# NEG Card Doc---Run for the Roses---Race 1

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#### Collective bargaining rights are an alibi for continued settler domination, allowing colonialism to recuperate AND further dispossess the ‘Indigenous other.’

Englert ’20 [Sai; November 2020; Lecturer at Leiden University; Antipode, “Settlers, Workers, and the Logic of Accumulation by Dispossession,” vol. 52]

A growing number of authors have made the link between settler colonialism and primitive accumulation (for example, Coulthard 2014; Harris 2004; Nichols 2017; Simpson 2014). Most important here is Coulthard, already discussed above, who, in his Red Skins, White Masks, has emphasised the centrality of primitive accumulation to the settler colonial world and its specific expression in that context. He showed convincingly that in North America primitive accumulation had taken place by eliminating the indigenous population and replacing it with a new—settler—population, which would in turn be submitted to the tyranny of the market in its stead.

It was this attention to settler accumulation that led Coulthard (2014:125) to identify settler colonialism as “territorially acquisitive in perpetuity”, thereby complicating, as already pointed out in the first section, the concept of elimination as an outcome rather than a strategy. He further writes:

In the specific context of Canadian settler-colonialism, although the means by which the colonial state has sought to eliminate Indigenous peoples in order to gain access to our lands and resources have modified over the last two centuries … the ends have always remained the same: to shore up continued access to Indigenous peoples’ territories for the purposes of state formation, settlement, and capitalist development. (Coulthard 2014:125)

This approach, by focusing on the aims of settler colonial regimes rather than fetishising its methods, further leaves open an analysis, developed in this paper, of the multiplicity of settler strategies within an overall strategy of accumulation. This can include, as Harris (2004:172) shows within the late 19th century Canadian context, incorporation of indigenous populations into the workforce. If Canadian settler colonialism has pursued “state formation, settlement, and capitalist development” primarily through elimination, other settler states in different contexts could pursue similar goals by different means. It is this point that Kelley (2017) made in relation to South Africa (see above), where settler colonial dispossession removed indigenous populations from the land and forced them into the colonial labor market.

More recently, Nichols (2015, 2017), echoing Harvey and Coulthard, has discussed the importance of considering the relationship between primitive accumulation in the original formation of capitalism and in its later reproduction and spread across the globe, with a specific focus on settler colonial contexts. He argues that the incorporation of indigenous people into the workforce is not a necessity for settler regimes because the colonial process is incorporating their land into an existing global capitalist system, which has already generated surplus labor in other places. As such labor could be extracted from indigenous people or from settler populations proletarianised in different locales. This approach then also underlines the diversity of strategies available to settler regimes, including exploitation and/or elimination of the natives.

This analysis of accumulation by dispossession, lays the theoretical foundations to approaching contemporary settler colonialism as a process within a broader framework of capitalist accumulation. This can both open up reflections about its specific characteristics as well as its continuities with broader logics of exploitation and/or dispossession.

Settler Accumulation and Settler Quietism

In order to reflect on the particular nature of accumulation by dispossession within a settler colonial context, another issue should be raised: that of the internal social relations within settler colonial societies. Indeed, the most striking aspect of settler colonial societies is the development of a colonial polity in which settlers live, produce, and reproduce themselves socially. They do so on the back of the dispossession of indigenous populations through which they acquire land, resources, and, depending on the context, labor. This—perhaps obvious—characteristic leads to the development of internal class relations and conflicts, alongside confrontations between settlers and indigenous peoples.

The history of settler colonialism underscores the conspicuous absence of involvement by settler working classes (as opposed to individuals or limited networks) in mass, sustained challenges against the process of settlement and indigenous dispossession.3 In fact, more often than not, settler labor movements fought for the intensification of settler expansion and racial segregation (see “An Alternative Reading: Settler Colonies and the Exploitation of the Native” above), through colour bars, boycott campaigns and demands for expulsion. In the process, bitter confrontations emerged between settler labor and capital, when the latter attempted to increase its profit margins through the exploitation of indigenous labor—for example in the context of the white labor movements in Australia and South Africa.4 Yet these conflicts can be resolved, especially while the settler colony continues to expand, by intensifying the dispossession of indigenous populations in order to improve the material conditions of settler workers (see “Case Studies” below).

Here, the question of accumulation by dispossession returns to the fore. If settler workers are exploited as workers within the settler colony, they remain settlers. As such they participate in the processes of accumulation by dispossession through the occupation of lands, the elimination or exploitation of indigenous peoples, and the extraction of expropriated resources. For example, at a very basic level, their houses, workplaces, and basic infrastructure such as roads, railways, etc., are all premised on the capture and control of indigenous land. Settler workers are both exploited by settler bosses and their co-conspirators in the dispossession of indigenous peoples. As such, class struggle within a settler society has a dual character: it is waged over the distribution of wealth extracted from their labor as well as over the colonial booty.

In the case of Zionism in Palestine, the current associated with the publication Matzpen (“Compass”) developed a class analysis of Israeli society. They came to the conclusion that because the Israeli economy was heavily subsidised from the outside (first primarily by Britain, then by the US) and that this subsidy was not simply going into private hands but was used by the Labor Zionist bureaucracy to organise the development of the Israeli economy and infrastructure, class antagonisms were diverted within its society. Hangebi et al. (2012:83) wrote:

The Jewish worker in Israel does not receive his share in cash, but he gets it in terms of new and relatively inexpensive housing, which could not have been constructed by raising capital locally; he gets it in industrial employment, which could not have been started or kept going without external subsidies; and he gets it in terms of a general standard of living, which does not correspond to the output of that society … In this way the struggle between the Israeli working class and its employers, both bureaucrats and capitalists, is fought not only over the surplus value produced by the worker but also over the share each group receives from this external source of subsidies.

If this analysis was essentially correct, it underplayed, however, the consequences of an important aspect of Israeli wealth creation (which Matzpen otherwise recognised): the Israeli state, its infrastructure, and its economy were made possible by colonial expansion, land confiscation, the expulsion of Palestinians and the expropriation of their wealth and property.

Affordable housing, for example, an issue discussed further below, was not only possible because of the subsidies the Israeli state received from abroad. It was possible because the land on which new houses were built, as well as existing Palestinian houses, had been confiscated by the Israeli army, Palestinians had been expelled in their hundreds of thousands, and the spoils were re-distributed amongst settlers. It was—and remains—the collective dispossession of the indigenous population by the Israeli population as a whole, which ties the settler community together, despite internal class, ethnic, and political divisions.

The settler class struggle is fought over the distribution of wealth extracted from settler labor power as well as over the share each group receives from the process of accumulation by dispossession. This dual class and colonial relationship helps explain the relative absence of settler workers’ resistance against settler colonial expansion or alliances with Indigenous peoples.5 This tendency can be understood as “settler quietism”: even if working-class settlers are exploited by their ruling classes, overthrowing the settler state would mean overthrowing a system in which they share, however unequally, in the distribution of the colonial loot. Participating in the process of dispossession and fighting for a greater share of the pie leads to more important and immediate material gains.

It also follows, as many anti-colonial thinkers and activists, not least among them Fanon (2001) in the Wretched of the Earth, have argued that indigenous people face the settler population as a whole in their struggle for de-colonisation. This is not to say that individual settlers or specific settler organisations cannot or have not supported struggles for decolonisation. It is however to point out that this is not the case for the majority of the settler working class, while it continues to depend on the continued dispossession of the natives for the quality of its living standards.

