

"Violence and Reconciliation: Emotional Healing in
Dionne Brand's *In Another Place, Not Here*"

Rebecca Ashworth

Dionne Brand's novel *In Another Place, Not Here* (1986) explores the Grenadian Revolution of 1979 to 1983 and the subsequent American invasion. This article departs from earlier readings of the novel by bringing the role of emotion into focus. It argues that Brand's novel structures an understanding of what it means to experience states of revolution and violence in their broadest terms. By offering instances when violence is reconciliation, the novel establishes a singular lens through which to view the project of transforming damaged subjectivities and building constructive action.

Brand's novel has received much critical attention, and this article works alongside those critics who have examined emotion and revolution in the work. Joanna Luft explores the self-hatred and trauma of the immigrant experience in Canada, likening these experiences to those found in slave narratives (27-28, 48). John Corr addresses affective coordination and combines sensation, the body, and the erotic to argue that romance and revolution become "intertwined" in Elizete and Verlia's affective and sexual union (113), concluding that the end of the novel signifies "a promise of a rejuvenated affective politics" (128). He also argues that Verlia presents the revolution as a triumph in her diary and that the novel does not foreclose "potential for the present" (128). It is, however, Raphael Dalleo's exploration of emotion and revolution that is the most extensive to date. Dalleo argues that, through the character of Verlia, the novel invokes "the same problematic as *Angela Davis: An Autobiography*, which performs an exaggerated presentation of its subject as a purely rational, genderless intellect" (67). He maintains that Verlia splits her "intellect and feeling," and that her "problem is always her body" (68). Dalleo also argues that Verlia dismisses emotion as "feminine and biological," perceiving it to be a "threat" to her "rational public persona" (68). The love that Verlia strives for in conscious imitation of Che Guevara, Dalleo argues, is abstract and rational, even though Verlia and Elizete's relationship shows the "boundaries" that are "breaking down" between an idealized revolutionary love of the people and romantic love (68). Dalleo concludes that Verlia's love for Elizete is a sexualized love of the intellectual for the peasantry and that Elizete is an object of Verlia's "sexualised gaze" (69). Little attention is

given to Elizete other than the observation that her body "is an unwelcome reminder of her history" and that when she goes to Canada after the revolution she takes up Verlia's role as the "enlightenment seeker" (71-72). This reading presumes that prior to going to Canada Elizete is a woman connected to her body and emotions, thus positioning Verlia and Elizete at opposite poles of thought and emotion. This reading, I will argue, is based on Verlia's reading of Elizete, and not on Elizete's own narrative. Dalleo pays little attention to Abena. She is read as a marginal character who voices a "reoriented intellectual project" that aims to "help ordinary people" (72).

In contrast, I read all three women as having equal narrative importance. I argue that Verlia and Elizete cannot be situated as opposites when read through their own narratives and that the three women's positioning on an intellectual and emotional axis is constantly in flux and is determined by individual experiences, including love and violence. Furthermore, my reading of the novel focusses on self-love rather than romantic love, and emotional rather than political revolution.

Psychiatrist James Gilligan argues that violence has to be understood in relation to emotion. He asserts that "when self-love is sufficiently diminished, one feels shame. But it may be somewhat paradoxical to refer to shame as a 'feeling,' for while shame is initially painful, constant shaming leads to a deadening of feeling, an absence of feeling" (47), a "zombielike existence" (40). Gilligan maintains that, although one may be able to feel rage, emotional numbness includes the loss of the capacity to experience love for self and others (113-114), which occurs through formative "physical violence, neglect, abandonment, rejection, sexual exploitation and violation" (45). He argues that violence "is the ultimate means of communicating the absence of love" (47), occurring when there appears to be no "non-violent means" of preventing "shame or low self-esteem" (112). Psychiatrists Frederick Hickling and Roger Gibson, discussing collective rather than individual trauma and violence, argue that in the context of the Caribbean "rebellion and revolutionary violence have been the unavoidable antithetical responses of collective humanity to combat and heal" colonialism and its legacy (101).

