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Doubly estranged: racism, the body and reflection

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ABSTRACT



This paper introduces the concept of “double estrangement”. Drawing on a large qualitative dataset it will argue that young migrant group boys in Dublin’s north inner city suffer from a break with their embodied selves as they are pushed between habitual and reflective action. The dual elements of “double estrangement” will be outlined, firstly, through the contention that visible difference and dispositions of the body mark minority boys out as not belonging within peer exchanges in three primary schools. Secondly, by arguing this has the effect of heightening a boy’s self-consciousness of their body as an object of value estranging them from their habitual embodied being.

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Introduction

It is difficult to directly deal with the material body in racial and ethnic studies. There are multiple reasons for this but from the limited history of academic scholarship the blunt materialism of some aspects of the biological sciences has led to the contention that social inequalities are simply enactments of a hardwired meritocracy of skill, the most insidious examples of which are so-called “scientific” racism and sexism (Spracklen 2008). Social sciences have provided crucial counter narratives of what drives our life course. As far as it is predestined this is the result of being born into highly unequal societies, where privilege is transmitted intergenerationally and racism and sexism are insidiously woven within structures (Miles 1989). Our life chances are stymied then not by a genetic inheritance, but by how societies are constructed to reflect the needs and priorities of those already rich in resources (Bourdieu 1984). The claim of a biological base to inequality has been exposed as a dangerous fallacy and simplistic logic of what bodies “inherently” mean robustly critiqued. Racialization is a key concept in this regard. While there is tension as to the consistency of meaning and use of the

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term (Banton 1977; Hall 1997; Miles 1989), racialization has been crucial in moving the debate beyond the ontological certainty of “race” to the question of “why certain racialised subjectivities become a feature of social relations” (Back and Solomos 2000, 20).

However, to fully examine what and if the body has relevance for studying racism, a full investigation of what is being critiqued is required. The difficulty is when trying to focus on the body there is a tendency to slip into linguistic analysis; discussions of the body inevitably lead to debates on *how* we discuss the body (Garratt 2016). This turn to language is justified by arguing it is false to distinguish the linguistic from the embodied (Butler 1990). While this may be true, it seems pertinent to look closer at what is really meant by embodiment. Such an examination would allow scholarship to better analyse how the body is discursively interpreted as an object of value in racist societies, but also allow these processes of evaluation to be unpicked as embodied practices in themselves (Garratt 2016). Here, I wish to focus on one aspect of this: that of self-conscious reflection on oneself, one’s body and one’s actions inculcated in the body.

The need to find a way to deal with the body emerged from a four-year qualitative study of young children’s experiences of diversity within north inner city Dublin, Republic of Ireland [hereafter Ireland]. While this context has many implications for what is discussed, an in-depth analysis of the local and national context is the subject of another piece (Garratt [forthcoming-b](#)). The focus here is to show that to adequately capture what embodiment meant in this site a different theoretical approach was required. This paper will argue that minority boys were “doubly estranged” from their embodied being. Firstly, through visible difference and dispositions of the body which provoked a tendency for them to feel constantly on display and judged through their bodies and secondly, by heightening self-consciousness of their bodies as an object of value. Self-consciousness or constant reflection will be operationalized as an insidious effect of racism.

Methodology

Qualitative research does not attempt to test assumptions or refute theories, but is interpretive and focused on discovering meaning; as such an inductive grounded theory approach was adopted (Glaser and Strauss [1967] 2008). Data for this study come from three class groups of 7–8-year-old children from three primary schools in north inner city Dublin. Two of these schools are single-sex boys’ schools and one is a co-educational school. Collected over two phases, the initially fieldwork took place as part of the Trinity Immigration Initiative,¹ Children Youth and Community Relations Project [CYCR] (Curry et al. 2011). The CYCR project collected demographic data from all primary schools within north inner city Dublin over two academic years, using this