Whether the settler colony is organised on the basis of an eliminatory or an exploitative model, what remains constant is that the entirety of the settler polity will participate in the process of accumulation by dispossession, and that the different settler classes will struggle both against the natives to impose and maintain this dispossession, as well as amongst themselves in order to determine the nature of its internal distribution. More than that, the specific structural forms of settler rule over the indigenous population is best understood as the outcome of struggle, both between settler classes and between settlers and indigenous populations. This paper now turns to two brief case studies demonstrating this process in the context of Zionism in Palestine.

Case Studies

The specificity of Zionism in the history of settler colonialism, its lack of a colonial metropolis, had real consequences for the Zionists in Palestine. Firstly, it could not impose—at first—its control over the land through military force. Secondly it could not organise the transfer of populations to the colony in the same way a state could. In the words of Shafir (1996:155): “Zionism, then, was a colonisation movement which simultaneously had to secure land for its settlers and settlers for its land”. The dual need for land and labor was at the heart of many political developments in the Yishuv.

If the question of land was resolved first through acquisition from largely absentee land owners and then (and most extensively) through military violence, the question of immigration came close several times to bringing the whole colonial project to its knees, as the European Jewish population tended to reject Zionism as a political response to the poverty and discrimination they faced. Two distinct political responses emerged within the early settler population. On the one hand, the Jewish farmers and their sponsors hoped to develop a cash crop producing agricultural sector focused on export to Europe and the exploitation of cheap Palestinian workers. This vision was based, as demonstrated by Shafir (1996), on the model of other European projects—especially the French settler colonies of North Africa.

On the other hand, the nascent Labor Zionist movement demanded better wages and working conditions for Jewish workers in Palestine, which they argued would be the only way to attract and retain new settlers. This, they claimed, necessitated full separation between the Jewish and Palestinian sectors, removing thereby the “unfair competition” of the cheaper indigenous labor force. This led to the development of a series of new Labor Zionist institutions to organise this “Conquest of Hebrew Labor”, by organising strikes, pickets, and boycotts of Jewish owned businesses that employed Palestinian workers or sold products made by them.

The Kibbutzim, the Histadrut,6 and the early Zionist militias were all born out of the process of organising this campaign (Lockman 1996). For example, the Histadrut’s constitution, passed at its founding congress, made clear that it was a Zionist body committed to the project of settlement through the development of an exclusively Jewish society. It stated that the Histadrut’s goal was to:

… unite all the workers and laborers in the country who live by their own labor without exploiting the labor of others, in order to arrange for all settlement, economic and also cultural affairs of all the workers in the country, so as to build a society of Jewish labor in Eretz Yisra’el. (quoted in Lockman 1996:68)

The similarity between the logic of this statement and that of the white South African strikers mentioned above is remarkable.

This struggle—waged against Palestinian workers and Jewish farmers—led to a partial victory for the Labor Zionist movement (Lockman 2012). Key industries, such as construction and agriculture, were taken over by Labor Zionist institutions such as Solal Boneh and the Kibbutzim. At the same time, Jewish representation in colonial institutions was increased through collaboration with the British Mandate authorities especially in the context of crushing the Arab Revolt of 1936-1939. The Labor Zionists took over the Yishuv’s political leadership and created a dominant Jewish sector, without however being able to establish a fully segregated one. It did set in motion the logic of separation as well as laying the infrastructure for a Jewish state, which would be made a reality by its militias’ military violence and mass expulsion of Palestinians during the Nakba.

This case study shows that the Labor Zionist movement developed on the basis of opposing Jewish farmers as well as Palestinian workers, a political focus that also shaped its key institutions. The campaign for Hebrew Labor also demonstrates that the “elimination of the native” in the settler colonial context is not a given, as in the Wolfe-an framework, but the outcome of a specific set of struggles that pit both the indigenous population against the settlers, as well as different settler classes against one another.

This approach is not only applicable to historical processes but also contemporary ones. In 2011, an Israeli social movement emerged from a small activist encampment protesting the cost of housing in Tel Aviv into a two and a half month long protest in which hundreds of thousands of people joined demonstrations and square occupations all over the country. The movement was supported by a large majority of Israelis, regardless of political persuasion or ethnic background (Perugorria et al. 2016), as well as by key institutions of the historic Labor Zionist movement, including the Histadrut and the national students’ union.

It was an expression of class struggle within the settler population, where the victims of neoliberal economic reforms fought for greater redistribution of wealth. This process was self-consciously an internal one: the movement actively presented itself as made up of loyal, serving, citizens—an impression that was reinforced by the organisations that supported it—while keeping Palestinians and their demands at arm’s length. The Palestinian question remained taboo (Honig-Parnass 2011).

The Netanyahu government’s response to the movement’s demands was to deepen settler dispossession. The question of unaffordable housing could be resolved easily, so the argument went, by expanding settlements. MK Arye Eldad argued that “[t]ens of thousands of Israelis can live in Judea, Samaria [the West Bank] and Jerusalem” (quoted in Harkov 2011). Similar proposals were a significant current among Israeli politicians. In August 2011, a group of 41 MKs (out of 120), including representatives from the Labor Zionist camp, called on Netanyahu to expand settlement construction in response to the demonstrators’ demands. Indeed, governmental initiatives have since focused on developing housing in East Jerusalem on the one hand, and in the Israeli periphery—more specifically within areas with high Palestinian populations, such as the Naqab in the south—on the other.

An interesting episode in the summer of 2015 highlighted this approach. The government was in the process of negotiating a new agreement with the Chinese state over permits for up to 20,000 Chinese construction workers to come to Israel. When criticised, Netanyahu defended the deal on the basis that “the ability to build many apartments, thereby increasing supply, will, in the end, allow us to change price trends” (quoted in Reed 2015). Moshe Kahlon, the then finance minister, also explained that “the plan to bring thousands of Chinese workers into the country is intended to speed up construction work to solve the housing problem and bring down prices” (MEMO 2015). The government’s response to the demonstrations has been to provide affordable housing to the settler working class while simultaneously increasing its control over Palestinian land.

A “settler colonial fix” is available to the Israeli elites, through which they can soften the blow of internal inequality through colonial expansion. The state’s response to the 2011 social movement’s demand for affordable housing through the intensification of indigenous dispossession, and the silent acceptance of this solution by a movement that had gathered such considerable public support, further underscores the claims made by this paper. Settler class struggle is waged over both the distribution of wealth within the settler population, but also over the distribution of the settler colonial loot.

The participation of the settler workers’ movement in the process of accumulation by dispossession, through capturing land, resources, and labor, or through the expulsion of the indigenous population is a specific characteristic of settler colonial regimes. Indeed, whereas the theoreticians of accumulation by dispossession, discussed above, understood it as a process directed against workers and peasants, we see here settler workers actively participating in the process and enjoying its spoils. Furthermore, the discussion of this process within the framework of Zionism in Palestine, shows that this struggle takes place both within exploitative (first case study) and eliminatory (second case study) contexts. It is in part through this internal struggle over the distribution of the settler colonial loot, alongside the struggle against the indigenous population, that the nature of the settler colonial regime is determined, as discussed in the first case study, which described the shift in the process of settler accumulation from exploiting the indigenous population to attempting to eliminate it.

#### The logic of elimination is grounded in the collective unconscious AND exists beyond utility, derailing any attempt at statist reform---vote neg for preconscious, absolute refusal of settler control.

