The Other

<u>Introduction</u>

For the months of October and November I will be presenting some of my ideas around difference, and in particular what it is to be The Other.

Part One: Kristeva, Power and the Other

Given the current political shift to the right here in the United Kingdom, my ongoing research into what it is to be the Other seems of increasing importance. With this in mind, amongst the many works I've considered recently, one of the most important comes from Julia Kristeva, and her excellent book 'Strangers to Ourselves' (Kristeva, 1994). Whilst many of us are aware of the strangers in our midst, and the fear and anger of the subject often case in the direction of the Other, an area where Kristeva's work is particularly strong is in its consideration of the impact on the Other itself. For example, Kristeva offers us one perspective on the plight of the Other where she talks of its '"Experiencing hatred": that is the way the foreigner often expresses his life, but the double meaning of the phrase escapes him,' continuing 'like a child that hides, fearful and guilty, convinced beforehand that it deserves its parents' anger.' (1994, p. 13). This statement here immediately conjuring up that sense of the power differential under which the Other must constantly live.

To expand this point further, when we say that the subject is better than the other we immediately create a power relationship based around power where for the object to be worth anything it has to be as good, if not better than the subject. The subject will therefore never admit to being the Other as this would be to admit to being nowhere near as great as it thinks it is (Zondag, 2004). I would term this a grandiose defence. The subject's need to nominate itself as better than the other here separates it from any learning from, or responsibility for, the Other, responsibility suggested by the likes of Buber (2010), Levinas (2006) and emphasised from a more afrocentric perspective in the philosophy of Ubuntu (Oppenheim, 2012). The only responsibilities left to it being to rule over the Other, or destroy it, positions echoing those raised by Villet (2011) in his paper comparing the Master/Slave dialectic of Fanon and Hegel, and discussed throughout various post-colonial discourses (Fanon, 1959; Huddart, 2006).

Given the 21st Century world we live in though, my view here is that the subject, in its fear of, or its need to suppress or dominate the Other, is missing out on an opportunity for collective (or personal) growth. Kristeva clearly recognises this potential where she states 'the foreigner is within us. And when we flee from or struggle against the foreigner, we are fighting our unconscious – that "improper" facet of our impossible "own and proper"' (1994, p. 191). This important idea is echoed by Jung, who clearly recognised that the Shadow, the part of oneself that we have cast off as unwanted in order to fit into this world, is actually the Other (Stevens, 1990).

At the other end of this dyad, in its own attempt to gain recognition, often the struggles of the Other are presented around the idea that subject has to alter its own perspective in order for this to occur, or as Benjamin suggests 'respect for the different other requires that within the binary hierarchy of recognition-negation, negation receives its due' (1998, p. 98). Although I believe she is right that this is one path towards recognition, I also feel that this expectation still gives a lot of power away to the subject. My own preferred view is that this is not the only route for the Other to follow, and that it can also be important for the Other, or the child as presented in Kristeva's earlier metaphor, to grow, to separate, off in its own direction. A route towards this is by surviving the projections placed upon it by the subject.

Projections, as previously stated, are basically psychic material cast off by the subject in order for it to maintain a fixed sense of its own identity, this Othering (Kirschner, 2012) of the Other being where stereotyping and objectification occurs. It is within this struggle that the Other's own sense of self and identity can become compromised. The Other gradually becomes less of what it was within itself, and more of an object for the subject, a mirror for the subject's narcissism. The longer that this objectification continues, and the longer the Other carries the psychic material of the subject, then the more likely psychological breakdown, the evidence of this being the numerous studies currently being undertaken to understand this phenomena from within feminist and cultural studies (Butler, Tull, Chambers, Taylor, & Ph, 2002; Fredrickson & Harrison, 2005; Tull et al., 1999). In order to survive the projections covering it I initially believed there had to be a distancing for the Other from its own sense of self. I now strongly believe that an Other 'adopting' the shadow of the subject creates a type of internalised conflict between its own sense of self and the shadow of the subject projected upon it, an idea mirroring the conflict raised by Fanon (1959) in the slaves conforming under colonial rule . To explore this further, this conflict mirrors ideas raised in acculturation where in order for individuals to manage their dual identities, say African-American, it is thought there has to be a negotiation of these two polarities otherwise an identity split could occur leading to increased risk of addictions etc (Howarth & Wagner, 2014; Sekhon & Szmigin, 2011).

