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By Astrid Rasch

ABSTRACT
This essay considers a researcher's anxiety at submitting a trauma memoir to critical scrutiny. By studying the uneven distribution of grievability in a white expatriate's memoir of Zimbabwe, it explores how this anxiety can open up for a reading strategy that is sensitive to the political power of selective empathy.

KEYWORDS
selective empathy; trauma memoirs; grievability; Zimbabwe; anxious reading

Introduction

For whom do we cry when we read a memoir of trauma? How might empathy for some of a memoir's characters interfere with or contribute to a critical scrutiny of its politics? In the following, I will discuss a memoir by Peter Godwin, a white expatriate Zimbabwean, which prompted me to think about such questions. Godwin's memoir *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun* (2006) treats Robert Mugabe's post-2000 "fast-track land reforms" with a heavy focus on the predicament of whites. As I was reading this memoir, I was constantly pulled in two opposite directions. On the one hand, there was something in Godwin's representation of the crisis in Zimbabwe that did not sit well with me—it "rub[bed me] the wrong way."[1] On the other hand, every time I started to interrogate what that might be, I felt blocked by an anxiety about whether I was doing injustice to the real-life victims he describes. It is this dilemma that I want to take as my point of departure in this essay. It is fascinating and unnerving to watch emotions that I normally value highly become stumbling blocks. Countless times, I have considered abandoning the project of a critical reading of this text, out of a worry that such a

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reading would somehow do violence to the victims it describes. However, rather than abandon a critical reading out of empathy for those represented, I propose a strategy of *anxious reading*, which, I argue, allows us to see that this empathy is in fact selective.

Paul Gilroy has argued that in British media coverage of the Zimbabwean crisis, the "repetition of tragic southern African themes" was "deployed to contest and then seize the position of victim." It is a similar strategy to take "possession of [the] coveted role" as victim that I am unpacking here.[2] In Godwin's memoir, as in western coverage of Zimbabwe more generally, white victimhood is achieved through a fostering of in-group identification between the victims and the white western audience—at the expense of the black majority. Godwin compares white Zimbabweans to persecuted Jews, emphasizes their family-ness and goodness while granting them voice and agency. In contrast, the black victims of the upheaval appear mostly as a backdrop for his depiction of a nation in chaos, in which whites are represented as the primary targets and the most grievable victims: "Some lives are grievable, and others are not"; as Judith Butler suggests, "the differential allocation of grievability that decides what kind of subject is and must be grieved, and which kind of subject must not, operates to produce and maintain certain exclusionary conceptions of who is normatively human: what counts as a livable life and a grievable death?"[3] What I want to explore critically in reevaluating my emotional response to Godwin's memoir is how some victims are made more grievable than others, and how the resultant selective empathy "works" on the reader to deflect attention away from the moral ambiguities of a text and its context. There is an unspoken assumption that because these are families under threat, we must suspend our critical inquiry into the historical role they played in a racially unequal society, and into the continued inequalities of wealth that may partly explain, if not justify, the crisis. To understand the political implications of the text, we must interrogate Godwin's selective focus on white victims, even though—indeed because—that interrogation might provoke ethical anxiety in the researcher.

What I am proposing here is a reading strategy. Like Judith Fetterley's feminist "resisting reader" who looks at male texts with "fresh eyes" so that they "lose their power to bind us unknowingly to their designs," the anxious reader seeks to uncover the politics of a text through a resistant and self-aware reading, paying particular attention to the selective nature of one's "empathic unsettlement."[4] In the first half of this essay, I will justify this strategy of *anxious reading* from a theoretical angle, placing it in the context of research on trauma texts and life writing. In the second half, I will demonstrate what anxious reading might look like in practice through the example of an analysis of Godwin's

memoir. I will illustrate how the lens of anxious reading allows the text's invitation to selective empathy to come into focus. In my analysis, I will consider some of the tools the author uses to create the grievability of some victims that is causing my anxiety in the first place.

Selective Empathy in Trauma Texts

The proposed strategy of anxious reading is a response to the ethical conundrum which faces me as a reader of trauma texts that are politically dubious. In this section, I will explore how trauma texts may "work" on their readers through selective empathy, and the ethical dilemma this places on the reader.

Scholars of trauma narratives have taught us that these stories come to us at a considerable price. As Selma Leydesdorff et al. argue, it "takes a particular form of courage, and a painful effort, to call to mind those phases of life in which excessive stress, sadness and violence have been experienced."[5] Victims of trauma are all too often silenced, not only by the psychic effects of trauma itself but also by surroundings that may meet victims' stories "with resistance and denial."[6] This means that readers have to listen carefully: "Such narratives therefore require particularly sensitive kinds of readings."[7] Once the victim has overcome the challenges of facing and articulating the trauma, our job is to "bear witness."[8] Trauma stories thus place certain ethical responsibilities on us as readers.

Much of the scholarly literature that has developed ethical frameworks for how to respond to trauma texts has focused on testimonies by historically disadvantaged people whose status as victims is fairly unambiguous, whether as Holocaust survivors, Aboriginal Australians of the Stolen Generations, victims of the South African apartheid regime, or former child soldiers.[9] These are groups that have been collectively, as well as individually, exploited and brutalized. But they are far from the only sources of trauma texts. Indeed, global and local inequalities and the market structures of publishing are such that it is much easier for members of privileged groups to write memoirs about their traumatic experiences and access large audiences. All things being equal, victims of child abuse or catastrophes are more likely to become published memoirists if they live in the Global North than their counterparts in the South. In addition, the power of their trauma texts on their western readers seems only to be increased by the unexpectedness of their suffering. As Richard Delgado argues, "Norm theory holds that our reaction to another person in distress varies according to the normalcy or abnormalcy of his or her plight in our eyes. If you see an upper-class white family being evicted from their nice suburban home, you feel alarmed

because you know that sort of situation is abnormal for them. … But if you see starving Biafrans on TV, you feel less empathy because you know that is their ordinary situation. Famines are common in that part of the world, so your heart does not go out to them as it would to a neighbor who materialized on your doorstep not having eaten in eight days."[10] Because of what psychologist Martin Hoffman calls "familiarity bias," privileged white westerners like myself find it easier to identify with victims who look like ourselves, and our empathy is amplified because their crises are perceived to be abnormal, a violation of our own privilege.[11]