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In the one-man play, A Huey P. Newton Story (Lee 2004), Roger Guenveur Smith, playing Huey, talks briefly about hippies wearing buckskin and fringe. He says, "White people in America are a trip, they exterminate the Native Americans and then they try to dress up just like 'em. What kind of necrophilia is that?" The raw, complex, and ambivalent set of relations that comprises the question of appropriation and desire for those who are the inheritors of the colonial legacy is both powerful and deeply troubling. While the colonial project certainly reshaped geographies, lives, modes of governance, and made every attempt to eviscerate entire modes of value and ways of life, it simultaneously operated as a force that reconfigured subjectivities and the ability to know who one is or what one might become. In this, it reshapes its own historical legacies of brutality and genocide by restructuring what Lacan would describe as the relation between the real, the symbolic, and the imaginary of those it deems to be settlers and those it designates as other. As Frantz Fanon (1963) put it, "Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content. By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures, and destroys it" (210).

In this article, we will engage a Lacanian psychoanalytic reading of the process of subjectification (1) that produces the settler as a social subject. (2) We acknowledge there are limitations and significant issues with traditional psychoanalytic readings of colonialism rooted in modernist psychoanalytic constructions that make claims to universal and essentialist understandings of human behavior. However, our reading here is rooted in a reading of Lacan via Deleuze and Guattari that may offer an alternative nonessentialist and more historically grounded analysis. We would also note that our reading of the unconscious here is not the individual unconscious of traditional psychoanalysis, nor the Jungian collective unconscious, but the sociopolitical unconscious proposed in the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1977).

Specifically, we will attend to the role that the fetish plays in the ongoing cultural appropriation of Indigenous spirituality and culture within an ongoing neocolonial material context. (3) Deploying Lacan's concept of dialectical lack as foundational in the production of social forms, we will diagram the ways that lack drives catastrophic modes of appropriation and genocide as an erotic form of murderous arousal. We will unpack the colonial Freudian/Lacanian unconscious that produces the settler as both a mythical subject free of the disruptive and forbidden activities engaged in during the extensive historical conquest of Indigenous peoples and as a social discourse that obscures and eviscerates memory, producing the settler as innocent within a utopic desire for democracy and opportunity. In particular, we investigate the role of the phallic as foundational to the colonial project and the resultant modes of fetishization. In this, we are hoping to extend lines of inquiry that engage psychoanalysis as inseparable from material modes of analysis that delineate the colonial process and its effects. We would align ourselves with McClintock (4) (2013) when she calls for "a renewed and transformed investigation into the disavowed relations between psychoanalysis and socio-economic history" (8). In what follows, we will diagram both the process of subjectification that emerges in the development of the settler unconscious, as well as an alternative to the settler subject as a set of unconscious coordinates.

AMBIVALENCE

It is Marx (1972) who proposes that the development of modes of subjectivity is subsequent to the mode of production, while being absolutely necessary to the continuance of systems of rule within any given historical period. Within the historical establishment and expansion of the mode of production defined as capitalism, there have been and will always be forms of subjectification appropriate to the necessities of colonial subjugation of noncapitalist forms of community, value, and life. However, as Marx (1972) points out, any given mode of production and consequent system of rule is shot through with antagonisms and contradictions. We would argue, following Negri (1996), that these antagonisms and contradictions manifest as inherent alternatives to the given system of value, mode of production, and system of rule. As Guattari (2005) points out, while it might appear as though the process of subjectification that arises out of a given system of production is seamless, it is, in fact, riddled with fractures and ruptures that point toward alternative sets of social relations not yet realized.

Certainly, the "settler," as a mode of subjectification, deployed by capitalism in the ongoing colonial project, is a case in point. Indeed, we might suggest that the advent of the settler, as a certain subject that acts with genocidal fury in pursuit of absolute appropriation, might be seen as a symptom of the perversion of unconscious desire. Following Deleuze and Guattari (1977), we would define unconscious desire as sheer productive living force. This definition, we would note, is in contradistinction to the more dialectically informed definition of Lacan (1988), who proposes desire as premised in lack. To a degree, we would argue that it is the operation of both forms of desire in capitalism that are in play here. Capitalism, as a system premised in the absolute lack of the purely symbolic, is simultaneously dependent upon the productions of living form responsible for both the brutality and violence of the settler, as well as the ruptures and fractures that may signal an alternate set of relations and forms of subjectivity.

This double mode of desiring subjectification as perversion is characterized by a profound ambivalence in the settler psyche to all things Indigenous. On the one hand the settler fetishizes Indigenous women, masculinities, culture, art, and history, while on the other, he relegates them to the sacrilegious, primitive, barbarian, and demonic. Neither dialectically nor temporally contained, the simultaneity of these two positions creates a psychic impasse in the settler that expresses itself in the most violent and horrific displays of genocide. Indigenous people, land, and culture are produced in the psyche of the settler as the other that is both threat and salvation.

In his work on the excessive brutality and violence perpetuated on Shamanic cultures in Columbia during the colonial period, Michael Taussig (1987) notes that the violence perpetrated by colonists against the Indigenous populations exceeded any necessity for colonial control of the area. Indeed, the degree of genocide was counterproductive to capitalist interests because it reduced the level of the Indigenous labor force needed for rubber production. He suggests that there was a complex interplay of the effects of intra-European colonization and the colonizing activities in Columbia.