information seven schools were selected using maximum variation sampling (Patton 2001). Individual and diode interviews with 343 children were conducted along with hundreds of hours of observation. This paper focuses on the experiences of the youngest boys aged 7–8 years from three of these schools, schools 1 and 3 are single-sex boys' schools and school 2 is a co-educational.² Just under thirty per cent of student body in each school was composed of students with two migrant parents, the numbers were as high as sixty per cent for those under seven years and as low as twenty per cent for those over nine years, the 7–8 year cohort was chosen as it was reflective of the average demographic, with between twenty-eight per cent and thirty-one per cent in each class group (Curry et al. 2011). Class group 3 was revisited one year later for the author's work alone at which point the respondents were 8–9 years, all the pupils had been retained from the previous year and two students who had migrated to Ireland in the previous four years had joined the class. A total number of forty-two interviews, from fifty-nine participants, fifty-one boys and eight girls, thirty-nine children from the majority group and twenty from minority backgrounds are drawn here. Additionally, the data consist of approximately 150 hours of in-classroom observation notes and on what I have termed the "child world" of the school (Thorne 1993), spaces in which children's attention was primarily on their peers in the absence of overt adult supervision and control (the methodological complexity of this study is the subject of Garratt [forthcoming-c](#)).

Those born in Ireland to two parents born in Ireland are described as majority group Irish [MGI] and are racialized as "white". All of the children referred to as minority group Irish have two parents born outside of Ireland, some also moved in early childhood and are the 1.5 generation (Rumbaut and Portes 2001), others are second generation born in Ireland. Where background is relevant, those with West African links are described as West African Irish [WAI], East Asian Irish [EAI], South Asian Irish [SAI] or Eastern European Irish [EEI]. Quotes will be labelled with a school number, background ID and age. A boy talking in school 3, WAI, aged eight will be labelled [3,WAI,8] in the second year of observation the label is [3(II), WAI,8]. The terminology is imprecise, essentializes categories and does not reflect the children's self-identified ethnicity which tended to be Irish regardless of background or birth place (Garratt 2012). Where a collective description is needed, I will refer to children as minority group and were relevant as having a migrant background. It can be argued with some validity that what is described conflates ethnicity and immigration, which although not mutually exclusive deal with different modes of experience, but it is important to note that in Ireland the majority of those identified as "ethnic" minorities have at least one migrant parent (Curry et al. 2011). While this makes the situation different from other countries, the objective is not to point out racism is contextual, nor claim the universal applicability of the findings, but rather to contend from this fresh site the wider literature can be usefully re-evaluated.

An embodied perspective

James (2000) has contended that any account of children or childhood must be rooted in an embodied perspective, as the process of growing up places the body at the heart of a child's identity. The need for James to make the point that embodiment is a necessary consideration for Sociological accounts of children, makes clear how at odds the discipline is with related fields, where the body as both an object and subject is central to analysis (Aboud 1988; Nesdale 2005). Shilling describes the body in Sociology as an "absent presence" (2005, 17) in this regard, as actors are often spoken of but when one drills down to what is described, it would seem the study of immaterial minds is the object of interest. Yet with other fields persevering with minute examinations of physiology, without engagement from Sociology embodiment risks being lost to physicality. On this note I would like to define what I mean by the body. A phenomenological approach is taken here; internal physiological processes are not the focus but rather the embodied dispositions at play for children in this site. Determining where these dispositions may find incorporation in the body is not the aim of this paper but rather to emphasize that they are incorporated. While developmental psychology has rightly shown 7–9-year-olds are at certain stage of motor and cognition development (Vygotsky 1978), there was no reason to assume there were any larger differences in development amongst these children than for any other groups.³ It is the argument of this piece that the body is important to understand not only for internal physiological processes but also for dispositions inculcated in bodies as a result of racism.⁴

An analogy often used by phenomenologists to describe this distinction is soccer [hereafter football]; while many will have the same motor abilities, that is, an ability to kick, one can only use this skill effectively if the nuances of the game have been embodied successfully. Motor skills alone do not make a good player unless one has the dispositions to use them appropriately.⁵ Here, this moves from analogy to substantive issue, children's play especially that of boys was dominated by this one activity. Whether through informal games which took up the majority of space in the playground, hero worship of professional players, plans for future careers or the constant gossip, speculation and discussion of other boys performances demonstrated at the break time games. Swain (2000, 2003) has outlined the importance of football in the construction of masculinities in junior schools, he argues that it is used to reaffirm and emphasize the subordination of marginalized boys and girls on a "highly visible stage for the performance ... of stylised masculinities" (2000, 107). Within the masculinities literature, football⁶ has been identified as a key activity in which young boys establish and reaffirm their claims at what Connell (2008) describes as hegemonic masculinity. It acts as a central activity and topic of discussion in which boys can be understood