I am not suggesting that victims from privileged groups are not deserving of our empathy, but in listening to some victims, perhaps our attention is also diverted away from others. Allison Mackey explores how trauma texts "work" on their readers, suggesting that texts by marginalized authors may "coax" their readers into "recognizing vast webs of power and complicity in which we all form a part."[12] However, a text may also "coax" its readers into less progressive realizations. It may "work" through selective empathy to solidify rather than challenge existing power structures. Discussing novels, Anna Lindhé addresses this "flipside of empathy" and asks, "can we credibly argue that reading literature produces ethical effects if empathetic responses to one character occur *at the expense of* another character in the story world?"[13] As I will explore below, Lindhé's question becomes even more urgent when applied to life writing rather than novels. What I am interested in at present are the political consequences of such an unequal distribution of attention and empathy. Here, it might be useful to consider Dirk Moses and Michael Rothberg's conversation about the ethics of transcultural memory, in which they discuss the heated debate that has sometimes flared up about the relative suffering of victims of, for instance, the Holocaust and Stalinist terror. Rothberg proposes that when the suffering of different groups is being compared, we must take into consideration "to what ends the comparison is being made; here a continuum runs from *competition* to *solidarity*."[14] When, as we will see in the second half of this essay, Godwin focuses on the traumatic experiences of white families and uses black suffering mostly as a backdrop, we can place his text on what Rothberg calls an "*axis of political affect*" by asking whether he does so to call for mutual solidarity between white and black experience or to compete for empathy.[15] The writer's invitation for the reader to identify with white families in pain and the near neglect and anonymization of black victims have the effect of suggesting that whites have a particular claim to victimhood, which competes with and overrides that of black people.

Trauma texts encourage the reader's empathy with the predicament of the protagonists, the feeling of their pain. Ashleigh Harris, who has also studied western representations of the Zimbabwean crisis, has observed that once we identify with victims of violence, we stop asking critical questions.[16] She quotes Slavoj Žižek's argument that the horror of violence and our empathy with victims prevent us from thinking clearly. He argues that in order to think conceptually about violence, we need to ignore its traumatic impact: "there is something inherently mystifying in a direct confrontation with [violence]: the overpowering horror of violent acts and empathy with the victims inexorably function as a lure which prevents us from thinking."[17] Similarly, the tragic family deaths in Godwin's memoir enable a kind of truth claim, which insists on emotional truth and short-circuits critical examination of the political implications of how these deeply personal losses are represented. Insisting on such a critical examination thus seems to run counter to the ethical demand of empathy for victims of trauma. In a sense, as researchers, we find ourselves placed in a situation where doing what is our job—the critical reading of texts—suddenly appears unethical.

So, how might we continue to do that job without merely shying away from this feeling of unethical appearances? Whereas Žižek suggests that we should ignore the traumatic impact of violence in order to study it, I suggest that we take that traumatic impact as our point of departure. This allows us to study not violence itself, but our own empathetic response to the traumatized victim, and to ask how such a response focuses our attention on some victims over others. As readers of memoirs, we must dare to subject texts to critical scrutiny despite, *and alongside*, the empathy that we feel for our subjects. Developing a theoretical framework for unpacking the way trauma stories act through affect may be one way for us to tackle the ethical bind in which these texts seem to put us. This entails acknowledging both the pain that the author has gone through and the traumatic experience of those represented, and at the same time examining the way in which that trauma is described and how it functions in the moral and political economy of the text in its context.

I find Dominick LaCapra's concept of "empathic unsettlement" helpful here. LaCapra's project is different from mine in that he is not interested, in his examination of Holocaust survivor testimonies, in challenging these accounts and revealing what is left out. However, he too attempts to find a response which allows itself to be affected by the trauma without letting it "become a pretext for avoiding economic, social, and political issues."[18] LaCapra describes how historians might respond to watching video testimony of trauma survivors with "anxiety … both

because of the evident, often overwhelming pain of the survivor recalling" and because of one's helplessness to do anything about the source of the pain. This anxiety, he says, increases because of the "ethically induced feeling that one may not be responding with sufficient empathy."[19] He warns against the polarities of giving in completely to this anxiety and identifying with the victim, or subsuming the response under "extreme objectification and harmonizing narratives" by treating trauma accounts as any other archive.[20] Instead, he "insist[s] on the need for empathic unsettlement, and the discursive inscription of that unsettlement, in response to traumatic events or conditions."[21] The reading strategy of anxious reading is one form of such "empathic unsettlement," paying attention to and documenting our own emotional response without letting this stand in the way of scholarly work. While my approach differs from LaCapra's in my critical interrogation of the narration of the trauma itself and what it leaves out, it is precisely by responding to the "empathic unsettlement" induced by the text that these omissions can be brought to the surface.

When referring to this as *anxious reading*, I want to highlight a productive sense of unease. Gilroy and Butler both use "anxiety" to describe the unease of privileged westerners when confronted with the fact that they are involved in the world and with the sense of their own vulnerability that this realization brings. Gilroy says that, in Britain, the media response to the Zimbabwean crisis has been an "anxiety over the fate of Britain's abandoned colonial kith and kin."[22] Butler describes how Americans reacted with "anxiety" at the "loss of their First Worldism," when 9|11 forced the realization that attacks could happen within their borders.[23] In their usage, anxiety is a negative emotion with little constructive potential. But maybe anxiety holds possibilities as well. My own anxiety also springs from my realization that my critical work is involved with the world; in studying life writing, my ethical responsibilities seem all the more pressing. It stems, too, from a sense of my own vulnerability and that of the characters of the text. I am faced with two ethical obligations at once that work on different, maybe even incommensurable, levels: the personal obligation, from one person to another, not to do violence to traumatized victims and the structural or professional obligation as a researcher to do my part to scrutinize strategies of power. This incommensurability prevents any easy cost-benefit analysis. We want our work to make a difference, but we want it to make a positive difference. However, rather than stop at anxiety and abandon the critical project, and rather than ignoring anxiety in order to be critical readers, anxious reading can be a productive reading strategy. In the end, the stumbling block may become our stepping-stone.

Life Writing: Empathy for Real People

For readers of life writing, the anxiety of critical interpretation is enhanced by the referentiality of the text. The fact that the trauma depicted is real affects our emotional as well as critical response. In his analysis of Alexandra Fuller, another white expatriate Zimbabwean, Tony Simoes da Silva says that he realizes his irreverent reading of her memoir may come across as "unethical" because "[o]ne of the contractual obligations of life-writing is that the reader must at the very least respect the truth, and the trauma the writer proposes."[24] In this section, I want to explore the consequences of this contractual obligation by examining the phenomenon of empathy and how it works differently in life writing to fiction.