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The colonists who were sent to Columbia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were often from those classes whose own historical Indigenous practices, beliefs, and modes of life had been subjected to the brutalities of the inquisition of the Catholic church and to the "civilizing" imperatives of the subsequent enlightenment. Caught between the overt violent repression of their own peoples as uncivilized heathens, pagans, and witches and the valorization of rationality and reason in European thought, Taussig suggests that these colonists rejected, through sheer projection, anything considered wild or irrational. He proposes that colonists constructed the Indigenous people of the region as a savage antiself. (5) In a review of Taussig's work, Valter (2008) describes the antiself as, not well-defined and clear-cut, but... swathed in what Taussig calls 'epistemic murk': the colonists worried incessantly about the Wild Man, and this worry infected their imagination with terrible nightmares of Indian attacks, conspiracies, uprising, treachery, etc. It was the unclear, murky nature of the wildness ascribed to Indians in colonial fabulation that gave this wildness such a powerful, obsessing hold on the imagination of the colonists. (para 3)We would argue that this radical repudiation of the wild in one's own psychic, emotional, and spiritual constitution, under the historical conditions of colonial subjectification, expressed itself in a kind of terroristic mob mentality, through which a certain purging of a forbidden self was accomplished through the destruction of the other. (6) However, it is impossible to purge the demon within through the slaughter of the other. The resonances of commonality that drove the terror are, instead, displaced into mythologies of symbolic affiliation. In the case of the rubber plantation colonists, this takes the shape of a profoundly ambivalent relation between colonists and the wildest of the wild: the shamans. In what might well be seen as a nearly psychotic projection of purely imaginary force, the very colonists who sought to slaughter and eliminate any trace of the "savage other" perversely sought healing from shamans of the people they had killed. Not surprisingly, they sought assistance with maladies associated with hauntings from the ghosts of those killed in the genocide. This action, premised in the profound ambivalence of constricting, purging, being haunted by and seeking absolution from one's own antiself, is indeed a mad form of ambivalence. (7) We would suggest that it is just such ambivalence that, in a broader sense, may be the key to understanding the brutality of colonization that exceeds the requirements of land theft or even the logic of capitalism itself. That is not to say that the logic of land theft and the unrelenting appropriation of natural resources was in any way secondary to the psychic ambivalence of the settler project. As we will propose later, land is also subject to a colonial reconfiguration premised in the projective imaginary of the settler. (8) We will argue that a reading of the colonial project as a project of conquest alone does not adequately explain the horrors of colonialism. Instead, we would suggest that a psychoanalytic investigation of the settler imaginary, particularly its appropriations and fetishisms, may provide some avenues for grasping, and hopefully de-potentiating, the ongoing madness of colonial logic. While Freud provided the theoretical foundation for attending to the psychosexual elements at play in fetishism, it is Lacan's expansion of psychoanalytic theory into the realm of linguistics that allows a transversal mapping of sexuality onto the settler unconscious in its colonial mode of ambivalence. FETISH Freud (1905, 1927, 1940) theorizes that a fetish item stood in for a male child's apprehension of a woman's lack of a penis, her castration as understood in the mind of the child. The psychic pain and frustration a male child experiences when he realizes his mother is missing a penis creates a wound that he later attempts to deny. The psychic trauma of this wounding, according to Freud, is rejected and displaced through the adoption of a symbolic substitute. In male perversion, fetish items come to take the place of the missing penis in an effort to reintroduce the mother into the phallic order. For the male child, this complex psychic algebra allows for the completion of the mother. In this way, the fetish item provides a continuation of the joy, excitement, and arousal that was frustrated by lack. Not only does the fetish attempt to overcome lack and reintroduce joy, it attempts to overcome the anxiety caused by the thought of castration. The child can persist in his love for his mother without fear that he will be castrated by his father (as his mother was) for competing with him for the mother. The mother, as lack, introduces the possibility of castration generally and hence the male child's castration in particular. Castration anxiety is therefore being equated with emasculation and emasculation with the feminine or, in another term, the "other." Fetish perversions, by reintroducing the woman into the phallic order, disavows castration--no one can lose their penis--and, more subtly, the differences between the sexes. The fetishist defends against the full force of encounter with the woman by maintaining an imaginary in which the fetish item stands in for the penis. The fetishist holds an ambivalent relation to women in that they are both women and not women simultaneously. Freud described this defensive stance as a split in the male ego that maintains denial and reduces anxiety. Elsewhere we have discussed Freudian denial as constitutive of the settler subject (Kouri & Skott-Myhre, 2016); here we need to move to Lacan to understand the full force of the analysis of fetishism in the ambivalence which characterizes and sustains the ruthlessness of colonialism as we know it. (9) LACAN AND FETISHISM For Lacan, the tables are somewhat reversed. Where Freud saw fetishism as a defense against anxiety based in denial, Lacan (1997) sees it as a pact that establishes an ambivalent bond between the symbolic and the imaginary. In the realm of the symbolic, it is no longer the actual father and his penis that is the force in play. Instead, for Lacan, it is the symbolic Name-of-the Father as the master signifier. Rather than the individual male penis of the father, there is the universal phallus, which is generative not only or even primarily of the individual unconscious but of society itself. In this sense, the individual father with only a penis is always under threat of castration in relation to the phallic register as the father in the form of the state, law, or authoritative other. For Lacan, the symbolic father constitutes the threat of ongoing castration to the actual living father as the imaginary of absolute law and universal definition. Lacan, however, noted that the realm of the phallic as universal signifier can never function fully or seamlessly. The regime of the phallic is always incomplete. This is because there is something that Lacan names jouissance, which describes the lack that escapes the Other. This is the realm of what Lacan calls the Real, that which cannot be symbolized. It is the realm that constitutes the limits of the Other, as it is the limit of the subject itself. This is "exactly what permits the emergence of desire; a desire which is structured around the unending quest for the lost/impossible jouissance. Impossible because if the subject does not have it, neither does the big Other, the socio-symbolic system. Both subjective lack and the lack in the Other are lacks of jouissance. Lost because it is posited as lost, introducing thus the idea that it can be refound" (Bohm and Batta 2008, 353).The fetish as a symptom of symbolic lack then serves to refigure Freud's symptom that speaks an unconscious truth and can disrupt the ego's smooth functioning. Lacan's definition of fetish is the lie that allows the ego to reduce levels of anxiety in the face of an unbearable truth. The truth of absolute lack and the threat of castration is no longer denied but managed by seizing upon an object that facilitates an ambivalent attitude toward the actual relations within the symbolic register. In this, the actuality of the Real as that which eludes capture by the phallic register constitutes a set of relations/subjectivities/systems of value that are ineffable and unable to be articulated within universal signification.

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Lacan (1997) specifically notes woman as the other who does not exist in relation to universal signification. In Deleuze and Guattari's (1977) explication of Lacan, they expand this category of woman as other to what they term the "minoritarian." In their work, minoritarians are those subjects constitutively incapable of belonging within the symbolic registers of the master signifier or phallic register. Such "others" invoke an unconscious founded in the Real rather than the symbolic. These minoritarian others signal the death of the father as a loss of coherent social reason and stand as an ongoing threat to the sovereign rule of the law of the father. The fear and anxiety provoked in subjects inducted into or seeking entrance to the law of the father is derived from the threat to language as a universally understood set of terms and definitions. For what Deleuze and Guattari define as majoritarian subjects, the possibility that language might fail could well result in psychosis and the loss of familiar forms of patriarchal society.

This is the threat of symbolic castration that implies the loss of social order and all the benefits for those who are constituted within the phallic register of the father. The anxiety that one might fall afoul of the father and be cast out is overwhelming and impossible. For those subjects of dubious class affiliation and social standing sent to colonize a world composed almost entirely of subjects and territories that lay outside the phallic register of the phallocentric European State form, this becomes an unbearable threat of excommunication and symbolic castration. The possibility that the settler might fall into the abyss of the Real as unstratified and open desiring production is an unbearable threat of madness.

But it is madness that results--genocidal psychosis on a continental scale. The brutality of the settler, as we have noted above, steps aside and outside the laws and logic of the father. It is the unbearable truth of this violation that requires the fetishizing of the other who was the very object of murder, rape, and theft. The fetish mediates the horrors embedded in the traumatic memory of the violation of all social law. It opens a field of ambivalence that allows for a certain kind of forgetting premised on the appropriation of the symbolic objects of the violated other. This is exactly the case with the settler subject who appropriates Indigenous artifacts while complicit in land theft. And to paraphrase Huey Newton, it is indeed a perverse form of necrophilia.