My thinking here is that the dual identities are the Other's own sense of self versus the shadow identity of the subject. A stronger, more rooted sense of self for the Other, say in its own cultural or gender identity for example, then has a greater chance to survive the potentially debilitating impact of the projections placed upon its shoulders. Finally, the ability by the Other to survive this psychic onslaught then forces the subject to confront its own sense of anxiety and powerlessness, and most of all its anxiously fixed egoic sense of being. It ultimately forces the subject to, as Kristeva states, 'by recognising our uncanny strangeness we shall neither suffer from it nor enjoy it from the outside' (1994, p. 192).

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The Other

Continuing on from last month's exploration of power and the other, for the month of November I would like to present my own vision of a more worrying cultural trend in our encounters with the other.

Part Two: When Echo needs to speak up!

As stated last month here in the United Kingdom, during the current difficult economic times we are witnessing the scary rise of UKIP (Dilnot, 2014) into a credible political force. A rise built on the back of much scaremongering about the rise of immigration from Eastern Europe and its leech-like impact upon British jobs and welfare benefits, statements refuted quite clearly from other more credible sources (Harris, 2014). This displacement covers everything from the current political debate about Britain's position within the EU (BBC, 2014) to the current sporting debate about how the influx of foreign footballers has hindered the prospects of home grown players and the prospects of the national football team (Savage, 2014). One thing that these efforts to blame the other serve is the failure of a culture to admit its failings, its first major step towards making the changes it needs to in order for it to grow and survive.

I was drawn to this topic by two articles in particular. The first involved the idea that the continued harassment of the other is something that has even entered policy making within government given Shreya's (2014) insightful blog on the issue. The second was the perhaps more disturbing idea that our current political climate is beginning to find expression in the next generations of children within schools across the country, where racist bullying and stereotyping is on the rise (Duggan, 2014).

This second aspect was particularly disturbing for myself. As the son of immigrants who settled in this country in the middle of the last century, this rise in hatred strongly reminds me of my own time at school where to be called 'African' was to be labelled subhuman in some fashion. Political parties of the time also fed upon the fear of the other hidden within the populace via their often inflammatory rhetoric, for example during the infamous Smethwick election campaign (Shah, 1999).

Yet, given the relative recentness of those experiences, I am aware of the relative silence of those other minorities that have been here through these past couple of generations. As I look around, I do see voices raised to dispute the messages of the discourse that seem loudest. Yet, I am also surprised and saddened that there are still other necessary voices which seem quiet in comparison, voices from my own and other minorities already established here, or minorities that have gained in power over the past few generations. In various ways, we have experienced and witnessed the denigration of our heritage in politics and in the press and have struggled hard to establish ourselves and our children here. It therefore seems at the very least strange, at the most quite sinister, that we are not more vocal in our opposition to the current political storm about immigration.

My fear here is that we have become so 'brow-beaten' by the struggle to be seen, by the constant fight to establish ourselves here, that we have chosen to hide ourselves whilst the current wave of cultural bullying goes on all around us. The problem with this fear though is that in being just 'Narcissus' Echo' (Morrison, 1986; Spivak Chakravorty, 1993) we hope that this storm will pass us by. But it will not. It will consume us just as it threatens to do Muslims in France who are being forced to conform (Hancock, 2013). By hiding from the other, banning the other, or bullying the other into submission, we run the risk of standing by as another subsequent generation of others struggle to retain their sense of self in our foreign land.

It is this cultural bullying that helped form the ideas of great thinkers like Buber (2010) and Levinas (2006) who both suffered hugely during the last great world war based around race hate. Their work, and that of many others (some of whom I discussed in last month's blog), stresses the need for greater compassion for the other (Benjamin, 1998; Frosh, 2002; Kristeva, 1994; Poland, 2011).

And also, without becoming too esoteric too suddenly here, as a man of African origin, where relationship with the other is rated highly, I have an obligation to help the other as best as I can (Hapanyengwi-chemhuru, 2014; Nussbaum, 2003; Oppenheim, 2012). I have more than an obligation to help, to house, or to just be there with the other, but as stated last month, the other is a route to my knowing more about myself. I therefore ask, given my own history, given the struggles that we have endured or witnessed, and given the great strides that we have made accordingly, is it really our way to stand by and watch as UKIP and others manufacture dissonance and hate all around us?

Echo needs to speak up, don't you think?