Brand's views on revolution in her essay collection *Bread Out of Stone* (1994) clarify how revolution in *In Another Place* is intrinsically linked to psychological and emotional healing: "Revolutions are not as simple as the words given to them after they fail or triumph. Those words do not account for the sense in the body of clarity or the sharpness in the brain, and they cannot interpret the utter vindication for people like me needing revolutions to reconcile being in a place" (*Bread* 96). Brand's "place" can be read as a geographical

location, but also as a psychic space, a physical body, a lesbian body, an emotional body, and a particular historical time. Revolution is a precondition for reconciliation to this broad meaning of place. Furthermore, as part of the novel takes place in Canada and the Caribbean island of the revolution is unnamed, the meaning of revolution is simultaneously stretched to encompass the geographical spaces that Caribbean people inhabit and narrowed to the individual psyche.

The novel begins with Elizete's narrative, which is the one most transparently influenced by slavery. Importantly, Brand chooses to explore psycho-social violence rather than the obvious physical violence of slavery. After the death of Elizete's mother, Elizete is raised by a woman emotionally stunted by, and preoccupied with, her enslaved ancestor. The woman, deliberately childless, views Elizete as a burden. Love in this community is perceived as useless. Elizete's only meaningful interaction with the woman is listening to her stories. This interaction is accidental, as the woman is speaking to spirits, not Elizete. The stories are of Adela, the enslaved ancestor brought from Africa to the Caribbean, who actively resisted slavery. Adela, although unable to prevent or terminate her pregnancies, refuses motherhood: "The charm she tried to use against each one was left half done in them so, till all of she generations have a way so that nothing is right with them neither" (*In Another Place* 19). The belief that Adela's actions shaped their destiny erodes hope and resistance. It also proves a barrier to love: "Her heart just shut . . . and it shut for the rest of we what follow" (22). Her feelings outline the process by which shame is inculcated in her descendants. As an act of resistance and for her own psychological self-preservation, Adela stops herself from loving her children. Psychologist Helen Block Lewis explains that, for children rejected by their parents, "loss of parental love becomes loss of 'self- love,' via loss of esteem in their eyes" (21). Rejected, Adela's children respond with shame. A lack of self-love inhibits love for others, especially those most like oneself. The shame Adela's children feel is tied to the land and to their history: "Is not just people navel string bury here is their shame and their body" (*In Another Place* 15). Beside shame, the only emotion they feel is "rage" (42), which, as previously discussed, indicates the intensity of the experience of shame.

As another act of resistance, Adela refuses to remember or experience anything she encounters: "Adela call this place Nowhere and with that none of the things she look at she take note of or remember or pass on" (19). This active amnesia eventually leads to her forgetting her "true true name and she tongue" (20). This is symbolic of the loss of African culture, identity, and language. Whilst symbolizing the loss of Africa, however, the story itself preserves the memory and circumstances of this loss.

For Elizete's guardian, Adela's story serves as a guiding example. She feels no love for others, refuses to mother, and accepts colonialism's legacy. Elizete, however, is able to understand that Adela's actions, although necessary for a specific time, are not acts of resistance in the present. In contrast to the community, who "discarded memory like useless news" and "saw nothing could be done" (43), Elizete decides to see everything and is "determined to love this and never to leave" (25). For Elizete, resistance is determined by context. The resistance strategies of the enslaved, if emulated by their descendants, perpetuate a form of mental and emotional slavery. This is to continue to be defined by the institution of slavery.

After the death of her guardian, Elizete is given to a man to work for him in a manner resembling slavery. She is whipped and raped, and, having nowhere to go, cannot escape. Her insight into the legacy of slavery proves insufficient to protect her from the psychological harm: "Who is me to want anything big or small. Who is me to think I is something. I born to clean Isaiah' House and work cane" (4). The lack of question marks at the ends of sentences otherwise structured as questions further emphasizes her low self-esteem, as it precludes Elizete even questioning her negative self-image and her situation.

Elizete's shame is the emotional counterpart of her derogatory beliefs about women and black people in general: "It don't matter what woman say . . . This woman with her mouth flying . . . cheups. I hear something about co-operative. Black people could ever co-operate?" (13). Having never been listened to, Elizete does not listen to other women. Thus, when she meets the revolutionary Verlia, she dismisses her speeches; Elizete's "cheups" of disgust indicates a learned emotional response. Her scepticism about the co-operation of black people signals a distrust, a difficulty in viewing them as authority figures, and a learned dependency. The question mark after "co-operate," however, does indicate hesitancy: on some level, she does not completely discount this possibility. It is through love for Verlia that Elizete's self-perception is transformed: "I must be was in a trance because it was as if Verl wake me up" (6). Through loving a black woman like herself, Elizete learns to appreciate her own blackness and womanhood. With this newfound love and self-love she can reflect that shame feels like being in a trance, dulled to the full range of emotion.