as boys by their peers (Skelton 2000; Woods 2009). When racialized masculinities have been analysed in relation to sport, boys constructed as “black” have almost always been found to be positively stereotyped by their peers as possessing natural athletic ability (Staples 1982). As Czopp (2010) highlights that both positive and negative stereotypes rarely have positive outcomes for those typecast. Most research argues that characterizations of “black” males as athletic and rhythmic has done little to diminish racism but rather ties back into racialized discourses of masculinity centred on the body, further constructing and separating groups as races apart (Majors 2001). This has particularly damaging consequences as an identity associated with the body is generally linked to irrationality, a key construct which justifies and naturalizes racism within modernity.

The role of rationality in the development and protraction of racism within nation states is a central finding of Goldberg (2002) and Said’s ([1978] 1995) work. Through different perspectives they invoke Foucault (1975) to contend that in constructing a “rational” agent an “irrational” one is born, a rational society an irrational one, both of which are constructed as pre-modern and largely non-Western. To be associated with one’s body then, is to be separated from rationality. Embodiment understood in this way undermines individuals and groups’ citizenship, rights and belonging within nations, as a “rational” state must defend itself from the “irrational”. This has particular poignancy when considering the historic justification of slavery and colonialism which were perpetuated by manufacturing “evidence” of irrationality by racializing the body (Wacquant 2005). To be “embodied” then has been to be equated with a lesser humanity, and scholarship has rightly exposed this racism Fanon’s ([1952] 1982). By only analysing embodiment as that which dehumanizes us though, there is a tacit agreement with a Cartesian worldview that humanity is found in a distillation of the mind and proven only in “rational” thought. Embodiment viewed in such terms implies that if the body can be shed as the centre of one’s identity, the privileges that come with a “rational disembodied” identity can also be claimed by those racialized, but is it really possible to shed one’s body and is a disembodied state in some pure form really possible?

There has been an increasing focus on the impact of Cartesian thought within Sociology and attempts to bring the innovations of philosophical debates into the social sciences (Elliott 2004; Stoller 2009). In these accounts, dualism is not re-examined to shed the body further but to argue it cannot be denied as it is our very means of experiencing (Crossley 2001). One key objection is that an “inner theatre” of the Cartesian mind cannot be sustained, as inward examinations always take an outward turn. One can perceive objects and subjects but cannot perceive perception or be conscious of consciousness directly without using some construct from our relationship with the outside world such as language, images or emotions to represent them

(Ryle 1949). Our capacities to think and reason are not discrete processes but dependent on our somatic relationship with the world. The understanding of intelligence as defined by propositional thought (the assumption that any act or perception is only intelligent if it is thought about beforehand) is questionable (Ryle 1949). If this were true, any thought would be infinitely regressional, as not only would the act have to be reflected on, but the reflection itself (Crossley 2001). Indeed other fields have strongly made the point that not only is the rational model of mind wrong but undesirable for intelligent action (Tversky and Kahneman 1974; Kahneman 2001), as what is often termed “rational” is supported and created by the “irrational”, our learned senses, habits and embodied schemas.

If the tools for “mental” activity are underpinned by our bodily engagement, in the world we are our bodies, but these bodies are not pre-social and reductionist. From this approach, what does this mean for young boys for whom the body is not an oblique aspect of their identities? (James 2000). This paper will focus on two interrelated implications for the young boys here, the body as a phenomenological object and hesitancy of action caused by habitual reflection.

A feel for the game

A bunch of girly babies the lot of ‘em

Who?

The foreign boys

Why is that?

Always crying always, just always being a baby they are asking for it

Asking for what?