In Richard Wilson and Richard Brown's definition, empathy is "a projection of one's own mental state into that of another. Whereas in a state of sympathy one says 'I recognize your pain,' in empathy one says 'I feel your pain.'"[25] Or, as Hoffman puts it, empathy is "an affective response more appropriate to another's situation than one's own."[26] This kind of fellow feeling has consequences. It may stir us into action and it is not easily put aside. It can take place between people who meet face-to-face, but it can also happen between a reader and the characters in a book. Such readers' empathy tends to be valued highly in scholarly literature.[27] Some theorists propose that it can translate into altruistic action in the real world, while others believe that it simply makes for better readers.[28]

The standard assumption that empathy is a good has come under attack from scholars of post-colonial, feminist, and critical race theory. They point out the universalistic premise of the notion that we all feel the same, and question whether it is possible, and desirable, to put oneself in the other's shoes.[29] They also argue that empathy may divide the world into socially privileged empathizers and less fortunate sufferers in a way that maintains existing hierarchies and fixes the "other" as the "object of empathy."[30] While I wholeheartedly agree with the criticism, I wonder if what they are describing is actually empathy or rather what Delgado refers to as "false empathy"—the assumption that one is feeling what the other is living through while in fact one is only extrapolating from one's own limited experience.[31] Stirred by "false empathy," those in power fail to listen to those they purport to help, and consequently the oppressed are not offered what they are asking for but what those in power imagine they would have wanted in their situation.[32]

However, I believe it would be mistaken to draw from this criticism the conclusion that we should not attempt to make the real imaginative leap required to be moved by the pain of others. Indeed, as Carolyn

Pedwell demonstrates, there are literary works that alert their readers to the impossibility of one-to-one affective translation, and hold the potential for improved recognition precisely through an acknowledgment of difference.[33] In other words, writers may be more or less ambitious in their attempts to push readers beyond their easy in-group identification. It is revealing that Delgado's remedy to false empathy is storytelling in the voice of the oppressed.[34] With Jean Stefancic, he expresses the hope that "[e]ngaging stories can help us understand what life is like for others and invite the reader into a new and unfamiliar world."[35] As I will explore below, when we scrutinize our own empathic response to a text, we become aware of how some characters are allowed to tell such stories in their own voice and others are not.

While Delgado's work springs from the real-life context of legal storytelling, much of the literary work on empathy has focused on fiction. An important discussion in the study of narrative empathy is the so-called "paradox of fiction"—that is, "whether genuine emotion can be felt in response to a fictitious character or event."[36] Writers of fiction can elicit emotional responses from their readers that resemble the empathy they would have for real people.[37] In memoir, however, that is not the issue: a particular challenge of studying life writing is precisely that we know that the textual world corresponds roughly to the real world. However, this genre has as yet received insufficient attention from scholars of narrative empathy. Suzanne Keen, a key theorist in the field, notes that while "[n]onfictional narrative genres may involve narrative empathy … most of the published commentary and theorizing on narrative empathy centers on fictional narratives, especially novels and film fiction." Indeed, she relegates the study of readers' emotional responses to nonfiction to "future empirical work."[38]

The memoir thus poses a unique challenge to the study of narrative empathy. While post-structuralists have reminded us of the fictionality of any text, including the autobiographical, there is still an assumption at the base of our reading of memoirs that the author on the title page corresponds to the narrator and the protagonist.[39] The post-structuralist attention to the constructed nature of the text is nevertheless useful in unpacking the textual strategies and effects that confront us. So, on the one hand, we have the reader's almost intuitive perception that what they find in the text is real. On the other hand, we have literary tools that help us understand the way in which life as it is lived becomes something else, how it is constructed into meaning as it becomes text. This tension forms the background for the anxiety I experience in my critical reading of memoirs. Only the most cynical of literary critics is able to abandon entirely that instinctive *feeling* that what is represented in the text is real—a feeling supported by our knowledge that the person

named on the title page has indeed lived a life which more or less corresponds to the one described in the text.[40] As a consequence, we do not want to disregard the *real* pain experienced by this *real* person; our interpretation, our critical work, is constrained by a sense of ethical obligation toward another human being.

By the same token, however, our failure to empathize with certain other people in the same memoir also has implications for real people. The emphasis on white victims in Godwin's memoir reflects most western media coverage. In contributing a forceful firsthand account of the Zimbabwean crisis to this catalogue, Godwin assists in a selective critique of Mugabe's regime, which fails to put human rights abuses more generally center stage because of the affective investment in a minority of the victims. This may have had real implications for the kind of pressure western states put on the Zimbabwean government.

At the end of the day, readers and writers of autobiographies and memoirs judge life writing according to different standards than they do novels. Questions as to whether the author is "lying" only make sense in the context of autobiography precisely because of the assumption of truth value.[41] This is what accounts for the furor over the revelation of "fake" autobiographies like those by Helen Dale|Demidenko and James Frey.[42] Unless we have indications otherwise, we take a text labeled "memoir" to refer (in broad strokes) to real events. In the case of Godwin, we know that he is a real person writing about a real human catastrophe, which he and the families he describes really did experience. This not only means that we can question his representation of events, but also that our empathy for the book's characters is an empathy for real people. An ethical aspect thus enters our reading that *is not relevant for fiction*: Are we being unfair in our critique? Could we end up hurting someone by it? Should we, perhaps, abandon the project altogether? We become anxious readers.

Because we are reading memoir and not fiction, we may be concerned that our critical work is doing harm to, or disrespecting the trauma of, another person. At the same time, however, our critical training tugs at us, prompting us to take it a step further, to ask still more probing questions. Some scholars limit themselves to asking whether what is in the text really does correspond in detail to "what actually happened."[43] Did this person in fact go through this particular trauma? In the best cases, this is important historical work, a crucial part of source criticism, as when Stuart Ward scrutinizes Godwin's account in his first memoir of having been at a famous crime scene as a child, which Ward argues he can hardly have witnessed and even less remembered.[44] In the worst cases, the fact-checking of trauma memoirs amounts to a negative rhetorical stance of suspicious questioning of victims, a stance that can be

abused to deny victims the reality of their experiences. Exploring one example of this stance, Kate Douglas has documented the unethical obsession of the press with the veracity of a child soldier's account, which, she argues, neglects the way trauma affects memory.[45] In any case, simply questioning the historical accuracy of a memoir is not enough for my own literary hankerings. Instead, I believe that it is important also to ask about the internal workings of the text and its place in a broader discursive field. Whose trauma is represented in what ways? And how does that reflect tendencies in the time and place where the text was produced?