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CONSTRUCTING THE SETTLER UNCONSCIOUS In the context of Lacanian thought on the role of the fetish, we might well argue that what is at stake in the construction of the settler unconscious as a field of perverse desire is the question of an infinitely deferred master signifier. For the production of the settler as subject requires a narrative of obfuscation and homogenization premised on the "mirror" construction of the colonial "other." As Fanon (2008) points out in Black Skin White Masks, On the basis of Lacan's concept of the mirror stage it would be certainly worthwhile investigating to what extent the imago that the young white boy constructs of his fellow man undergoes an imaginary aggression with the appearance of the black man. Once we have understood the process described by Lacan, there is no longer any doubt that the true "Other" for the white man is and remains the black man, and vice versa. For the white man, however, "the Other" is perceived as a bodily image, absolutely as the non ego, i.e., the unidentifiable, the unassimilable. (139)The "raced other," then, is a fundamental element of the colonial other; and while the relation between race and indigeneity is neither simple or clear cut, within the discursive regimes of colonial phallic logic, it remains a defining template. In her Desiring Whiteness, Seshadri-Crooks (2002) asserts that the templates for race are rooted, as we have noted above, in the issue of sexual difference. In her work, she attempts to demonstrate how "race articulates itself with sex to gain access to desire or lack-the paradoxical guarantee of the subject's sovereignty beyond symbolic determination" (3). While she is clear that there is no equivalent relation between race and sex, there is a complicated resonance related to the way that race holds a relation to the ineffable. The ineffable here might well be understood as the ways in which both race and sex, as modes of subjectification, are produced simultaneously as modes of subjection and sets of alternative liberatory possibility in relation to the phallic as master signifier. This relation, as delineated by Seshadri-Crooks, we would argue, involves the definition of the subject's sovereignty as derived from Hegel's master-slave dialectic and explicated in the work of Simone de Beauvoir. (10) Lloyd (2013) notes that the use of term "sovereign subject" in Beauvoir is not a straightforward appropriation of the term. In the first place, although Beauvoir refers to the sovereign as the masculine and the female as its object, there is a subtler dynamic at play. In Lloyd's reading of the sovereign as master in Beauvoir, he postulates that Hegel had little interest in equating the sovereign with the master. Lloyd attributes this differentiation from Hegel to the influence of Bataille's reading of the sovereign in Beauvoir's work. While the argument Lloyd makes is complex, of particular note to our interests here is the way that the sovereign as master is posited within an understanding of sexual difference. In this context, the sovereign is not powerful as master but has force through the exclusion of the sovereign as an object of fear. For Bataille, societies are held together by what is excluded or sustained as taboo. (11) Lloyd notes that what is taboo is central to what constitutes the sovereign. It consists essentially in the expulsion of certain objects into a region that is impossible to penetrate. These objects have, if you will, the power to send away, or at least keep at a distance, all the individuals who participate in the institution. That is, in essence, not a case of objects consecrated by beliefs or fixed rituals--it is corpses, blood, especially menstrual blood, menstruating women themselves... These objects... are impure and untouchable, and they are sacred. (11)In the set of relations outlined above, the king or sovereign as the representative of the divine as an inaccessible realm is also taboo. In being excluded, the sovereign becomes the unifying element of all that is disparate. In short, the sovereign becomes the master signifier that defies castration by being excluded from difference. This is not the power of the master but power through exclusion and implacable homogeneity. The sovereign force in any given society is then the master signifier that seeks to sustain the homogenous undifferentiated truth. The enemy of the sovereign is the heterogeneous elements of any given social system: those elements that defy homogenous definition. In terms of subjectivity, the exclusion of heterogeneous elements from the homogeneous realm of consciousness formally recalls the exclusion of the elements, described (by psychoanalysis) as unconscious, which censorship excludes from the conscious ego... Taboo and repression are mechanisms of the exclusion of the heterogeneous from the homogeneous realm of consciousness. And eroticism, par excellence, is a matter of taboo and transgression; much of Bataille's studies of eroticism consist of a study of the complementary relationship uniting taboos which reject violence, with acts of transgression which set it free. These counterbalanced urges have a kind of unity "transgression does not deny the taboo but transcends it and completes it." (Lloyd 2013, 14)For us, the question of what constitutes the sovereign subject vis-a-vis Beauvoir is profoundly entangled with the deployment of "whiteness" as a master signifier. This signifier seeks to homogenize the social field by redacting actual cultural difference. It then reconstitutes it within the symbolic register of "whiteness" as equivalent to conscious awareness. It produces living alternative difference as a repressed unconscious of forbidden desire. The relation of all subjects within the social field of colonial relations must submit their living heterogeneous differences, forged over millennia and particular to geographies and historical contingencies, to the subjectifying process of colonial consciousness. In this process, an erotic relation is formed between the elided aspects of those subjects admitted into "whiteness" with the attendant repression of any grief or loss of previous habits of culture, living practice, and the displacement of the lost objects onto those subjects excluded from the realm of the master signifier. This complex construction that produces actual living historical heterogeneity as taboo creates what Bataille calls an "erotic relation" that we described above as fetishistic. The erotic relation is a "complementary relationship uniting taboos which reject violence, with acts of transgression which set it free." (Lloyd 2013, 14) Here we can begin to see how the erotic charge of the other can be transgressed only through actual or symbolic acts of violence that release the trauma of assimilation through the expression of sublimated rage. The use of the fetishized relation to the Indigenous other is an attempt to escape the law of the father as the master signifier. It is the violation of the law that fuels the eroticism of perverse desire in a gambit to produce a subjective sovereignty outside the law of the father, that is to say, outside the realm of symbolic determination. It is a bid to seek anonymity in the other so as to not be accountable to the universal signification of the moral and ethical imperatives of the father. We might then ask, what are the implications for this vanishing into the Indigenous other as a flight from the legacies of genocide? If we follow Fanon (2008) in his explication of the effects of colonial subjective aggression on the others of the colonial project, specifically, Black subjects, then the question of subjective production of settlers in our contemporary period becomes quite troubled. When Fanon cites Lacan's mirror stage in relation to racial identification, we understand that, for the settler, the racialized other resides outside the phallic register of the symbolic. It is an empty space wherein the white settler sees an open subjective territory in which to seek refuge by reconstituting the other as all of us together. In a strange way, putting on a headdress and burning traditional medicine provides settlers a way to reduce the full shock of colonization. However, this time it is not through strict denial but through a joy of transgression, or rather, jouissance. Fetish items, in the Lacanian register, gain an erotic charge specifically because they represent a counterpoint to the socially accepted codes. Where Freud theorized the unconscious as the realm of forbidden desires and overwhelming anxieties, Lacan posed a realm where the unarticulated became charged. The return that promised a jouissance taken during the castration that language imposed. THE FORCE OF THE SYMBOLIC

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As we have seen, the colonial other represents a fundamental unspeakability in the symbolic and imaginary registers of the settler. This has profound consequences for the colonial other as the settler seizes on this as an opportunity to elide the actual materiality of that which can't be articulated in the master tongue. At the symbolic level, this is most clearly demonstrated by the colonist's insistence on renaming the Indigenous people of North America along with every aspect of geography and culture. The capacity of the colonial other to name themselves or to have any overt recognition at the level of the symbolic is absolutely denied. At an imaginary level this takes place through the production of terra nullius, literally, empty land.

Without a doubt, settler colonialism is specifically about land (Tuck and Yang 2012). For nearly four hundred years, European Christians, particularly, white males, made a new home for themselves in the lands of sovereign peoples. These lands are now known as North America. This homemaking took place through the most brutal of processes that included: starvation, the deliberate spread of disease, kidnappings, rape, the burning of sacred objects, and internment camps populated with children stolen from their families called residential schools. The capacity to elude the material actuality of living subjects who inhabited the land requires a rupture in the relation of the symbolic and imaginary of psychotic proportions. The land and the people residing on it must enter a landscape utterly produced by what Said (1985) references, vis-a-vis the Orient, the colonial imagination.