A bruising, not being bad but like they are asking for it [1, MGI, 8]

“Black” boys in this site were almost never conceptualized by themselves or their peers as sporty or hypermasculine, rather where such a conception existed, this was seen as an attribute of majority group [MGI] boys. This sits in contradiction to the international literature which has tended to find that “black” males are frequently understood as hypermasculine, while “Asian” males are often feminized as “model minorities” (Staples 1982; Qin, Way, and Mennal 2008). In another context, it should come as no shock that boys from many backgrounds can be feminized⁷ as at the heart of this literature is a focus on how such conceptions are constructions (Kimmell 2010). Categorizing “foreign boys” as “girly babies” here was a product of several mutually constructing factors, including the ways in which masculinity was understood in relation to the history, criminality and mythology of north inner city Dublin and through disparities of perception (Garratt 2012, [forthcoming-a](#)). In short,

the feminization of minority boys in this site was based on little material difference to warrant such a conceptualization, rather they were judged more critically than their peers (Garratt 2012). Here, though I wish to focus on the one material difference which did exist, namely the tendency for minority boys to be hesitant and constantly reflect on their activities.

Due to football's ubiquity in boys' conversation and activities, a common question in the interviews was "what makes a good footballer?" MGI boys' immediate response followed similar patterns:

Don't know *just am* [2,MGI,8]

You *just are*, you're good or you're not [1,MGI,8]

Do it like, do it, you know do it, *just fuck the ball down the field* [3(II), MGI,9]

These boys enjoyed deference from their peers as the best footballers in their class despite little difference in their skills to warrant such a conception. What I mean by this is the "best" footballers did not score more goals, nor did they complete the tricks they claimed to be skilled at, despite this their actions were interpreted as markedly more proficient than their peers even when they performed very similarly to them (Garratt 2012, [forthcoming-b](#)). In one sense though they were different as they seemed to lack forethought or reflection on their actions within the game:

Anything bother you about yard time or anything?

Eamonn: No *just playing and all it's alright*

Ryan: He's very good he is

Eamonn: Yesterday I *just wacked it off my foot I don't even know how I did it and it went in, I don't even know how* [3(II),MGI,9]

So how is a boy good at football then?

Just is

Yeah?

Em I when, I got the ball and em

Yeah?

Got it down the pitch and it went in and I can't even think about getting a goal [1,MGI,8]

Eddie: I *just do it*

What is this?

Eddie: Football [2,MGI,8]

Here, football skills are described as *just* something which is accomplished, small words serve to minimize exertion and present their game as effortless.

In contrast, boys from migrant origins described their experiences playing football quite differently:

I can't think what to do

Where?

In football

Yeah how do you feel when you can't think?

Scared

Yeah what are you trying to think about?

Em ... *trying to shoot but I don't think I can do it* [2,SAI,8]

I don't know how to do it I try but my leg will not go

[...]

No they won't go [2,WAI,8]

Mikhail: We try to do it

Billy: We don't know how

Mikhail: [...] I think then I will shoot but no

[...]

Mikhail: I can't do

Billy: I *tried* it but I, I can't know what to do they were saying "ha ha" to me [1,EEI,8]

These boys tended to talk about actively *trying* to be good at football and considering what skills to use. For MGI boys though, trying was the antitheses of just doing. Within peer interactions there was a clear presumption that "real" boys should not *try* to be something, they should just be it:

Owen: Rule number one don't be something you're not

What's this?

Eddie: How to get friends

Owen: And and just be yourself

[...] *is everyone just being themselves?*

Eddie: No

Owen: No [laughs] I am, we are but I'd tell you I have to straighten them out [minority boys]

[...]

Owen:... he's [WAI] always crying like, like em, like, boys here don't like, just get on with it

Maybe he is just trying...

Eddie: We can just do it [2,MG,8; about 2,WAI,7]

Owen and Eddie's formula for getting friends seems an easy one, "just be yourself", it offers a simple conception of what it is to be a boy, an upfront honesty, free of contrivance and boys who *just* get on with it. Here, minority boys are positioned as not doing this and instead trying to be something they are not and as such bringing "straightening" out on themselves. Separating minority boys from "real" masculinity which was couched in such terms and largely demonstrated and assessed through football games was common across the schools:

Bohoo, cry, cry, cry, we need people who can get on with it [football]

Who doesn't get on with it?

The blackies [3(II),MGI,9]

They are girls [minorities]

Why?