The novel's chronology continues with Elizete's narrative. The end of the revolution, the US invasion, and Verlia's death, however, are bypassed. Instead, the novel focusses on Elizete's trauma. Elizete turns the violence on herself: "She tried to mash her own face in . . . Over and over the stone in her hand moved to the pulp of her mouth, hoping" (50). Psychiatrist and trauma specialist Judith Lewis Herman explains that, for those who suffer

trauma, "self-injury is intended not to kill but rather to relieve unbearable emotional pain, and many survivors regard it, paradoxically, as a form of self-preservation" (109). The depiction of Elizete's violent action, then, enables the psychological violence she suffers to be more readily understood. Both her self-harm and her flight to Canada can be read as self-preservation, and both contain hope.

Nevertheless, this hope disappears before Elizete arrives on Canadian soil. By ordering the narrative such that it omits the revolution and the US invasion, Brand allows Elizete's experiences to be read as typical of both those who fled after the US invasion and of female "illegal" immigrants, thus emphasizing the trauma of being "illegal." Moreover, as Elizete's Canadian experience is post-revolution and Verlia's is pre-revolution, the narrative chronology, finishing as it does with Verlia's death during the US invasion at the end of the novel, positions the Caribbean Revolution as being subsequent to both women's experiences in Canada. This is significant because in Elizete's chronology (the chronology of the novel), rather than linear chronology, the Caribbean Revolution is *still to come*. Thus, despite the trauma of the failure of the revolution and Elizete's subsequent traumatic experiences in Canada, the novel's chronology suggests that revolution is still possible.

On the airplane Elizete experiences humiliation and shame: "They were Third World people going to the white man country. That in itself lowered them in their own estimation, they could not hope to look forward to being treated right . . . their stories were becoming lies because nobody wanted to listen" (*In Another Place* 60). When read as the collective experience of "illegal" immigrants, the passage describes how they are psychologically damaged even before their arrival in Canada. Feeling shame, they relinquish all expectation of acceptance and the acquisition of the structural means for self-respect. In Canada, their previous experiences and identities are not welcome. This is particularly traumatic for Elizete, fleeing the brutal demise of the revolution. Any affirmative memories are now "lies."

As an "illegal" immigrant, Elizete is in constant fear of deportation and is vulnerable to exploitation:

A man you don't know bends you against a wall, a wall in a room, your room. He says this is the procedure, he says you have no rights here, he says I can make it easier for you if I want, you could get sent back. His dick searches your womb . . . His dick is a machete, a knife, all the sharp things found on a kitchen table, all the killing things found in a tool shed. (89)

Brand employs the second person singular to encourage the reader to imagine that the experience is happening to her or him. Using the language of immigration checks and controls, calling it "the procedure," the novel shows how the rape of an "illegal" immigrant can become authorized. The use of the definite article makes the event appear inevitable. The imagery of rape as "searching" also makes the event part of an immigration inspection. The progression from "a wall" to "a wall in a room" to "your room" and finally "womb" moves the act of violence into increasingly personal spaces, whilst depersonalizing each space in turn. Rhonda Copelon, drawing on the work of psychotherapist Lepa Mladjenovic, states that rape makes a woman "homeless in her own body" (197). Elizete is divested of her space and body. The language also suggests terror warfare. Anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom explains, "One of the goals of terror warfare is to reproduce the hegemony of violence in the minutiae of everyday life . . . Perpetrators do this by using common everyday items to produce terror" (279). The allusion to terror warfare—a man's penis being used in the same manner as everyday items are in torture and murder—shows how immigration laws of exclusion render the immigrant woman invisible to the protection of the law. This forces the immigrant into a societal gap in which violence can enter every aspect of her life and body. The previously mundane becomes threatening. She cannot risk deportation and knows that, as an "illegal" immigrant, she has no recourse to justice or even medical care. She both exists and does not exist; illegitimacy in effect sanctions violence.

Verlia's childhood, although also one of poverty, is more privileged than Elizete's. Her family members, however, have no stories with which to make sense of their situation: "All of them had something they could not remember but made excuses for. Their bodies and the acts they committed everyday fell into this attitude, this nightmare, so frequently and intensely, they forgot even longing to be awake" (*In Another Place* 147). Deprived of their own history, their shame is more intense and more ingrained, as is suggested by the word "nightmare" rather than "trance." They have no remembered African ancestor and experience this as grief: "They held grief like mouthfuls of cool water, it purified them even though they boasted of its pain, moaned its injustice even though it was due to their own forgetfulness" (123). Being disconnected from Africa and their own slave ancestry, they have no sense of ancestral self-agency.