To produce this imaginary landscape of pure potentiality for the settler, what is encountered as material actuality must be reconfigured so as to meet the requirements of the new imaginary. This opens the production of settler subjectivity to a certain kind of, what Brennan terms, a "psychotic fantasy" that conceives of the subject (in our case the settler subject) "as the origin cause and end of knowledge" (cited in Sheshadri-Crooks 2002, 4). This level of foundational denial allows for the settler subject to repress any knowledge the colonial other has of themselves, so that a purely imaginary projection of truly psychotic proportions can come to stand in for the material actuality of genocidal trauma. In this regard, Hardt and Negri (2001) note that the North American Terrain can be imagined as empty only by willfully ignoring the existence of the Native Americans--or really conceiving them as a different order of human being, as subhuman, part of the natural environment. Just as the land must be cleared of rocks in order to farm it, so the terrain must be cleared of native inhabitants. (170)To accomplish the obfuscation of what Foucault (1980) has termed "subjugated knowledge," Indigenous people were fiercely punished for practicing their languages and traditions. Their ecological and spiritual connections to the natural world were subjected to the stratification, nominalization, and territorializations of the imperial code of land management. This articulation of the colonial subject as an indeterminate, ahistorical open signifier allows for the ability to literally colonize everything both symbolically and physically as far as the eye can see.

As Brennan points out, the imaginary process of fixing the other is not only confined to seeing; it also involves naming. More accurately, naming is part of how the other is seen, as well as being part of the way out. In sum, when the master becomes the master, identified with and as a name-shaper, released into and through a cultural linguistic tradition, the master simultaneously directs aggression towards the one who is seen to be pacified. But this leaves the pacified in the position where they are dependent (at least at the level of ego) on the image they receive from the other. (cited in Seshadri-Crooks 2002, 5)This process of naming in order to deny the material actuality of what the settler can see is at the root of the perverse relation of colonial desire. The entire symbolic and imaginary systems of Indigenous people required castration in order to constitute the settler subject. Such castrations, however, do not disappear but enter into the unconscious. In the Freudian reading of the unconscious, denial allows for the production of a new subject, but castration anxiety returns through symptoms of this original repression: the fear of being themselves castrated fuels an unparalleled savagery that maintains the new patriarchal order. Turning to Lacan, however, we have a better analysis of the paradoxical desire to appropriate and possess that which is Indigenous. The colonial other, through castration and the imposition of a new symbolic and imaginary order, becomes the lost joy of the settler, the promise of a presymbolic or preoedipal jouissance.

In contemporary settler societies, the jouissance that the colonial other represents is in a fully fetishized mode, one characterized by ambivalence. The violation of the law of the father that results in the genocidal project of colonialism is buffered by an appropriation of Indigenous symbols and imaginaries. Not that the settler has access to these registers but rather that transgressing the settler's own symbolic order brings a painful intensity. Settler appropriations are telltale signs of fetishisms where the significance of the object is increasingly detached from the signifying system, while the affective charge is intensified. Indigenous art therefore mediates, as fetish, an ambivalent relationship that denies the horror of colonization while producing the object's lost castration as desire. Attempts to possess the other by signifying within the register of the father cannot be sustained, and therefore new atrocities are bound to continue even while Indigenous arts and artifacts are produced on a mass scale as objects of capitalistic value. Similarly, Indigenous ways of knowing and relating to the environment are reproduced in innumerable books while Indigenous people continue to be dispossessed of land for resource extraction. The colonial other, in the psyche of the settler, is pure unconscious abstraction: a denied signifier with no corporeal existence, returning only as a mediator of anxiety and excitement.

THE UNCONSCIOUS WE DESERVE

Felix Guattari (2010) tells us that we have the unconscious we deserve. In our writing here, we have attempted to sketch out the profoundly problematic forces that have constituted the ambivalent psychic relation that has characterized the settler regimes of dominance, subjugation, genocide, and appropriation. We have proposed that the ongoing fetishizing of all things Indigenous by settler subjects is deeply rooted in a psychotic disavowal of a deeply ambivalent historical legacy. At this point in our writing, it is important to note that all three authors are settler subjects. As such we are not attempting to articulate any proposals or theoretical framework that would reflect on or inform Indigenous projects or scholarly work. Our project here is to inform ourselves about ourselves and, in so doing, to make us visible. It is to claim the unconscious we have as our legacy in order to realize the possibility of reconfiguring it to different ends. It is to suggest the possibility of removing the mediating fetishistic defenses we have deployed through the appropriation of the other so as to face more clearly our own relation to the law of the father.

We argue that a reconfiguration of the settler unconscious could not occur in the realm of the symbolic or the imaginary but only through a reversal of the process of the logic that originally produced it. That is to say, this can only occur through a process of reconfiguring the question of sovereignty outside the registers of phallic law. Settler relations with Indigenous peoples cannot continue to be configured through the preexisting universal symbolic patriarchal systems of meaning that are comfortable and familiar to majoritarian subjects.

As we enter the twenty-first century, Canada has engaged in a process to ostensibly address issues of colonization through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC). We would argue that this effort is riddled with the problems we have been identifying above. Indeed, we might argue that this effort to remediate the traumatic effects of colonization effectively fetishizes colonial trauma by deferring any material or actual mechanisms of decolonization. As Tuck and Yang (2012) point out, decolonization is not a metaphor and cannot be accomplished through mechanisms such as apology or moderate reformation of government policy toward Native peoples. Decolonization requires the repatriation of Indigenous land and the reestablishment of Indigenous sovereignty.

In our terms, the TRC operates specifically with the logic of phallic law. It appears to be an effort to redress and remediate colonial injustice through inquiry into the residential school system (2015a) and published Calls to Action (2015b), whose agenda advocates closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health services and outcomes, increasing health practitioners' cultural competence, and including Elders and traditional healing in education and health service provision.

The TRC has also worked to increase awareness about the residential school system and therefore places the current conditions of Indigenous people into a colonial context. The TRC's Calls to Action, however, falls short of naming the attempted genocide of nations of Indigenous peoples, instead reframing colonization as "cultural genocide" (155). Furthermore, it elaborates a path forward without a word about decolonization as land return, thereby offering reconciliatory roadmaps for Indigenous futures within the neocolonial nation-state. The TRC operates as mediation, which allows the settler state of Canada to sustain its colonial sovereignty. It fetishizes the practice of apology over any actual shift in colonial relations. It perpetuates the process of colonial appropriation and control of Native land and resources through substituting unconscious abstraction for any kind of actual reversal of settler logic. We would argue that settler practitioners have a responsibility to work with other settlers to undo this repressive fantasy and engage in the hard work of land repatriation and equitable sovereign relations.

We would argue that to decolonize in good faith requires relinquishing our addictive relation to the castrating fear of lack. The symbolic is not our progenitor but only our father-in-law. As Ettinger (2006) points out, our common progenitor is the womb, the feminine, the ineffable ecological relation of mutuality, and permeable borders. To remember this as the source of our unconscious productive desire means that we as settlers must be willing to break down. We cannot simultaneously support the system of father law and make no claims to its effects. To hide ourselves from ourselves in psychotic paranoiac projection in the other is an act of moral and ethical cowardice.

Deleuze and Guattari (1977) tell us that the form of unconscious is derived from what they term preconscious social investments. They describe the force of the capitalist unconscious as a kind of antiproduction that is loved by itself for itself. They describe induction into such a system as a deep preconscious investment in the realm of the purely symbolic.

Oh, to be sure, it is not for himself or his children that the capitalist works, but for the immortality of the system. A violence without purpose, a joy, a pure joy in feeling oneself a wheel in the machine, traversed by flows, broken by schizzes. Placing oneself in a position where one is thus traversed, broken, fucked by the socius, looking for the right place where, according to the aims and interests assigned to us, one feels something moving that has neither an interest nor a purpose. A sort of art for art's sake in the libido, a taste for a job well done, each one in his own place, the banker, the cop, the soldier, the technocrat. (346-347)And, of course the settler. Certainly, if we are to see the other as having a material actuality and sovereign status beyond European colonial paradigms of the master-slave dialectic and the law of the symbolic father, then we must repudiate these kinds of preconscious investments by seeking the production of a new kind of unconscious, or perhaps an unconscious we have always had but somehow couldn't locate in our lived role of settler.