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Introduction

A belated Happy New Year! For the first month of the year, I would like to extend my exploration of the importance of understanding our relationship to, and as, the other. This month I will therefore consider the role of power in the relationship between the subject and other.

Part Three: The problem with the assimilation of the other.

As stated in my last blog post, I discussed the cultural bullying that occurs as a means of forcing minorities to conform, or to conceal their identity. This month, I was going to move on to another topic, but just after the holidays, I found myself reading an article on the BBC News website entitled 'Margaret Thatcher's criticism of Brixton riot response revealed' (Unknown, 2014). What struck me most struck the authors suggestion that part of the reason for the surprise at the three days of rioting in the 1980s was that, even with the Stop and Search laws of the time, the common belief was that black society had been successfully assimilated into British culture.

This then raised the spectre for me of just how much are minority groups of any type, and particularly in the current political climate, encouraged or forced to conform to some way of being? And just as importantly, what is the cost to those groups, and also to the majority, when they are forced to do so?

Assimilation, which is occasionally presented under the banner of acculturation, is regularly presented as the other becoming part of the majority's whole. It is also often painted as the absorbing of the other into the majority (Brubaker, 2001). This then suggests that the other doesn't have its own identity after a process of assimilation. The problem with this idea is this is what I believe, in part, creates not only the power struggles but those very riots of the 1980s. In the modern day arena, it is what also creates the marginalisation of those others unable, or just unwilling to assimilate themselves within the majority.

Another problem here with assimilation is it avoids the prospect of there being any impact upon the majority of the arrival of the other. It therefore literally invites a power dynamic with distinct echoes of the colonial times that so many post-colonial authors believed had ended and that we were only now beginning to recover from (Butler, 1990; Fanon, 1959; Said, 2003). My belief though is that assimilation leads in part to a type of colonialism brought home to Europe where the power dynamics are perhaps even more potent as the coloniser now has firm footing on home soil and the colonised is not.

This then allows me to explore another angle around assimilation, and that is in a consideration from a more therapeutic perspective. From within psychotherapy, a more Freudian perspective on aggression, although often much disputed and largely forgotten about, has I feel something to say about aggression towards the other by the subject. As Thompson states, 'aggression is not necessarily destructive at all. It springs from an innate tendency to grow and master life which seems to be characteristic of all living matter' (Storr,

1991, p. 16). Freud follows up this aggressive need to dominate which I feel is contained within the idea of assimilation as he states, 'it seems, then, that an instinct is an urge inherent in organic life to restore an earlier stage of things' (1955, p. 36). This for me is what sits behind the idea of assimilation. The need to have the other present, but with nothing altering for the subject, is a hugely aggressive one on the part of the majority, a futile drive to prevent change.

But what about the aggression of the other? Winnicott is useful here as he states 'if the individual's requirement to be recognised and appreciated as a person in his own right has not been met, the normal drive toward self-affirmation and self-assertion becomes intensified and transmuted into hostility' (Storr, 1991, p. 21). In this context, the aim of the subject to control the other, I will argue here, actually creates the perfect circumstances for the hostility then returned upon it by the other as it seeks to establish itself in the world and in a different, non-stereotypical or objectified, relationship to the subject. I will also argue here, that it is this aggressive impulse that when suppressed in the other leads to some of the psychologically damaging conditions encountered in working with those who have been the on the receiving end of the subject's need to control their environment.

Returning to the BBC article then, my feeling here is that assimilation therefore doesn't really exist, it's a fantasy and a fraud designed provide comfort and relief from the anxiety inherent within change. Change though is real and constant. Recognising that when we invite the other into our space that things have forever changed is the more mature way to be. This does not mean it is easy, nor does it mean it will not provoke anxieties of its own. What it does mean though is that change is here and we need to be ready for it, as it's not going anywhere.

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Continuing my exploration of just what it is to be the other, this month I would like to talk about some of the positives to being the outsider.

Part Four: The Outsider, the Genius.

I was recently listening to the podcasts on the BBC of the Reith Lecture given by Edward Said (1993) over 20 years ago, the second of which looked at the intellectual as an outsider of their own community. In this particular podcast, Said interestingly discusses the difficulties the intellectual might have in offering their opinion, but about 20 minutes into the lecture he turns his attention towards the positives side of being an outsider, and the creativity that this position can foster if the intellectual harnesses their gifts correctly. It is this positive aspect of being the outsider that I would like to explore here this month, as I strongly believe that in our lack of understanding of what it is to be an outsider, and our collective fear of the other, we forget the benefits and strengths to ourselves and society of being other.