The fact that the events we read about are not invented but refer to the real world may cause us to pause. Does it make sense to interrogate representations of trauma? After all, Godwin did not decide for white people to be the victims of racist violence so that he had something to write about. In reading life writing critically, we might expect people to respond that this is what actually happened, and that the victims in the text are actual victims, who have actually gone through the suffering described. This referentiality is at the root of my hesitations about critically investigating the text. However, life writing is about choices and representation: it necessarily entails the non-writing of most of one's experiences.[46] Therefore, it is relevant to ask which experiences have been singled out for inclusion and how they have been represented. In the case of Godwin's memoir, we will see how such an examination reveals differences in the representation of white and black suffering, and an emphasis on the former at the expense of the latter.

Reading through Tears

Equipped with this theoretical understanding of anxious reading as a reading strategy, let us put it into practice through an analysis of *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*. The context of Godwin's memoir is the so-called "fast-track land reforms" of the early 2000s. Here, I will briefly sketch this context and then consider how Godwin invites us to empathize with the white victims of the reforms, while the black victims come to form the backdrop.

When Zimbabwe emerged as an independent state in 1980, it was after almost a century of white-settler rule under the names of Southern Rhodesia, Rhodesia, and Zimbabwe Rhodesia. While the white minority saw their rule as more enlightened than the apartheid regime across the border in South Africa, from the mid-1960s they experienced increasing alienation from the international community as they maintained transparently racist policies long after the "wind of change" had brought majority rule to the rest of the continent. Voting rights were de facto

restricted to white people, housing was segregated, pay was differentiated according to race, and the best lands were reserved for white farmers.[47] The latter issue of land, in particular, has left its mark on Zimbabwe. Many enduring conflicts between racial and ethnic groups come down to struggles over fertile land.[48] In the period after independence, there were some reforms underway to redistribute land holdings on a "willing buyer, willing seller" basis, but land tenure continued to be highly unequal. Relieved that Mugabe encouraged them to stay, many white farmers remained in the country. Two decades after independence, in a country of twelve million people, a tiny minority of 4,500 white farmers still owned a third of the country's land mass, including the majority of the most productive land.[49]

Their position, however, was threatened as Mugabe abandoned his conciliatory line. From the mid-1990s, the president came under increasing pressure with rampant inflation, an unchecked AIDS crisis, and growing calls for democratic reform. Seeking a scapegoat for the country's ills, Mugabe singled out white farmers as "enemies of Zimbabwe."[50] In the so-called "fast-track land reforms" in the early 2000s, farms were taken over by squatters, and farmers and farmworkers were attacked and displaced. Alois Mlambo argues that the century-long history of land ownership on explicitly racist grounds had instilled a racialized logic in the way people in the country—black and white—thought about land. This meant that the government and government-sanctioned media were able to rally parts of the population around the idea that white farmers were to blame for anything that was wrong in the country. The very real continued inequalities of wealth along racial lines only helped to shore up this argument.[51] A similar reracialization of discourse took place among white Zimbabweans in and outside of the country, to the extent that Ranka Primorac describes the emergence of a "neo-Rhodesian" discourse that returned to past racial binaries.[52] While more subtle than some of his compatriots, the selective empathy of Godwin's memoir reflects this neo-Rhodesian discourse. As Primorac argues, he tells a dehistoricized account of the crisis that neglects the history of "colonial depredation and postcolonial white racism."[53]

While the state-sanctioned narrative in Zimbabwe was virulently anti-white, western media coverage of the crisis concentrated on the plight of white victims.[54] A number of researchers have noted that the focus on white farmers, often identified by name, did not reflect the overrepresentation of black farmworkers among those who were assaulted, killed, or raped during the occupations.[55] Human Rights Watch observed that attacks on white farm-owners "have attracted greater international and national publicity than those on black Zimbabweans. … Throughout the process of land occupation, however, most victims of the violence have

been poor, rural, black Zimbabweans."[56] Out of 4,500 white farming families, approximately 4,000 were evicted from their lands during the crisis. Proportionally, these are stark figures. However, in absolute numbers, they pale by comparison with the hundreds of thousands of black farmworkers who were displaced after they, too, were evicted from the white-owned farms.[57] In the period 2000–2004, eleven white farmers were killed, each of them a human tragedy. But in the same period, and much less reported though surely human tragedies in their own right, 190 black Zimbabweans, in particular supporters of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change, also lost their lives.[58]

This skewed media representation is a mirror image of, and indeed may have been inspired by, white settler memoirs about the crisis like Godwin's.[59] Exploring Godwin's representation of the crisis allows us to see selective empathy at work. Painting a picture of the horrors of the land reforms, Godwin focuses on a handful of individual white victims. He interviews Maria, a young Swedish woman who came to Zimbabwe as an aid worker and whose husband has just been brutally murdered. While Godwin interviews her, her toddler twins "crawl restlessly over her. 'They still don't really understand that their father has been killed,' she says."[60] She describes how the farm she and her husband had built from "an overgrown mess" was invaded by war veterans ("wovits"). The passage focuses on the loss experienced by Maria and her innocent children, not the story of the girl whose rape caused the situation to escalate:

> "When the war vets first invaded, we had fairly good relations with them. But then one weekend when I was away they raped a little girl in our compound, and our workers got the hell in with them."
>
> That's when the trouble started. The workers chased the wovits off the farm, and soon they returned with reinforcements and seized Stevens.
>
> "When David was taken away by vets, the last thing he said to me as he left was, 'Don't worry, darling, I'll be safe.' I never saw him alive again. … " And then she is crying, for the first time this afternoon, and it's her tears that capture her sons' attention as the abstract news of their father's death cannot. On her lap, they finally still; they look up at her in alarm.
>
> "David always said that he was not a hero or a missionary," she says, "that if it got dangerous, we'd leave."[61]

No matter how many times I come back to the memoir, this passage always gets me. I know what is coming, and yet it drives me to tears, as if on command. When faced with this kind of pain, when responding to it as I do, how can we achieve a reading that is not simply a mirror image of our own immediate emotional response? How can we approach such a text critically without facing the charge of having rejected the trauma of the widow? What I believe we must do is examine the effect

this use of tragedy has on us. When readers are invited to share the pain of the protagonist or other characters, is there something else that we do not look at, that our attention is diverted away from? And what does the depiction of loss do to our perception of the family that experiences such loss? In other words, can trauma function as a strategy, whether deliberate or not, to disentangle the white family from its privileged place in an unequal society?

