2015: Nope.
- *Now, what?*



# Getting Forensic – and Morbid – about Time

- LEARN: Next steps were obvious – needed to reengineer my days so that writing was part of the center, not in the margins
- What was stealing my time?
  - Pressure to be the perfect woman with the perfect house
  - Cleaning
  - My partner's job



# “Reclaiming My Time” – Maxine Waters

- According to procedural rules, Rep. Maxine Waters had a limited amount of time to interview Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin; once it was up, it was up
- Mnuchin was strategically trying to run out her time so she couldn't be effective and get what she needed from him
- ***He was stealing her time***
- *Over and over, she refused. She reasserted House Rules – and reset the clock*





# “Reclaiming My Time” – Maxine Waters

- *NEW HOUSE RULES: YOU own your time*
  - This is culture making
  - And you *do* have to be ruthless (and repetitive), because reclaiming your time goes against the grain of hundreds of years of our conditioning (hence, the ever-present guilt)



# “Reclaiming My Time” – Maxine Waters

- That’s what we have to do, too
- UNLEARN: Every day, over and over again, say out loud that you’re reclaiming your time
  - Every time someone tries to put a claim on your time, waste your time
  - Every time you’re doing things that displace and reduce your time for your tombstone activities, remind yourself that YOU own your time
- **YOU owning your time is culture making – because historically, we have NOT owned our time. White men did. *NO MORE.***



# “Reclaiming My Time” – Maxine Waters

- *Being a culture maker means you are NOT outside of time*
- *It's imperative that we reduce systemic time theft*
- *You own your time*
- *RECLAIM IT a million different ways, every day*



# Next Steps

- I had Dr. Cooper's speech transcribed and uploaded it to our Membership site. Highly recommend you watch and read it



# Resources

- ***The Racial Politics of Time*** by Brittney Cooper
- ***Between the World and Me***, by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- ‘Reclaiming My Time’ is Bigger than Maxine Waters, by Christine Emba <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-partisan/wp/2017/08/01/reclaiming-my-time-is-bigger-than-maxine-waters/>





**KELLY DIELS**

We are the Culture Makers

The graphic features a woman with blonde hair, wearing a black turtleneck, posing with one hand on her hip and the other raised in a fist. To her left are several stylized bird silhouettes in yellow and red. The entire graphic is framed by a white border and a multi-colored horizontal bar at the bottom.

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