Yet the life of the outsider is more often considered to be a negative experience, and as we obviously know, the other is often coated in stereotypes, denigrated, or abused. Excellent examples emerge for example from the work of Freire (1970), who speaks as if the other is taught to be less than the oppressor, and experience that is then internalised and carried I feel, not just collectively within the cultural group, but also for future generations. Alternatively, the other is often seen as something to be pitied, as less than, or as poorer than the subject of the dyad, this patronising stance being something emphasised and simultaneously challenged by Nevo (2011) in his linking of the ideas within the Kabbalah to those of Levinas. Other examples include the work of Jean and Samuels (2003), who in an article on being Gay and disabled, suggest that alongside the challenges of coming out, there is the additional challenge of revealing one's disability, emphasising the additional conflict against social categorisation that this entails. Where I feel this is important is the continued emphasis and understanding that the other is has been forced to hide or conform, sometimes both at the same time. At best the existence of the other involves gaining a life that mirrors a type of Heideggarian vision where sociality for the other alongside the majority becomes at the very best a 'being with' (Hand, 2009, p. 48), not I would suggest a 'being accepted by' or 'being a part of'. The problem here is that none of these perspectives acknowledge the position of the other as an outsider.

This isn't to say that even when we do consider the other as an outsider that this position does not have its own detractors. Lahood (2010), for example, discusses the isolation of the other present in the 21st century as a negative way of being that if left unchecked can give rise to a type of selfishness and narcissism. Gasparyan suggests in her paper where she attempts to understand what I believe are a multitude of experiences as the other says about isolation that 'a human being, living in complete isolation outside of a social environment, is not yet free, as he can be free only in the society of the like creatures who have recognised him as such' (Honneth 2010 cited in Gasparyan, 2014, p. 8). What she is suggesting here is that isolation

is externally validated by the subject, or by the other's own group, an idea that I don't feel expresses any of the positives to being the outsider that Said suggests in his talk.

These views though contrast strongly with the more positive transpersonal view of the likes of Rowan, who believed that the 'Authentic self likes solitude' (2011, p. 61), the authentic self here being that part of us which we listen to and heed most faithfully in the world. What his view begins to suggest to me is that either there are varying types of isolation, meaning that not all types of isolation are negative and detrimental, or the capacity to handle the experience of being the outsider and isolated depends upon the strength of the particular individual's sense of self, their own sense of authenticity. Yet, as I hold Said's words in mind, I wonder if it is the creativity together with the sense of isolation that is important here, as if the link between the two is the means by which the isolated other maintains an authentic sense of self, whilst making sense of their isolation.

It makes sense here to offer examples of isolation and creativity to emphasise my point. Considering a couple of individuals who endured difficult, and importantly isolated, childhoods; firstly, Beatrix Potter, in a story told by Storr (1997) in his book on solitude, was raised very much on her own, and created a wealth of rich characters, characters that have gone on to millions of children's books across the world. The multi-Grammy Award winning artist Prince, is another example of a genius who has often been considered as anything from unusual to downright weird, yet who is as prolific a musician now as he has always been, and whose music is often produced in solitude, and in the dead of night (Azhar, 2015). Both these examples though suggest that the artist/outsider/other has found a means by which to harness the pain of their enforced isolation and turn this into something positive for themselves, and then secondarily it seems for the good of the greater society.

It is this I feel Said is trying to suggest in his lecture about the intellectual, a suggestion that doesn't though acknowledge the richness of creativity that can come with being the outsider for many of us. It is my own belief then that when harnessed appropriately, the experience of the outsider, where they set their own rules, and develop their own creativity in the service of the majority, can be a huge boon to society.

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After a break last month for Easter, this month I'm offering a perspective for the corporate world on its growing encounters with diversity.