In the passage above, we hear that it was the rape of a little black girl that caused the crisis which led to David's murder. Yet her trauma is not the central story. It is instrumental, serving to establish the fundamental evil of the squatters, but it is not the girl who I am crying for. It is the young Swedish woman. Is it because she is so much like myself? Yes, as a young, white, Scandinavian mother, I certainly do find it easier to identify with a Scandinavian aid worker than a Zimbabwean village girl. Butler and Keen describe similar experiences of empathizing with someone who "fits the frame."[62] As Butler says of a brutally killed American journalist, "he could be my brother or my cousin; he is so easily humanized" in contrast to "the nameless Afghans obliterated by United States and European violence."[63] Like the starving Biafrans in Delgado's example, the village girl's rape is tragic but normalized.[64] To see that her pain is not just one instantiation of all-too-familiar violence, but that it is traumatic *for this person*, readers would need a sense of who she is and what her story is—she would need to be humanized. But Godwin structures his text around the trauma of the widowed mother rather than the girl. He makes no attempt to bridge the gap between his western audience and the little girl. While people who laud the empathy-inspiring capacity of literature tend to stress how it allows us to identify with people unlike ourselves, Godwin instead places those people most like his western audience center stage. He describes in gruesome detail the torture David suffered before his death. Through the voice of Maria, we hear about the young couple's history and hopes, their contributions to Zimbabwean society, and their close alliance with their farmworkers. All of this makes their suffering real, while the village girl's trauma remains only tragic, a symbol of the pure evil of her attackers rather than an empathy-invoking story in its own right. Unnamed, unspeaking, the girl *becomes* the rape, her individuality overshadowed by the tragedy of her fate and its function as catalyst for the, in Delgado's words, more "abnormal" suffering of the white farmer and his family.[65] Without any engaging details that would allow us to understand her life, and with her story coming to us third hand rather than in her own voice, there is little hope that any empathy we might feel for the raped village girl is more than a false empathy.

Another similarly disturbing scene repeats this pattern of selective empathy: "Bennett tells me that he has only just moved back onto his farm after war vets invaded it. He was away at the time, he says, and they seized his wife, Heather, who was three months pregnant. They put a panga to her throat and made her dance around the house and chant ZANU–PF [Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front] slogans until she collapsed from fear and exhaustion before they let her go. As a result she miscarried. They beat up the farmworkers and occupied the farmhouse, ransacking it and daubing the walls with their own shit. They emptied the urn of Bennett's father's ashes and cut the paws off the lion-skin rug to use for *muti*—traditional medicine."[66] Again, the traumatic experience of the family makes it uncomfortable to question the representation. But again, once we do, we notice that there are other victims who are present but absent in the scene: the beaten-up farmworkers, of whom we never learn anything but the fact that they were beaten. While the names, the graphic details, and the heart-wrenching story of miscarriage make the image of Heather and Bennett clear in our minds, the farmworkers remain unnamed, part of the setting of the catastrophe, together with the feces-covered walls.

Drawing on Butler, Harris analyzes *Mugabe and the White African*, a 2009 documentary about the land reforms. The film, she argues, "produces an intense identification with the faces of the white victims of violence … . While the film does depict black victims of the violent farm attacks, it does so fleetingly, without attention to the individual narratives of these victims and in ways that do not carry the symbolic weight of the images of the white victims."[67] This is significant for how we read a memoir like Godwin's. It is precisely the fact that we get detailed individualizing narratives about white victims that enables our emotional investment and empathy with their trauma, rather than just our well-meaning sympathy. The stories of black victims do not *stick* with us in the same way as those of the white victims do. The reader is not left worrying about what must have happened to this particular person. Yet, by exploring this emotional response, by reading through tears, the critical reader's anxiety becomes productive, revealing as it does the selective empathy invited by the text. The political implication is that some victims of the crisis come across as more worthy of our empathy.

Creating Grievability

Having thus established that the memoir causes us to weep for some characters more than others, I will turn now to examining how it does so. I will demonstrate that the grievability of white Zimbabweans is created through comparing them to persecuted Jews, by emphasizing

their family-ness, by allowing them to speak their suffering in their own voices, and by imbuing them with goodness and agency.

Despite the larger number of black victims of the land reforms, Godwin encourages a reading of the crisis as a genocide against whites, as he repeatedly compares their situation to that of persecuted Jews during the Holocaust.[68] He describes watching a government propaganda video about the recent evictions of white farmers. His Jewish father turns off the television and says, "Being a white here is starting to feel a bit like being a Jew in Poland in 1939—an endangered minority—the target of ethnic cleansing."[69] Here, Godwin is drawing on a narrative that was widespread in western media coverage of the crisis, where it was presented as "ethnic cleansing" targeted at white people.[70] But Godwin does not restrict himself to calling it ethnic cleansing. Through his father, he presents the reader with a comparison to the Holocaust. Rothberg has argued that the Holocaust has become "unmoor[ed] … from its historical specificity and circulat[ed] instead as an abstract code for Evil."[71] In Godwin's memoir, the link to the Holocaust is made both in the abstract, by saying that the treatment of whites in Zimbabwe is like that of persecuted Jews, and on the level of personal experience through his father, who lost his mother and sister in Treblinka: "Like Poland was to him, Africa is for me: a place in which I can never truly belong, a dangerous place that will, if I allow it, reach into my life and hurt my family. A white in Africa is like a Jew everywhere—on sufferance, watching warily, waiting for the next great tidal swell of hostility."[72]

This statement is followed by a detailed and gruesome account of the Treblinka gas chambers, as Godwin recounts trying to find out what his aunt and grandmother went through.[73] The passage takes up six pages, but a short and horrible quote will suffice: "As the bodies are dragged out, the fresh air starts to revive some of them, especially children. The guards shoot or club them with rifles, or simply jump on their necks to snap them, and their bodies are taken with the rest, and thrown onto giant grids made of railway tracks on concrete pillars, under which fires are lit."[74] The graphic detail of the description, coupled with the knowledge that this was the fate of millions of people, literally makes me sick to the stomach. Again, Žižek's remark applies: I cannot think clearly. I want to look away from the page on which these words are written. But taking that "empathic unsettlement" as my point of departure allows me to consider how the text works on me, what purpose that emotional disturbance serves in the wider economy of the text. Wedged between two passages about the Zimbabwean crisis, it is clear that the author wants his reader to connect the dots. My reaction to the horrors of the Holocaust spills over to the following pages, with the result that the white victims of the Zimbabwean crisis become more grievable.