Such an unconscious cannot be found in social productions of the system of colonial and capitalist rule. If we wish to desettle, then we can no longer perpetuate the Eurocentric patterns of family, law, sexuality, education, politics, economies, and so on. These forms are not translatable into the necessarily heterogeneous and fluid borders between radically disparate others. We must find new preconscious social investments in new forms of collectivity. As Anne Querrian (2011) points out, Guattari argued that "capitalism relentlessly destroys collectivities and constructs a direct equivalent between individuals" (86). This production of the western individual depotentiates the full force of bodies operating together. For capital, this production isolates the subject and creates it as a space of lack. Lacking the most primordial of relations, the womb is never an individual space but always a space of becoming multiplicity. The womb is a shared space of joint production of both mothers and children (Ettinger 2006). Our collective unconscious and our living force is rooted in this relation and only secondarily articulated in the realm of language or the phallus. But even in the realm of language, capitalism must be assured that our world is defined by universal signifiers that create hierarchies and taxonomies of abstract relations. To rediscover an unconscious adequate to the dismantling of settler identity and, more importantly, settler actions, it is essential that we recognize an ecological collective sociality.

Finally, we as settlers must repudiate all forms of denial. We cannot seek absolution or forgiveness. We are accountable (and not just historically) for our ongoing predations, appropriations, and subjugations of Indigenous peoples. This does not entail a wallowing in shame and guilt. That is an indulgence that no one can afford. We do not need to have conversations in which we "hear" our Indigenous neighbors and where they can "hear" us. We don't need more conferences exploring the rich culture of our Indigenous brothers and sisters. We don't need to erect monuments or placards memorializing horror and genocide.

We do need to enter into serious self-evaluation of everything we can do concretely to materially affect a change in the politics of land and sovereignty in each and every settler state (in our case that is the United States and Canada). This means serious engagements that prioritize reparations, land claims, and the establishment of sovereign relations with nonsettler peoples.

We do not own this land. At best, we are long-term guests who have treated our hosts with appalling savagery. To some degree, the fact that we have not seriously engaged the rampant contradictions and antagonisms of our own European history has led us into deep patterns of psychic malaise with horrific results. It is time we faced our demons and recognize our complicity in taking joy in the system we have built that is destroying us and everything around us. This is our responsibility. As we have noted above, we don't need to educate ourselves about the rich culture of our Indigenous brothers and sisters. This is not because this culture is not worth finding out about but because we are not yet mature enough as a people to recognize the worth of what we are seeing, hearing, and experiencing. We need to first educate ourselves about ourselves as settlers and with some diligence as a people free of an abusive father and neglected mother. Perhaps then we can learn to recognize ourselves within a world of heterogeneous others including our human and more-than-human (12) relatives. Therein lies the possibility that we will cease to desire the other in order to consume them and instead desire the other in order that we might form a world of infinite creativity and love.

### Perm: Do Both

#### ‘USFG’ requires retaining sovereignty over the U.S.

U.S. Legal ’16 [U.S. Legal; 2016; Organization offering legal assistance and attorney access; U.S. Legal, “United States Federal Government Law and Legal Definition,” <https://definitions.uslegal.com/u/united-states-federal-government/>]

The United States Federal Government is established by the US Constitution. The Federal Government shares sovereignty over the United States

#### That’s a geographical term.

U.S. Code ’40 [United States Code; October 14, 1940; 8 U.S. Code § 1101 – Definitions]

(38) The term “United States”, except as otherwise specifically herein provided, when used in a geographical sense, means the continental United States, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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### Alternative

#### 2. MATERIALLY---decolonization spills out and relinquishes settler control over Turtle Island.

#### Rematriation unlocks Indigenous ecological stewardship---that solves a host of interlocking, existential crises.

Hill ’24 [Kyle, Lyla Johnston, Misty Blue, Jaidyn Probst, Madison Staecker, and Lydia Jennings; July/August 2024; Assistant Professor in the Department of Indigenous Health at the University of North Dakota, Master’s in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University; Dine Community Organizer; Citizen of White Earth Nation; Master’s in Public Health at the University of Minnesota; Environmental Health MPH Student at the University of Minnesota; Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences from the University of Arizona; The Journal of Climate Change and Health, “Rematriation and Climate Justice: Intersections of Indigenous Health and Place,” vol. 18]

While climate change has been described as the most pressing global public health crisis of our time, the impacts and burdens of these crises are borne disproportionately between racial and ethnic groups. Indigenous Peoples are considered amongst the most vulnerable to climatic changes due to their interdependence with their local ecosystems, as well as increased morbidity from the enduring impacts of health inequities [1,2]. In addition, while climate change and associated environmental shifts are intensifying, climate impacts intersect with the compounded and enduring impacts of land dispossession, displacement and forced acculturation vis-a-vis Settler-colonialism [1]. Unfortunately, this era of the Anthropocene (human-induced cause of climate change), has done little to redress centuries of colonial subjugation, forced acculturation, and genocide of Indigenous communities, despite recognition that the roots of the Anthropocene are planted within the architecture of Settler-colonialism. Thus, the climate crisis as we know it is not only an existential threat to Indigenous Peoples, but also represents one of many crises caused by Settler-colonialism, and a further proliferation of this form of hegemony that threatens Indigenous conceptualization of kinship, reciprocity, and relationality [3]. To understand the scale of land dispossession, Farrell and colleagues (2021) found that American Indian communities experienced a 98.9% cumulative reduction in coextensive lands, with 42.1% of tribes from historical periods that have an absence of any recognized present-day land base. Furthermore, the average size of any Tribe's present-day land is only 2.6% of historically recognized territory. Finally, the average forced migration that many Tribes were forced to undertake was 239 km, with a maximum forced migration distance of 2774 km [4]. Despite the historical imposition of Settler-colonialism to cultural, spiritual, and traditional kinship practices to territorial homelands and lifeways, Indigenous communities continue to resist acculturation by actively asserting sovereign stewardship of cultural and traditional lifeways, languages, kinship practices, and land-based pedagogies.

Indigenous land tenure as climate mitigation

As Indigenous scholars, climate and environmental activists, elders and grassroots organizers move to recognize the inherent strengths of Indigenous communities, particularly in areas of biodiversity protection, ecosystem stewardship, and resilience in the face of genocide, we must reconcile with an oft-cited truth - Indigenous Peoples steward 80% of the global biodiversity, while only inhabiting 22% of the earth's surface, and comprising only 5% of the earth's global population [1,37]. The broad implications of these findings call to question a history of colonial subjugation, and the disruptive impacts to both Indigenous Peoples’ kinship and reciprocal relationship to land and place, as well as the capacity of the planet to sustain life. Today, we grapple with evidence that has suggested that conserving, reforesting, and regenerating the biological and carbon sequestration capabilities of just 30% of the Earth's degraded lands and oceans has the potential to stabilize not only climate change, but a whole constellation of related existential crises including biodiversity loss, food/water security, deforestation and desertification [5,6]. Such indicators are powerful testimony that recognize the consequences of land and living systems’ degradation due to anthropogenic climatic changes and the challenges facing climate science and climate risk assessment, which have historically been shaped primarily by Western/Northern hemisphere reductionist scientific paradigms.