The young Verlia, like the young Elizete, differs from others in her community: "She didn't sleep because she had to watch for their carelessness" (130). Verlia understands the power of memory, knowing that the past must not be repeated. At seventeen, Verlia leaves the Caribbean for Canada with the intention of joining the Movement for the liberation of black

people. The relatives Verlia stays with refuse to accept the reality of Canada's racism. For her, their reality resembles death and slavery: "they were offering her a pillow in their grave, in their coffin engraved in ice, ice, ice, in their donut smelling walking dead sepulchral ice . . . they're saying yes, they're right . . . be a good nigger, serve . . . and genuflect" (149-150). In her relatives' zombified existence, shame is embraced and other emotions numbed, symbolized by the coffin engraved in ice. Shame is the emotion Verlia imagines the enslaved must have felt when occupying the role of "good nigger." The possibility of assimilation, however, is seductive: "She is as much in danger of accepting the perfect picture as her uncle" (150). In fear that she may accept this existence—a form of self-harm—she leaves for Toronto to find "the Movement" (151).

For Verlia, being in Canada enables her to "struggle for a more 'scientific' understanding of that place that she's come from" (165). This understanding begins with detachment, but quickly turns emotional and romantic, as she wishes "to live in all the poetry and all the songs, all the revolutionary words" (165). These include Frantz Fanon's words on violence and decolonization, which she quotes directly:

"Decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon . . . It is willed, called for, demanded . . . in the consciousness and in the lives of the men and women who are colonized . . . This change is equally experienced in the form of a terrifying future in the consciousness of another 'species' of men and women: the colonisers."

Terrifying future, muthafucker. Don't even look at me. Prepared for struggle, prepared for struggle. She is weak with the beauty of these words. (Brand, *In Another Place* 157)

Verlia responds emotionally to these words, feeling both vindicated and empowered. This passage from Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961) begins with defining decolonization in general as the changing of one thing to another and proceeds to address anticolonial struggle specifically (27). In this way, it enables Verlia to read Fanon in a postcolonial context, interpreting the violence of the colonized as the violence of the oppressed. Verlia, however, does not refer to the middle section of Fanon's work, in which he discusses the role of intellectual post-violent resistance. I contend that the novel also engages with Fanon, but in a different way than Verlia does: by interpreting Fanon's earlier section on physical hostility,

quoted by Verlia, in light of his later statement that "Total liberation is that which concerns all sectors of the personality" (250).

This psychological liberation is first indicated when Verlia attends a Movement meeting. Initially she is euphoric, feeling "blood gushing in her head" (169). Instead of speaking about violent resistance, the speaker addresses the emotional element of structural and psycho-social violence:

we are not fighting for mere equality with white people—we are fighting for liberation . . . Are you tired of walking out in the street every morning feeling as if your life, your Black life and your Black self are just worthless? . . . This backward capitalist system wasn't made for the benefit of Black people, it was made to exploit us . . . they blame us and make us blame ourselves . . . Self-hate is what it has to offer. (169-170)

Liberation, then, is both emotional and psychological. It is to be without shame or self-hatred. Psychological and emotional liberation interconnect with societal and global structures. Unjust structures damage self-esteem. Anything less than a change to these structures cannot rectify psychological damage and break the causes of violence. The speaker makes Verlia uncomfortable: "the words coming out of his mouth. So simple, slipping into a crevice in her back and in her memory, the thing uncomfortable about self-hate, like it was she and nothing outside of her, that it was some sickness she was born into, this feeling small, small in her heart" (170). This passage provides Fanon's words with new meaning: "Decolonisation is always a violent phenomenon . . . It is willed, called for, demanded . . . in the consciousness" (qtd. in *In Another Place* 157). This violent phenomenon is commonly assumed to be physical violence against the colonizer. The "simple words" of the speaker, however, are about shame and self-hatred. Brazilian revolutionary educator Paulo Freire explains that the oppressed "are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The conflict lies in the choice between being wholly themselves or being divided; between ejecting the oppressor within or not ejecting them" (30). As the language of this passage identifies, for the oppressed, either maintaining or ejecting the oppressor within involves a form of psychological violence, precisely because the internalization of oppression makes it part of the self. The novel emphasizes the emotional aspect of this duality. To understand and identify with what the speaker is saying, Verlia's "struggle" is to fully acknowledge and become conscious of her own shame and self-hatred: the "terrifying future"