The family connection to the Holocaust adds credence to the parallel. As someone who lost his family in a concentration camp, Godwin's father seems to have a certain right to make a comparison that might otherwise be dismissed as extravagant, since he has the combined authority of being a witness to both the Holocaust and the racialized violence against whites in Zimbabwe. The referentiality of the text is crucial here: had a novelist compared the treatment of white Zimbabweans with the Holocaust, we could have rejected it out of hand. Now, we become anxious not to violate (the memory of) Godwin's already traumatized father. His very status as a (recently deceased) father further serves to make it impossible to challenge him without transgressing against unspoken rules about how to treat other people's family members. The upshot is that this comparison between an awful crisis that claimed the lives of about a dozen white people and one of the largest genocides in human history is made unchallengeable.[75] The reader risks being paralyzed by anxiety about challenging the sanctity of the victim. How can we suggest that the comparison is far-fetched without implying that Godwin's father has misunderstood his own life? By identifying his family and Zimbabwean whites both metaphorically and literally with a group that has come to signify quintessential victimhood in the same way as the Holocaust is an "abstract code for Evil," Godwin appeals to empathy for their predicament—empathy of the kind that leaves no room for interrogation.

Another important tool for creating grievability in the memoir is what I call "family-ness": irrespective of whether they are Godwin's own family members, he depicts white Zimbabweans first and foremost as someone's next of kin. The focus on the family-ness of victims is particularly effective in enhancing the emotional impact of trauma stories. It makes the victims into more rounded characters, and it invites a certain kind of reader identification, as we are able to relate to the trauma of losing a sibling, child, or parent. When Godwin describes the murder of white farmers, the combination of graphic depictions of violence with an emphasis on the innocence of the farmers' children enhances their grievability: "There has been another white farmer murdered too, Alan Dunn. His crime was to defeat a ruling-party candidate for a seat on his local council. He answered his door to five men who knocked him to the ground and pounded him with heavy chains, rocks, and tire irons. His three terrified daughters hid under their beds as he was being killed."[76] This is followed by a moving funeral service: "Dunn's three tow-haired daughters file up to the altar. Each of them bears a single sunflower. The youngest girl also clutches a frayed brown teddy bear."[77] In all its simplicity, this scene stirs powerful emotions. The innocence of the girls is contrasted to the brutality they have had to endure. It is the family-ness

of this scene that gets to us. This man is made grievable through his status as a father, through the graphic description of his death, and through the eulogy at his funeral, which describes his hopes and dreams and sacrifices for the country (and, dare I say it, through his whiteness). All of this enables the reader to imagine him as a person and to feel empathy for him and for his daughters' tragic loss. But such tear-provoking stories of death and violence against white families leave the reader numb when it comes to stories of anonymous black victims, whose stories are generic rather than personal. In this way, the memoir creates a hierarchy of mourning, with some people seemingly more deserving of our attention and empathy than others.

While a knee-jerk response to the charge of selective empathy would be to say that, as a white man, Godwin simply has more connections in the white community in Zimbabwe, this is too facile a conclusion. Plenty of the white victims portrayed in Godwin's memoir are not his family; they are in fact strangers and yet they are depicted in detail *as* families. Visiting another farm, Godwin describes the white farmer "agonizing over whether to go to England this week for his son's wedding," for fear that he will lose the farm if he goes.[78] His wife tells the story of losing her mother, who "was ill with cancer and needed to be taken to the hospital. The wovits eventually permitted an ambulance to take her to town, 'but they refused to let me go with it,' says Jenny. 'Three days later my mother died, alone.' Her mouth purses with anger."[79] These family details serve to establish the humanity and pain of the farmers. They also invite the empathic anger of the reader, sharing as we do Jenny's sense of injustice that she could not be at her mother's deathbed. We saw above how Bennett's father's urn was offered as much attention as his farmworkers. By coupling the pain of losing a parent with the invaders' disrespect of the sanctity of the family, the invaders become more barbaric and the white victims more humane, while the black victims slide into the background.

As discussed above, Delgado's solution to the problem of false empathy is to allow people to tell their stories in their own voices.[80] In a memoir, of course, the author-narrator's voice is the dominant one. But texts are multivoiced and can allow space for others to speak. As we have seen with the Swedish woman, his own father, and now Jenny, Godwin provides a platform for a number of white Zimbabweans to express their experience of the crisis in what is represented to us as their own words. Only rarely does the narrator offer a similar occasion for black victims to speak for themselves. Instead, their pain comes to us interpreted by Godwin's voice, already known, in a repetition of the colonial idea of the settler knowing and interpreting the colonized.[81]

As Godwin visits another white family, we hear about the hardships endured by "Naison, the gardener." However, it is not Naison himself who tells the story, but his white employer, who calls him "a lovely old chap." While Naison is working, she tells the story of how, when his wife died, the family insisted he pay off the bride price to get her body: "These people, honestly. Imagine holding a corpse hostage. Now he's dying of AIDS too, poor old bugger. Every time I see him he's got a new blister on his lip or something and I think, *Oh, oh*, and I rush off to give him extra treats to eat. You know that's my instinct, to nourish the sick. I used to work at the hospice, you know."[82] While the family details allow us to imagine a bit more of Naison's life, they come to us through the filter of his employer's voice. In her telling, his fate becomes a story of the unscrupulous greed of his relatives, contrasted with her own instinctive goodness. Other parts of the memoir recount the dire poverty of the country, but Godwin makes no attempt here to challenge the woman's story and link the family's demand for the bride price to this economic context. It is unclear whether the author finds this woman rather self-absorbed, and if he finds the racist implications of "[t]hese people" offensive, but, even if he does, he does not tell us. Nor does he offer Naison a chance to tell his story himself.