Can't play football just standing there crying [1,MGI,7]

While there is plenty to unpack in these quotes, specifically the disparity of perception which led to minority boys being judged as more emotional and less skilled despite little distinction to warrant these descriptions (Garratt [forthcoming-a](#)). This paper focuses on the one difference which was present in minority boys ability to "just get on with it", the tendency for them to reflect upon themselves and their actions. To illuminate this let us take the case of Themba, a young boy aged seven on first contact and nine on last, Themba is WAI second generation.

Themba

Themba was often observed looking quite unsure while he played football and he found it particularly hard to pick a team during "pickies", a ritual where boys who wished to take part in the lunch time game lined up and two people choose their teams in alternative goes, one day Themba is a picker:

Themba and an SAI boy from another class stand in front of the boys, they seem hesitant to pick, both choose one boy each, Themba has chosen Mark [MGI] and the other boy picks a MGI boy from the other class, the others shout their names, but the boys don't choose anyone else. Eventually the teacher divides the boys up by telling everyone on the right to go with the SAI boy and everyone to the left with Themba. [3, notes]

When I asked Themba about this later he described the experience:

I don't pick anyone because I only waste time.

[...] Who said you waste time?

No-one.

No-one? Then why do you think you waste time? [Shrugs] [...]

When I want to pick the people I should – when I was two I want to pick – I don't know who to pick then that's how I waste time.

Really?

I waste time in the game cos I can't think what to do [3,WAI,7]

Later his peers interpret his actions:

Like get on with it like, God what is the big deal he just stands there like "gawwwwww", time waster, I was telling him to pick and all but he [...] Do it like, do it, you know do it, just fuck the ball down the field don't stand there like "gawwwwww" those foreign boys like, they are fakers, they are just asking for it. [3,MGI,8]

Themba's harsh assessment of himself as a "time waster" mirrors the exact turn of phrase used by his peers. He was intensely critical of himself, especially his skills at football and his appearance; this persisted into the second year of the study, to the extent that he described himself as someone who was:

A frozen person I don't know what to do [in football]. [3(II),MGI,9]

The consequences of being a "frozen person" are multiple, not least it provides material evidence for the opinion that minority boys do not act spontaneously and are not "real" boys. Tangentially hesitancy makes one a less effective within the game as "good" football requires spontaneity. Intelligent play is engaged as players perceive opportunities and feel boundaries in relation to their position on the playing field and through perceptual schemas which constitute their know-how (Merleau-Ponty 1965). One's ability to be effective comes through the synchronization of one's actions to the game, allowing one to act without having to reflect on every detail. Themba's propensity for self-consciousness made him a marginally less effective footballer. He did not have a feel for the game as he literally lacked the ability to feel it. Rather his engagement came through constant thought, where he assessed himself and reflected on how others might judge him. The provocation for Themba to engage in such contemplation was partially due to his awareness that his body was liable to be judged harshly by his peers:

They will watch my skills [...] because of my looks [...] so I have to try and be good [at football]. [3(II),MGI,9]

The body as an object of value

Themba's contention that he is watched by others because of his "looks", reveals his belief that the way he acts in football will be scrutinized because

of his appearance and not simply because of his skill. The need to grapple with one's appearance was a common phenomenon for many minority boys especially those of African and Asian backgrounds. In the same class another WAI boy reflects on the way he looks:

The look of me is different but I am the same. [3,WAI,8]

This boy is discussing conversations he has had with his mother who has assured him that he can say he is both "Irish" and a "northsider" if he wishes (Garratt forthcoming-b). The need for an eight-year-old to explicitly state he is the same despite his appearance reveals something of the process of reflection he has engaged in to work through the supposed incongruence between his identity and objective body. Indeed, many expressed a sense of burden in relation to their bodies; the most disturbing manifestations of which came through a common fantasy in which minority boys imagined achieving acceptance through the virtual eradication of their bodies:

What would you change?

My body.

You'd change your body, in what way?

I'd turn into white.

You'd turn into white, why would you do that?

So people can't laugh at me.

Why would they laugh at you?

Because they called me black. [Kofi 2,WAI,7; Eddie, 2,MGI,8]

Many boys of African and South and East Asian backgrounds expressed a wish to change their hair texture/colour, eye shape or skin tone. A discomfort with one's body was also found among Eastern European origin boys who discussed uneasiness with their skin tone not being white enough or "too white", however, more frequently these boys discussed being exposed through language proficiency and embodied dispositions such as accent:

I am a Russian, but they only have a clue

Um?