(157) is hers. The reason this is so difficult, as the passage identifies, is that emotions are internal and consequently are experienced as self-generated. Verlia's shame and self-hatred are caused by external violence (structural and social), and perpetuated by violence from others' thoughts (external), as well as from her own (internal). To become fully conscious of these emotions, the first step towards internal decolonization is violence against Verlia's own internal colonizer. As Freire identifies, "[L]iberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one" (31). Ejecting this internalized oppressor and birthing a new self is an emotionally and psychologically painful process. Verlia must fight her shame and self-hatred, which are themselves manifestations of psychological violence. Revolution in this sense is internal, distressing, and violent.

Verlia, finding armed struggle unfeasible in Canada, decides to join the revolution in the Caribbean and asks her lover Abena to join her. Verlia's decision to go and Abena's refusal both stem from each woman's specific history. In this way, the novel stresses the personal and emotional dimensions of political decisions. The narrative, however, suspends knowledge of Abena's history and motives, as the reader at this point is confined to Verlia's point of view. Verlia's motives for going are more emotional than theoretical: she feels like she is "shedding and dying" and worries that she is betraying herself if she stays (*In Another Place* 197).

The revolution is presented through two accounts: the first focusses on the love affair between Elizete and Verlia, conveyed through both perspectives, with the second focussing on Verlia's emotions, conveyed through her diary. The novel presents the revolution from a personal rather than political angle. Verlia and Elizete see in each other revolutionary characteristics that they regard as missing from themselves. This needs to be stressed because each woman's appraisal of the other reveals information about herself rather than about the other. The novel emphasizes this by splitting the women's perspectives. Elizete's appraisal of Verlia is narrated in the first part of the novel, whereas Verlia's appraisal of Elizete occurs near the end. For Verlia, Elizete is at one with the land, and Verlia feels "She needed a woman so earthbound" (202). Verlia desires the action and certainty she perceives in Elizete: "She needed someone who believed that the world could be made over as simply as that, as simply as deciding to do it, but more, not just knowing that it had to be done but needing it to be done and simply doing it . . . she was the one who had doubts and what she was saying she merely said but Elizete felt and knew" (202). For Verlia, then, revolutionary writings have never convinced her that revolution will be possible in her lifetime. Revolution has been something for the individual: herself and others she hopes to convert, in terms of internal

decolonization. Through meeting Elizete, she comes to believe that revolution can mean political revolution.

For Elizete, however, Verlia is the one with certainty: "Verl is sure of what she make in her own mind and what she make didn't always exist" (7). Elizete reveres what she perceives as Verlia's disconnection from the physical: "she is not here, she is dreaming of things we don't dream" (15). Elizete is inspired by Verlia's idealism, which imagines a total transformation of people and place. Both women perceive the other as grace. For Elizete, Verlia is grace in the form of transformation and possibility: "Everything changing for good" (74). Verlia rather views grace as the unity of body (action) and emotion: "That she would envy hardship, that she would envy the arc of a cutlass in a woman's hand . . . such avenging grace . . . anyone with such a memory would know more, be more than she" (202-203). For Verlia, Elizete is connected to her own body, her emotions, specifically vengefulness, and the land and its memory. As Verlia believes Elizete is connected to land, Elizete believes Verlia is connected to the spirits through her body: "That was Verlia's love, the people buried in the field . . . She remember them in she body. Vein does remember blood. The spirits call she and make their display in she" (84). Here Elizete perceives Verlia as being unified in spirit, emotion, body, and intellect.