In all of these passages, the contributions of the white victims to their community are stressed, painting them as profoundly good people. I have explored elsewhere how white Zimbabwean memoirists stress white contributions and sacrifices in a repetition of the colonial trope of Africans in need of Europeans.[83] Here, my interest is in how an emphasis on goodness serves to focus the reader's empathy on white victims. As bell hooks argues, many white people have been "[s]ocialized to believe the fantasy, that whiteness represents goodness."[84] This is a fantasy that is cultivated in Godwin's memoir. Not only was Maria, the Swedish woman, an aid worker and thus a "good person" by nature of her profession, but her murdered husband David made "all the rivers flow" on their arid farm, "spoke fluent Shona and was on the local council trying to sort out the roads in the communal area."[85] If any reader were to ask whether white farmers were in Zimbabwe for their own gain, or whether the enduring economic inequalities in the country might help to explain why parts of the population were ripe for racist hate speech, these stories provide instantaneous refutation. The individual victims come to us only as selfless people devoted to their community. When Godwin says that the farm of a white family had a bakery which served fifteen thousand locals, this not only suggests the importance of that farm in feeding the local community, as he seems to imply, but also demonstrates the concentration and accumulation of capital in a few hands and the persistence of colonial-era inequalities.[86] However, Godwin does not acknowledge

this. Instead, the emphasis is once again on family-ness as he describes the defiance of the farmer's elderly mother, Janet Selby, who was trying to salvage "the rosebushes given to her by her mother-in-law as [a wedding] anniversary gift" with the help of "Panga, the family cook," only to be stopped by one of the squatting thugs.[87] The frailty of the white farmer's mother, the innocence and symbolism of the flowers she tried to rescue, and her alliance with an employee combine to put the family beyond reproach for their complicity in a profoundly unequal society.

This goodness is coupled with agency, as white Zimbabweans are consistently represented as *doers*, actively fighting for the community. As Pedwell and Delgado argue, there is a difference between the false or shallow empathy for someone who is rendered the passive recipient of help, the "object of empathy,"[88] and the more engaged fellow feeling for someone who is seen actively shaping their destiny. Stories that emphasize agency serve to constitute subjects *as* subjects in life, as well as grievable in death.[89] When leaving the country, Godwin is ashamed that he is "abandoning [his] post" while others are resisting the regime, implying that he should have stayed and helped.[90] One of those who stays behind is "Caro, the British colonel's wife, now ferrying around anti-tear gas solvent kits and bottled water, her toenails painted a riot of different colors, her posh Home Counties diction already absorbing the shorted vowels of our southern African dialect."[91] Not only do these details allow us to imagine what Caro looks and sounds like; she is also represented as active. This is in contrast to most of the book's black victims. Most remain nameless, like the "wounded protesters—the trembling black women with broken limbs and puffy eyes and backs striated with the angry whip marks of the dictatorship."[92] Unlike Caro and the other white characters, the protesters constitute, as Harris says, "a nameless mass, in need of white protection."[93] The "marchers for democracy [who] are being shot at and teargassed" are passive, even on the level of sentence structure, sufferers to be saved by the agency and sacrifice of white altruists, silently represented by the white memoirist.[94]

Even in a case where Godwin is actually making an effort for us to identify with a black sufferer of the corrupt and violent regime, he ends up telling a story of his own heroism. Suggesting the family-ness of an elderly black woman "my mother's age," he imagines how she must have spent months cultivating a bag of cornmeal for her grandson, only to see it confiscated by a corrupt police officer.[95] However, the climax of the scene is when Godwin tries to intervene, putting himself at risk as the officer responds by waving his pistol threateningly and screaming at him. Fleeing, the elderly lady "raises a hand, bestowing on me her acknowledgement."[96] While letting the reader imagine the suffering of the woman, the voice, agency, and self-sacrificing goodness lie with Godwin.

When Godwin gives us no names of black victims, or represents them with no more emotional depth than stock characters, dutifully enacting their role as loyal servants, like "Panga, the family cook," and "Naison, the gardener," he does not allow us to imagine these people as grievable fellow human beings. Rather than having stories that are tragic in their own right, black victims are used only to shore up a general image of the catastrophic Zimbabwean crisis, an image whose emotive force is driven at the campaign against whites. Making a similar point, Simoes da Silva asks, "After all, what do we remember most vividly of Blixen's *Out of Africa* if not the pain she endures in her love affair with Africa? The dispossessed villagers serve merely as backdrop and trigger to this enactment of White trauma."[97] In Godwin's memoir, white victims are established as grievable through the comparison with the Holocaust and through the granting of family-ness, voice, agency, and goodness. Again and again, the structure of the narrative is such that our attention and our empathy are directed at those with whom the narrator invites us to identify. In other words, black victims are not entirely obscured from the field of vision, but their trauma remains one-sided, narrated and interpreted by Godwin and serving only to tell a story that is not their own—the story of white trauma.

Conclusion

As Rothberg points out, claims for empathy can be made for the purposes of solidarity or competition.[98] An inherent challenge in the discussion of the moral good of empathy is thus whether it takes place at somebody's expense. By putting familiar faces on some victims and not others, Godwin makes them grievable and assists empathy with a select part of the Zimbabwean population. Even though he may conceive of this as rectifying a racist government's insistence on seeing white people as villains, his intervention is not balanced out by a strong focus elsewhere in the media on the much more numerous black victims of Mugabe's strong-arm tactics. This does not mean that stories of white victimhood have no place, but we cannot afford to let our empathy disallow critical scrutiny of those stories. Butler describes finding herself in a similar situation after 9|11, when critical reflection on the background of and the response to the terrorist attacks on the US was ruled out as unpatriotic and sacrilegious to the victims. She insists, though, that it must be possible to mourn losses without letting "neither moral outrage nor public mourning become the occasion for the muting of critical discourse and public debate on the meaning of the historical events."[99] Instead, we can use our own emotional response as a constructive point of departure. My anxiety about historicizing and challenging Godwin's memoir is itself

a powerful token of how the text "works" on its readers. By reading memoirs of trauma against the grain and examining our own anxiety, the life writing scholar may uncover the mechanisms through which the personal story is used to deflect criticism and direct empathy.