Encounters with the other within the global marketplace

Introduction

In April I had the undoubted pleasure of presenting a workshop at the Student Global Leadership Conference held at the Imperial College, London, on Encountering difference within the global marketplace. The workshop was aimed at undergraduates from across the globe who given their positioning would be working within their chosen fields both at home and abroad over the next few years, thereby engaging with cultures not just of their own. My research for this conference though highlighted a number of areas of consideration that I felt it useful to ponder on today in this blog. For example, the paper by Nieva (2015) on Google, and the wider Silicon Valley struggle to acknowledge the problems with its lack of diversity and how this struggle to bring in more minorities was holding back the development of technology in the Valley. This though seemed to sit counter to Berciu's (2015) paper which conversely highlights the importance of a diverse multilingual workforce in the modern arena, with the idea of utilising diversity for the benefit of business being even mentioned by the Guardian Newspaper (Benedictus, 2005), printed at the time London won the bid for the 2012 Olympics suggested that it was the diversity of London that appealed to the multinational voters, the members coming from the numerous countries that have experienced a different type of post-colonial London to the one their parents might have been raised experiencing.

Yet, what stood out most for me is during these changing times and in an ever decreasing world the engagement with a global marketplace throws up an intriguing question; what does it mean to embrace the diversity of ourselves or our staff in order to understand and fully utilise the potential held within the diversity of our marketplaces? In answering the first part of the question, Morrison (2000) is important here as in his paper looks at cross-cultural management literature where he draws a clean line between domestic leadership skills and global leadership skills highlighting in his paper the important role that our encounter with

cultural difference plays in the global marketplace, stating 'national leadership models generally work well as long as the leaders deal primarily with individuals from the same culture' (Morrison, 2000, p. 120). In this paper I feel he goes on to consider the difficulties top 100 companies have endured in making this transition, mentioning a number of scientific studies which were undertaken to consider the leaderships skills across the world; the aim being to collage the findings into a coherent format so one can work successfully within the global workplace. But there were two problems with this; firstly the sheer number of skills required. For example, 'Chase Manhattan Bank for example tracks around 250 competencies' (Morrison, 2000, p. 120). Secondly, it was incredibly difficult to ascertain which combination of competencies worked best for which area, although my belief is that this scientific approach alone may not have been the best way forward.

Approaching this 'problem' from what I feel is a more relational perspective, Jokinen in her paper on global leadership competencies lists amongst others, 'empathy, openness, persistence, sensitivity to intercultural factors, respect for others, role flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity, and a two way communication skill' (Jokinen & Tiina, 2005, p. 202) as being essential for working cross culturally. Beyond the more scientific approaches often applied this problem, these sorts of more relational qualities are I feel essential to cross-cultural working both at home and abroad in the global marketplace.

But even this forgets to consider the impact on the individual or the group when it encounters and engages with difference, and this is hugely important, even from a more corporate perspective. When we encounter difference, and when we allow ourselves to engage with the other in dialogue of any type, we are risking that we will be changed by this interaction, and the fear of this change is one of the root problems behind the encounter with the other. It is this which makes the domestic leader such a failure on the global scale as the encounter with difference is amongst many things also an encounter with different ways of working, thinking, being, expression and relationship building. In order to make this transition, the leader therefore needs to take a more humble approach, and be open to change, and I believe it is this that Lord Coe I believe realised in his understanding of how to win the bid for the Olympics, and if you saw the Opening Ceremony for the games you would have witnessed the rich diversity of the music and culture on show; going back through the history of the UK, and bringing it up to the richly diverse music and artistry of the modern day.

As for the second parts of the problem, for these I have three suggestions; firstly, Collective Marshalling, where the leader encourages the varying individuals within each group to work together in order to bring out the best of each other, and like a ripple along a pond, there is change all across the water; secondly, Segmenting, where the leader works with each cultural group in turn to bring out the best in each of them, giving them all space and time in order to develop to their potential; and thirdly, Combination, where to avoid a type of corporate ghettoization as each segment reaches its potential, it works with another segment in order to develop further and vice versa.

The aim here is to encourage a growing relationship initially within each of the cultural groups themselves, with the leader engaging with each of these groups to encourage yet further growth and acknowledgement of difference, before bringing all the groups together as a multi-cultural team. Ultimately, the company can then harness this potential and utilise it in the accessing of the global marketplaces. In another fashion it is about finding and working with the intersubjective space, or the space in-between cultures or groups, that the creativity and awareness of the other begins (Buber, 1992). I also believe that a combination of a leader being willing and able to learn and grow from the experience of meeting difference together with the qualities of 'empathy, openness, persistence, sensitivity to intercultural factors, respect for others, role flexibility, tolerance of ambiguity, and a two way communication skill'(Jokinen & Tiina, 2005, p. 202) discussed earlier in this paper, will be essential to any future success in the global marketplace. And I believe that these are the type of skills, together with a willingness to engage and harness the strength, dynamism, and potential held in a more diverse workplace that will carry the major global players forward as we walk towards the middle of the century.