What each perceives in the other, and feels to be lacking in herself, provides the women with the revolutionary force that overcomes their individual shame. The fact that they each value what they perceive in the other makes positioning the women as opposite ends of the cognition-emotion continuum impossible: Verlia values emotion, Elizete values abstract thought, and both see unity in the other. United through their love of each other, they symbolize a gendered revolutionary character. The physical aspects are discipline, action, and connection to the land. The mental aspects are idealism and the memory of struggle. The emotional aspects are vengefulness, love, and hope. This is contrary to revolutionary rhetoric that posits, as Verlia quotes, that romantic love "is what fucks up revolutions" (218). This is a rejection of African American revolutionary Angela Davis's words that lesbian love hinders developing the necessary "political dissatisfaction" (55). Freire, whose work incorporates Che Guevara's writings, including his words on love, argues that real love "is an act of courage, not of fear" (70-71), and that it is "lovelessness which lies at the heart of the oppressors'" violence (27). Lovelessness, the lack of love for self or others, is a fundamental aspect of shame. Self-love takes courage, especially for Verlia and Elizete, who have to experience the pain of ejecting the internalized colonizer to move from shame to self-love. Indeed, Elizete likens their love to physical pain: "I wouldn't call nothing that we do love because love too

simple . . . All that opening like breaking bones" (*In Another Place* 78). Love for each other helps them to love themselves, and it is only through self-love that they are able to love the other.

Verlia's diary is symbolic of the novel as a whole. Verlia initially plans to record the revolution in her diary, but rather than chronicle events and facts, it records her emotions. Significantly, the novel does not engage with debates about politics and it omits to mention whether Verlia and Elizete participate in violence. Fanon suggests that "hatred and resentment—'a legitimate desire for revenge'—cannot sustain a war of liberation" (111). Neglecting to offer an account of the additional emotions necessary, he suggests instead that it is the "force of intellect" and "violence alone" that shows the people their leaders' "power and authority," which "insure fresh conditions for progress" (117-118). This neglect in revolutionary writing is emphasized when Verlia contemplates the experiences of other revolutionaries: "I wonder if [Cayetano] Carpio felt the mix of lethargy and rage that I feel. This place holds you down with an unweighable load. I feel as if I'm in that sleep that you want to wake up from but cannot" (*In Another Place* 214). Verlia imagines talking to Guevara: "What I want to know, Che, is if you ever wake up and it is all all right" (214). Revolutionary writing does not account for this mix of lethargy and rage. The interdisciplinary discourse on emotion also neglects to discuss this feeling in a specific context. The description of Verlia's feelings, then, offers new insights into both revolutionary writing and emotion discourse. Verlia's account also emphasizes how emotions in revolution rapidly fluctuate from loneliness, to love, lethargy/shame, and rage, and then to joy: "I stood in the militia and the love of the people all around us made me the happiest I've been" (218). The joy Verlia experiences indicates that at this point she is free from shame. She feels self-love in a we-self context. Thus, Verlia achieves emotional decolonization that can be read as an internal revolution.

In Another Place extols the expression of the united will of the people. Verlia agrees with the party when they arrest Clive (the fictional characterization of the leader of the revolutionary New Jewel Government, Maurice Bishop). A comrade tells her that "if the people go one way and the party another, the party is wrong no matter how correct the political line" (223). Verlia comes to accept this view when the people free Clive: "I realized that at that moment the revolution had triumphed because the people, people who had been afraid, with all the governments before, of expressing their will had come out and done just that, exactly what the revo said they could" (224-225). The novel defines the triumph of a revolution as the moment the people express their will. The specifics in terms of actions,

politics, and motives are of lesser significance, as are subsequent events. It is important to note that this triumph does not necessitate physical violence. It also forces a reconsideration of the judgement of a revolution as a triumph or a failure and who is qualified to make such a judgement.

Following a linear chronology, Elizete's move to Canada would occur at this point. However, it is after describing the trauma of the US invasion that Abena's story is narrated. The novel's chronology has Abena's narrative, the woman most psychologically harmed by her upbringing, occurring after the US invasion. Thus, Abena's narrative aids understanding of the emotional trauma of the demise of the revolution. The narrative structure also functions to make the trauma of the invasion and the psychological and structural violence of Canada's racism analogous. Thus, we are encouraged to read Abena's experiences as those of Caribbean children post-US invasion as well as pre-revolution. The depiction of Abena's childhood begins when she moves to Canada at the age of twelve to be with her mother. For Abena, violence is transmitted through her mother:

[they] washed our faces in their self-hatred. Self-hatred they had learned from the white people . . . they hated us because they saw their reflection in us . . . they saw their souls assaulted and irrecoverable, wounded from insult and the sheer nastiness of white words and they beat us abused us terrorized us as they had been terrorized and beaten and abused . . . they themselves had been so twisted from walking in shame that they twisted our bodies. (231)

The daily humiliations and constant feeling of shame her mother suffers as the result of structural violence and racism leads her to feel self-hatred. Self-hatred is a more violent and active emotion than shame. As psychiatrist Otto Kernberg explains, "the primary aim of one consumed by hatred is to destroy its object . . . an object who at bottom is both needed and desired . . . hatred always reflects the psychopathology of aggression" (65). Abena becomes the object of her mother's self-hatred; her mother seeks to destroy her through psychological and physical violence. The diction of physical violence—"assaulted," "wounded," and "beaten"—in this passage is used to stress the fact that psychological violence is no less aggressive or damaging.