Because I am saying things like a Russian

[...]

Yeah but I look like Irish [1,EEI,8]

Indeed, while all the EEI boys demonstrated that they thought about how others viewed them, especially in relation to how "Irish" or not they looked, the difference between them and those from African and Asian origins was they knew if they did not speak they could sometimes slip from view. This was not possible for minority boys whose skin colour in a predominantly

“white” playground left them highly scrutinized:

Frank: Remember when we were playing with Themba and [...]

Cian: Themba was hiding in the shed but [laugh]

Frank: No point em you can see him eh all the

Cian: They are crap you can see them, I can see him now even when we are not playing you can find them

Frank: No point trying to hide with them [3(II)MG,9 about WAI,9]

Em so does anything else annoy you in the yard then?

Themba: I tries to be quiet and not, em not play football but they still after me [Yeah?] I was playing em chasing but they were shouting at me from football [Yeah?] They were looking at me anyway [...] Everybody is looking at me all the time because my body sticks out. [3(II), WAI,9]

Themba and his peers from African and Asian backgrounds had good reason to believe they were the subject of intense scrutiny which they could not escape due to their appearance. Yet, the acute awareness that one’s body “sticks out” is not simply a function of being a phenomenological minority but it is also a product of discursive structures which exclude and attribute meaning to physical features through a wider nationalist project that constructs Irishness as fundamentally “white” (Garratt [forthcoming-b](#)). The intense awareness of the judgements of others in relation to one’s body is the focus here.

Fanon’s ([1952] 1982) work placed considerable attention on the body. Through his psychosocial approach he dealt with the complexity of assessing one’s body through the distortion of a white colonial gaze. While he described racialization as a “second skin” or symbolically charged “white mask” imposed upon the biological body which ascribes meaning to arbitrary attributes, he also focused on the effect of this on one’s self-consciousness. For Fanon (1982) thoughts of one’s body for the colonized subject, becomes solely a “negating activity” filled with third-person consciousness. In some senses, his analysis mirrors Du Bois’ canonical concept of double consciousness which highlights how self-consciousness acts as a form of domination and control:

A world which yields him no true self-consciousness, but only lets him see himself through the revelation of the other world. It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness ... two warring souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body. ([1903] 2008, 12)

Du Bois brings to the fore the violence of third-person consciousness on one's mental integrity. Self-consciousness as a product of racism is, therefore, at the core of theory within the field of ethnic and racial studies, but if duality is rejected there is more scope to pursue the implications of this, as self-consciousness does not exist in some separate Cartesian mind but is derived through our somatic relationship with the world.

Double estranged

The denial of the body as ourselves perpetuates a myth that the body is merely an object, that one *has* a body but isn't one's body, *has* habits but isn't one's habits, when the body is removed from the self, it is ripe to be interpreted as a project, merely that which can be worked on and improved (Crossley 2001). This has damaging consequences in a racist society, as a core claim within the social sciences is that one can never really know or develop a self in isolation but must use the medium of society to know one's full character (Cooley [1902] 1964). Du Bois (2008) shows that to look at 'one's self through the eyes of others' when these eyes are likely to stare back with hostility is particularly destructive, as it is at least partially in relation to others we come to evaluate ourselves. When the body remains defined only as an object and not who we are, many aspects of it may be possible to augment, but only with great difficulty and expense can racialized features⁸ be changed. Kofi's wish to "turn into white", reveals *how* he would change his body,⁹ but also the fact of his contemplation exposes his estrangement from it, he relates to his body as an object of value rather than an integral part of who he is, which precludes him from the privileges of unconscious embodiment.

This is something Sayad ([1999] 2007) discusses in *The Suffering of the Immigrant*. Focusing on Algerian migrants in France, he argues dominant society requires migrants to "hyper-correct" their appearance, manner and behaviour to be deemed tolerable; resulting in introversion, introspection and anxiety to get things "right". For Sayad ([1999] 2007) this process leads one to develop a tendency to experience oneself as a, "shameful body, a shy, clumsy body with little self-assurance, a body that is experienced with unease ... a body that betrays itself" (2007, 206). He contends the development of introspection for migrants pushes them from habitual into reflexive action and consequently causes a break with their embodied selves. This has particularly damaging consequences within the Bourdieusian framework he works from, as within this approach it is through the body that practice is considered to occur (Garratt 2016).