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Notes

1. Ngai, *Ugly Feelings*, 175.
2. Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 105.
3. Butler, *Precarious Life*, xiv–xv.
4. Fetterley, *The Resisting Reader*, xxii–xxiii; LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, xi.
5. Leydesdorff et al., "Introduction," 13.
6. Leydesdorff et al., "Introduction," 17.
7. Leydesdorff et al., "Introduction," 14.
8. Leydesdorff et al., "Introduction," 6.
9. Douglas, "Ethical Dialogues"; Felman and Laub, *Testimony*; Schaffer and Smith, *Human Rights*; Whitlock, "In the Second Person."
10. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 76.
11. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 197. See also Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 76–79; Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, 19–20.
12. Mackey, "Troubling Humanitarian Consumption," 101.
13. Lindhé, "Paradox of Narrative Empathy," 20. See also Nussbaum, *Not for Profit*, 109.
14. Moses and Rothberg, "Dialogue," 33.
15. Moses and Rothberg, "Dialogue," 33.
16. Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe," 115.
17. Žižek, *Violence*, 3.
18. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, ix.
19. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 92.
20. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, 103.
21. LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma*, xi.
22. Gilroy, *Postcolonial Melancholia*, 105.
23. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 39.
24. Simoes da Silva, "Narrating a White Africa," 474–475.
25. Wilson and Brown, "Introduction," 2n2. For a thorough introduction to the shifting meanings of empathy and sympathy, see Hammond and Kim, *Rethinking Empathy through Literature*.
26. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 4.
27. See, for example, Nussbaum, *Not for Profit*, 95–120. However, for more critical interpretations, see below.
28. Keen introduces psychological as well as literary perspectives of the debate. Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, 16–26. See also Dodell-Feder and Tamir, "Fiction Reading."
29. S. L. Bartky, "Sympathy and Solidarity: On a Tightrope with Scheler," qtd. in Pedwell, "De-colonising Empathy," 30.
30. Pedwell, "De-colonising Empathy."
31. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy." For a sophisticated discussion of perspective-taking in empathy, see also Coplan, "Understanding Empathy."

32. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 78–84.
33. Pedwell, "De-colonising Empathy."
34. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy" and "Storytelling."
35. Delgado and Stefancic, *Critical Race Theory*, 49.
36. Keen, "Narrative Empathy," 523. See also Hogan, *Cognitive Science*, 167.
37. Keen, *Empathy and the Novel*, 88–89.
38. Keen, "Narrative Empathy," 522.
39. Cohn, *The Distinction of Fiction*, 31, 35; De Man, "Autobiography as De-facement," 920; Eakin, *Touching the World*, 30 and "Foreword," xiv–xv; Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact (Bis)," 131–132. See also Rasch, "Autobiography after Empire," 45–50.
40. Of course, when I refer to "intuitions" and "instincts" here, it is misleading. These are not reading practices we are born with but culturally contingent responses, bred by centuries of Enlightenment reception of autobiographical texts and not easily undone by post-structuralist interventions. And yet, they feel right, like the only natural way of reading.
41. Eakin, *Touching the World*, 30; Lejeune, "The Autobiographical Pact (Bis)," nn48–49.
42. Barnwell, "Identity Hoaxes," 105. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers of *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies* for reminding me of these cases.
43. "[W]ie es eigentlich gewesen" in Leopold von Ranke's famous dictum.
44. Ward, "Uncommon Law."
45. Douglas, "Ethical Dialogues."
46. Rasch, "Autobiography after Empire," 44.
47. Mlambo, "'This Is Our Land'"; Raftopoulos and Mlambo, *Becoming Zimbabwe*; White, *Unpopular Sovereignty*.
48. Alexander, *The Unsettled Land*; Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe*; Moore, *Suffering for Territory*.
49. Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe*, xi; Mlambo, "'This Is Our Land,'" 62.
50. "White Farmers"; Alexander, *The Unsettled Land*, 185–186; Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe"; Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe*, xi.
51. Mlambo, "'This Is Our Land.'"
52. Primorac, "Rhodesians Never Die?" 204.
53. Primorac, "Rhodesians Never Die?" 220.
54. Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe"; Pilossof, *Unbearable Whiteness of Being*, 119.
55. Ndlela, "The African Paradigm," 83; Willems, "Remnants of Empire?"
56. Human Rights Watch, "Fast Track Land Reform," 19.
57. Hellman, "Zimbabwe." See also Hughes, *Whiteness in Zimbabwe*, xiv and Sachikonye, *Situation*. Add to this the approximately five million people who needed food assistance by 2008 because of a failing agricultural sector. See Raftopoulos, "Crisis in Zimbabwe," 217.
58. Pilossof, *Unbearable Whiteness of Being*, 227; Willems, "Remnants of Empire?" 98.
59. See Rasch, "Postcolonial Nostalgia"; Nyambi, "'Planting Their Flag.'", and On the western reception of Godwin's memoir, see Rasch, "Subversion or Identity Work?"
60. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 64.
61. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 64.
62. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 37; Keen, "Empathy and the Novel," xx–xxi .

63. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 37.
64. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 76–79.
65. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 76.
66. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 94.
67. Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe," 116.
68. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 121, 176, 230.
69. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 176.
70. Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe," 111–115; Willems, "Remnants of Empire?" 97–98.
71. Rothberg, *Multidirectional Memory*, 229.
72. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 266.
73. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 267–273.
74. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 271.
75. Pilossof, *Unbearable Whiteness of Being*, 227.
76. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 87.
77. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 88.
78. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 69–70.
79. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 69.
80. Delgado, "Empathy and False Empathy," 81–95.
81. Said, *Orientalism*, 31–49.
82. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 283.
83. Rasch, "Postcolonial Nostalgia."
84. hooks, "Representing Whiteness," 169.
85. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 64. I thank one of the anonymous reviewers for *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies* for stressing this point.
86. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 178.
87. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 179.
88. Pedwell, "De-colonising Empathy."
89. Butler, *Precarious Life*, 32.
90. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 230.
91. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 230.
92. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 229.
93. Harris, "Facing/Defacing Robert Mugabe," 114.
94. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 230.
95. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 331.
96. Godwin, *When a Crocodile*, 332.
97. Simoes da Silva, "Redeeming Self," 10.
98. Moses and Rothberg, "Dialogue," 33.
99. Butler, *Precarious Life*, xiii–xiv.

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