As an act of resistance and self-preservation, Abena cuts off her "Emotions. She'd cut them off to stave off her mother's blows" (239). Shutting off her emotions in childhood means that she is unable to feel them in adulthood: "If someone wanted an emotion from her

it paralysed her . . . Emotions were too dramatic for her. If someone asked her for one she only gazed at them sliding as far back in her head as she could. Recoiled. Repelled" (238). The adult Abena is unable and unwilling to feel and recognize her emotions. She has to depend "on others to read them for her and then she nodded yes and no" (239). Abena, unable to access her emotions and act in her own self-interest, can neither join Verlia in going to the revolution nor try to stop her: "she'd been paralysed . . . she wanted to say, 'I'll come, too,' and she wanted to say 'Don't leave, Vee.' But she said nothing" (238-239). Abena's two opposing wishes indicate that her motive for either action is her attachment to Verlia, rather than either agreement or disagreement with the aims of the revolution. Abena can neither speak nor act because she still feels the "machete blade against her cheek-bone" (240). This account of their decisions positions emotion above politics. For both women shame governs their decision: Abena's extreme shame cuts off her emotions and Verlia's sense of imminent shame propels her into activity as prevention. Thus the synthesis of each woman's experiences and emotions up until this specific point in time determines her decision.

Following the novel's chronology, Abena's narrative, positioned after the revolution and the US invasion, becomes symbolic of the emotional numbness and demise of a revolutionary force that resulted from these events: trauma and shame. Abena's narrative, however, closes with Abena and Elizete finding solace in each other and finally beginning to voice their pain. For Abena this is the feeling of having been rejected when Verlia left, and for Elizete it is the feeling that Verlia left her when she jumped to her death. In this way, Abena's narrative ends with hope. Voicing their pain is the first step to overcoming shame and trauma.

The novel ends with Verlia's death and is related from multiple perspectives. Someone sees "the guns driving them off the cliff's side," another sees "them tumble, hit, break their necks," and Elizete sees "Verlia, running, turning, leap[ing] off the cliff" (246). This image calls to mind the stories of Caribs and the enslaved who committed suicide as an act of resistance. Verlia, like Adela, flies back to Africa. This ambiguity allows her death to be read as a final act of resistance, for while it does not detract from US culpability for her death, it claims triumph rather than defeat. In "death," Verlia experiences "flying out to sea . . . and she is weightless and deadly. She feels nothing except the bubble of a laugh . . . She's in some other place already, less tortuous, less fleshy" (246-247). Verlia finally escapes her body—a body transcribed/oppressed historically.

Verlia's escape, however, is not into the intellect. The weight that she has felt during her life is as much emotion (shame) as body. In death she feels joy: the absence of shame. Her laugh is significant. Brand explains in *A Map to the Door of No Return* that the moment that

Bishop was freed the crowd was celebratory and laughing: "It is possible to laugh in moments which turn out to be terrifying and tragic. You do not know that it is going to be so, you are living in the present, in each second, and so there was laughter in the crowd. Something good had happened" (162). Laughter thus connects the two events, equating Verlia's death with the moment of revolutionary triumph. It also again clarifies how triumph can be contained to a moment. The power of joy is emphasized by the words "weightless and deadly." Joy and true self-love are revolutionary emotions.

Through focussing on emotion rather than the revolution's political strife and physical violence, the novel shifts the focus to the systemic and structural violence that, whether in the Caribbean or Canada, can result in shame and self-hatred. Consequently, living a life truly free of violence, however desirable, is not yet a possibility. Through continually replaying the movement through shame, righteous indignation, and action, into self-love, regardless of linear chronology, *In Another Place, Not Here* enables emotional revolution to persist and to be valued. As the novel clarifies, the real triumph of the revolution was the moment of unity and the collective expression of self-respect. Self-esteem and emotional healing, as the novel demonstrates, is the definition of revolution. The novel reclaims and extends this moment.

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