For Bourdieu the body is what connects us to society, making what could be considered arbitrary phenomena important for our self-worth. Here, action is reinterpreted as practice, "a quasi-bodily involvement in the world" (Bourdieu 1990b, 66) which is meaningful as it purports that we only act in ways

which have significance for us through our habitus. The habitus is the inherited, embodied, predisposed but also adaptable ways individuals have of reading, understanding and interpreting the world in which they live (Bourdieu 2000). Sayad's proposition that migrants' habitual action is disrupted is particularly serious then, as within a Bourdieusian approach embodiment is understood as facilitation rather than denigration, as habitual practice allows us to succeed. Bourdieu explains the nuances of this through the analogy football; he argues that success is the ability to embody a feel for the game without hesitancy and self-doubt:

[t]he fact of being in the game ... the fact of being caught up in and by the game ... games which matter to you are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game. (1998, 76–77)

To be pushed out of habitual action into reflexivity in Sayad's account is to be denied this fluidity and precluded from this ease of belonging through constant self-assessment. If we apply this perspective to the data who then is embodied?

A conventional reading may argue it is minority boys who are embodied, as real and imagined phenotypical markers are given meaning through processes of racialization. Conversely, a simplistic Bourdieusian interpretation could contend it is MGI boys who are embodied, as they are moving with ease through the field of interaction, living his analogy by having a literal "feel for the game". Here, it is those of migrant backgrounds who are at a remove from their bodies by engaging in more forethought than their peers. It is tempting to argue this point, as it neatly challenges racism based on the supposed "embodiment" and "irrationality" of racialized groups by showing it is minority boys who are engaged in more forethought, this paper contends the situation is more nuanced than this. Both groups are embodied but through different modes of consciousness resulting in a habit of reflection for one.

There are two drawbacks of Sayad's work; the first is he follows Bourdieu by splitting his analysis of a disruption of one's internal time from habit. Crossley (2001) has argued that Bourdieu's (1990a) contention that individuals are habitual in three-quarters of their actions is incompatible within his wider theoretical position. In contrast, he argues reflexivity is also a habit, if something of a "second order habit" (Crossley 2001). Secondly, reflexivity potentially describes a number of modes of experience and it is not clear that self-consciousness and reflexivity are equivalent phenomena (Archer 2011). The limits of this paper do not allow for an in-depth analysis of either objection, but what is of concern here is not the mode of reflexivity or its equivalency to reflection or self-consciousness per se, but one step removed from this, namely to contend that behaviour which is usually understood as a

discrete mental process must be reconfigured. If a disembodied mind is untenable, any form of consideration of oneself or one's experiences takes, cannot constitute another mode of existence (Ryle 1949). To suggest otherwise maintains a dualist split.

Indeed, instead of seeing reflection as something other than a form of practice and re-establishing dualism, the situation in this site suggests that to properly capture what is happening it is better to understand this as habitual also:

I am thinking always how to kick the ball [1,WAI,8]

I can't stop, I am worried about it [football] [2,SAI,8]

Always, all the times I am trying to run fast and throw it strong [3(II), EAI,9]

I don't know, then I do know, now I know how to tackle, but sometimes I forget and then I don't know anymore, that is how I think all the time [2,EEI,8]

Thoughts of how well one was playing or how one would be viewed by others as playing was all consuming for these boys, something they "can't stop", and "always" do. The sad irony is the constant focus they gave to football made them less effective players as liberation from the game increases your chances of being innovative within it, as one can take risks more easily and are more likely to be viewed as exciting, skilled and fresh (Bourdieu 1978). MGI boys who had other resources to draw on to support their claims of hegemonic masculinity (Garratt [forthcoming-b](#)) were less invested in performing well and this detachment tended to result in less self-conscious play. A subtle layer of difference did exist between the boys then, as minority boys were more likely to be estranged from their active bodies through a habit of reflection which stilted their actions. This was at its most acute for boys of African and Asian backgrounds whose bodily phenotypes were given meaning through processes of racialization which estranged them from their passive bodies as an object of value (Garratt [forthcoming-b](#)).