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Introduction

In a temporary departure (although not totally) from my more recent posts, this month I would like to talk about an aspect of popular culture that is close to my heart; that of the age of the superhero.

Icon: The black superhero in the Superhero Age

Like a lot of teenagers of the 1980s, I have a love for the superhero genre, having watched the rise of Superman and later Batman on the cinema big screen, and passionately devoured the numerous Marvel comic books of the time as well. After a lull during over the past twenty years though, it seems as if there has been a relative deluge of comic book movies of late. Over the next two years we will be treated to Marvel's Avengers: Age of Ultron (Whedon, 2015), Ant Man (Reed, 2015), Captain America III: Civil War (Russo & Russo, 2016), Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice (Snyder, 2016), and Thor III: Ragnarok (Unknown, 2017), and whilst I am a fan of the genre, I am increasingly struck by how marginalised I feel culturally in their presence.

This is especially important I feel as, as I have often said in these blogs, it is possible to know yourself through the gaze of the other. Within the world of the Superhero this split is often prompted by what Saunders calls 'the distressing mismatch between our expectations of the world and the way the world actually appears to be' (2011, p. 5). Where I feel this is of importance here, is that given the plethora of films about male masculinity, is it no wonder that conversely I, and more importantly here, many other minorities, may feel a disconnect when watching movies of this type. A disconnect driven by the struggle to feel anything less than in deficit when seeing the world saved yet again by a man in a suit from a world foreign to ours.

Conversely, this need to believe we have control over a world that provokes such anxiety within us by the majority might be some of the problem behind some of the narcissism that drives much of western culture. To emphasise this from a more psychoanalytic perspective, in a consideration of the work of Rosenfeld, Whitford offers a view of narcissism that I feel is particularly relevant here, seeing it as a 'defence against acknowledging one's own envy and hostility' (2003, p. 33), and I will add one's own sense of powerlessness in the world. The emergence of this type of near omnipotence therefore means the hero leaves its projections, its flaws and insecurities, sitting in the arms of the other, that which is viewed as less than and in need of the 'hero' to protect it, meaning there will always be a power differential between the hero and the subjects it serves, protects, and occasionally dominates over.

Yet the superhero genre itself is currently moving towards a more inclusive direction where, for example, the current wielder of Mjolnir is a woman (Aaron & Dauterman, 2015), and the current Captain America is black (Remender & Immonen, 2015). And whilst I believe there is a long overdue wisdom in redefining the roles men and women can hold in the modern age, in order to level uneven expectations of just what roles minorities are allowed, the idea that

we only need more superheroes who are literally like gods I feel is a cultural step in the wrong direction.

To underline my point, I would therefore like to briefly discuss an aspect of the history of Black superheroes that I feel is most relevant. Born out of a tradition going back to the 1940's and possibly earlier, as Dawkins (2015) gratefully reminds us in her discussion about the publication Negro Comics from this time, black superheroes were real characters that were very much rooted in their time, their achievements and struggles during a difficult time in black history being what made them so special.

In the modern age, there are other examples, like the legendary Luke Cage – Hero for Hire (Goodwin & Englehart, 2015), who has had a wonderful and long history within Marvel Comics, as has the Black Panther (Lee, Gillis, & Cowan, 1988). Or from outside of the mainstream of comics, Icon, who is similar in some ways to Cage but emerged from a DC Comics sister stable in the 1970s. My current favourite though is Kwezi (Candy, 2015) from South Africa, a young hero born very much into the culture of his time, who finds realises his responsibility to his neighbourhood and culture. These are characters who are placed very much in the real world that we all live in, meaning that we can all identify with them in some fashion.

Yet, whilst they still hold an aspect of that which is 'super' that which sets them apart, and therefore makes them an inspiration for us all, children and adults alike. It is these types of superheroes, with their aims and aspirations rooted very much in the human world that we all live within that I find most interesting. It is therefore these types of superheroes, whose heroic deeds set them apart, but whose humanity keeps them rooted very much within the culture they were born from, and who from this perspective have to work within a world that is both more human and more limiting, that I personally find myself identifying with most of all.

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