However, the importance of the body did not stop at racialization. In this site, many minority boys were "doubly estranged". Firstly, through the phenomenological body which marked them out as not belonging and cause them to feel on display and judged through their bodies and secondly, by heightening self-consciousness of their body as an object, estranging them from their own embodied being. This experience mirrors Sayad's ([1999] 2007) description of a break in one's internal time. In this account though, self-conscious reflection is not understood as a separate form of action from that rooted in habitus, but is itself a habit. This amounts to a compulsion for minority boys to second guess themselves and be constantly aware of

their actions and body. The resulting hesitancy is used by their peers as material evidence to justify their marginalization. Reflection may be empowering when it emerges from forms of social authority and from easiness born of detachment where those already powerful have the recourse to consider the game for the game's sake alone (Bourdieu 1978, 1984). Indeed, Du Bois ([1903] 2008) argues that double consciousness can allow one to possess a privileged epistemological perspective, a "second sight" not available to white Americans. Perhaps though, we are too used to viewing reflection for its emancipator aspects alone; the extent to which it may be a factor in and expression of domination, has been overlooked.

Conclusion

While there is no biological basis to race, the importance of the body in racism did not stop at how it was discursively given meaning in a racist society but went further, by disrupting minority boys embodied selves. To be doubly estranged is to have one's interaction with the world and with oneself fundamentally altered. This alteration is at the level of habitual self-consciousness. How one may feel about one's body is a separate issue, one maybe proud of one's "difference" or have taken on the negative attitudes of others (Hraba and Grant 1970) but how one feels is not the focus here, rather to highlight that consciousness of one's body is habitual and precluded minority boys from the ease of belonging unconscious embodiment brought their peers. The degree to which this concept can be extended to other sites and groups is an invitation to further research. While this paper is not from developmental psychology, scholars within that tradition may wish to examine if the capacity for abstract thinking, which changes with age and experience tempers this concept. Indeed, as the examination of interpretative activities is integral to aspects of cognition and behavioural psychology, a constructive dialogue with these disciplines should be possible and is welcome, especially with work which examines the consequences of different modes of cognition for our actions, for instance Steele's (2010) "stereotype threat" or an engagement with "objectification theory" (Szymanski, Carr, and Moffitt 2010) usually applied to studies of gender and sexuality.

However, while the specificities of double estrangement may not speak to the experience of embodiment throughout the life course or in other contexts, its emergence in this site asks wider questions of the tendency to understand embodiment as something which only demeans and creates "other" groups. If we readjust our understanding of embodiment as our state of existence in the world, the means by which we come to know what the world is; when our body is racialized its impact goes further. It does not reflect off the surface of who we are, (with our real self safely locked away in a disembodied mind), it penetrates to our core. Without an embodied perspective the

objectification of the body in this way risks being trivialized as something which should not really affect the real us, as only a peripheral aspect of ourselves. But when we consider our somatic basis in the world the implications of the debasement of our bodies and marginalization of ourselves through our bodies illuminates its insidious and dangerous consequences.

Notes

1. TII was a cross disciplinary group studying immigration to Ireland. Within the CYCR there were four projects, Learning Together, the North Inner City Schools Survey of school composition, a study of secondary school pupils and a Campbell review of intervention methods.
2. The other schools were girls only and another did not include the 7–9 age group.
3. No cognitive testing was administered to the children but their academic test scores were within the normal range.
4. This is not to deny that a nuanced discussion of the innovative neurological, developmental or cognitive literature may enhance the arguments made in here but this deserves to be more fully explored in a large piece.
5. This is not to deny that measurable variables in motor ability can be a factor but this is explored in Garratt ([forthcoming-a](#)).
6. Soccer football was also a popular in the home countries of the minority boys' parents.
7. Globalised versions of hypermasculinity specifically associated with African American males had an impact on this site but the influence of these representations was far weaker than local constructions.
8. Taking into account practices of skin lightening/darkening, hair straightening/perming and cosmetic surgery.
9. A result of his relationship with a racist society, where "white" bodies are more highly valued in the wider discursive structures of whom can be considered "Irish".

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