More recently, several scientific bodies have elevated the critical importance of Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) traditions that recognize the intersections between ecological systems and environmental and climatic conditions as central to an interdisciplinary approach to climate adaptation. In many cases, considerable restoration projects and opportunities have, indeed, been informed by ITEK(s) and practices, with growing capabilities to monitor and coordinate action at bioregional scales—through an integrated, locally-based implementation framework. Many such projects have supported ecosystems in re-establishing stability and homeostasis amid the intersecting crises—biodiversity loss, pollution, food/water insecurity, forced migration, among others. Historically, Indigenous communities of Turtle Island (North America) have long demonstrated their ability to sustain millennial scale ecosystems through innovative land management techniques [7]. From 3000 year old American chestnut groves, to 3500 year old human assisted clam gardens in the Pacific Northwest, to the systematic fire management of buffalo habitat and grasslands from Canada to Louisiana, to the curation of 8000 year old regional soil management of the Amazon River Basin, to the creation of landscape scale floodplain aquaculture in Bolivia, Indigenous Peoples have shown that through reciprocity, reverence, and humility, humanity can sustain abundant food and land management systems with longstanding success [8], [9], [10], [11], [12].

If nature-based solutions are indeed the most holistic and powerful instruments of climate stabilization—and if Indigenous Peoples have proven to be the world's leading guardians of ecosystem health [1]—it would follow that returning Indigenous lands to Indigenous hands should be a key policy priority in the quest for climate rehabilitation.

Because Indigenous communities (generally speaking) are matrilineal, matrifocal, and/or matriarchal, it would also stand to reason that returning lands to traditional stewardship is returning to women-led land tenure. Indeed, the reverence and appreciation of women within most Indigenous societies is interconnected with our reverence and appreciation of the earth, who is often likened to a woman – our first mother. It is through this ethic of reciprocity, respect, Indigenous feminism, and relationality that Indigenous land management systems are born and implemented. To return lands to Native peoples is to return lands to women's leadership. Through these sustainable and time-tested practices, we can cultivate a powerful, nature-based solution to climate change, while also healing a long history of dispossession and relocation.

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Climate change impacts and indigenous health The global health impacts of climate change are comprehensive in scale and indisputably disruptive at local, state and national levels. Yet, the health impacts of climate change are not distributed equitably. In fact, climate change is known to exacerbate vulnerabilities associated with existing health inequities [1,2]. Such is the case within Indigenous communities, particularly American Indian and Alaska Native communities in the U.S. where direct and indirect climate impacts further burden communities experiencing food and water insecurity [1]. In many cases, health inequities within AI/AN communities are etiologically related to social and ecological determinants, a residue of Settler-colonialism in the U.S., and North America more generally. Furthermore, data indicate that present day AI/AN territories are exposed to greater durations of extreme heat than historical land bases, as well as receiving decreased mean precipitation [4], which implicates federal policies associated with Settler-colonialism as the driver of environmental shifts vis-a-vis land dispossession and forced relocation. In many instances, these correlates are recognized as etiologically related to many known health disparities within American Indian and Alaska Native communities, whether that be the nutrition transition and the relative contribution to obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular risk; or historical and intergenerational trauma and its links to depression, suicide and substance use [13], [14], [15]. Additionally, in the context of climate change, mortality and morbidity associated with contemporary health inequities within Indigenous communities are compounded by the burden onto systems and infrastructures that are already under considerable duress to support community health and wellness. Such circumstances become dire when we as a global community bear witness to the devastation of extreme drought, further exacerbating water and food insecurity in many communities, with Indigenous communities being among the most vulnerable [1,16]. Additionally, pollution and green-house gas emissions pose a unique global public health challenge in industrialized nations, invoking questions of equitable exposure to vulnerable communities, particularly when we consider a fair share approach. In many cases, countries with large Indigenous communities suffer disproportionately, relative to their contributions to global emissions [17]. Similarly, extreme heat reduces opportunities for physical activity, while challenging critical public health infrastructure in urban and rural communities, which, in the case of the Indian Health Service, is critically underfunded to support such vulnerabilities [18]. Furthermore, we understand that increases in air temperature and extreme heat are risk factors for wildfires, while also creating favorable conditions for food, water and vector-borne illnesses [16]. Again, such climatic changes pose challenges to already vulnerable healthcare, food and water systems within Indigenous communities. Many of such systems not only lack the technological advancements needed for adaptation, but also highlight the ongoing structural racism and disenfranchisement they continue to face. In the case of mental health, we are only beginning to understand the challenges faced in the context of climate change. In regard to the integrity of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, the kinship to land and interdependence becomes central to questions of health and welfare in the Anthropocene. The intersections of Indigenous ways of knowing, epistemologies, and climate change paint an important picture for the field of climate change and health, particularly how we reconcile our relationship to place. Recently, Cunsolo and Ellis (2018) described the experience of altered or severed connection to place and the emotional experiences that surface as ecological grief [19]. For Indigenous communities, the subacute and chronic climatic shifts (e.g. drought, sea/lake ice duration and extent, snow cover duration, altered seasons, etc.) are both dynamic and cumulative, when we consider the added stressors and impacts from historical loss and trauma, as well as legacy of colonial subjugation [16]. Such experiences undermine the ancestral connection with land and place, grounded in ITEKs and Indigenous ontologies, which are organized according to cultural and traditional practices often in harmony with seasonal changes and ancestrally recognized calendars. Disruptions to this harmony, in the case of anthropogenic causes of environmental/climatic shifts, have proven deleterious for cultural identity, sense of place, and manifest in community dis-ease (i.e., general distress, substance use, suicidal ideation, depression, feelings of disconnectedness, etc.). Quite understandably, climate-induced migration or mobility is associated with severe distress in cases where the lived-environment is no longer able to support Indigenous cultures and lifestyles [4,19,20]. Climate justice as a reparative approach

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Climate justice is a paradigm shift that recognizes the disproportionate climate impacts to communities recognized as at-risk or vulnerable, the historical harms that these communities have experienced along the arc of Settler-colonialism, as well as ongoing structural discrimination and oppression. Most notably, climate justice redresses a history of forced acculturation, land dispossession and displacement of Indigenous Peoples by engaging principles of distributive justice, which advocates for equitable allocation of burdens and benefits of climate change; procedural justice, which seeks to engage equitable decision-making and litigation of the Anthropocene; and, recognition, which advances considerations of fairness, respect, and equity [2]. Though, from an Indigenous perspective, climate justice is grounded within three interrelated tenets or postulates. Firstly, we recognize that the Anthropocene is a residue and artifact of Settler-colonialism, with devastating implications on Indigenous land-tenure and Indigenous rights [21]. Such that the architecture of Settler-colonialism, namely the dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples of North America as well as the collective impacts of capitalism, extractive economies, industrial revolution, and urbanization, are well-recognized “human-induced” correlates of the climate crises. Similarly, Hernandez (2022) asserts that Ecocolonialism represents the rapid environmental alterations that result from urbanization and Settler-colonialism that, in combination with climate change, has displaced or disrupted Indigenous peoples’ sense of place and lifeways [22]. Secondly, we assert that ITEKs are a conduit and arbiter of our interdependence and sovereign relationship with local ecosystems and traditional territories. In many ways, the privileged and intentional engagement of ITEK(s) (i.e. active use of Indigenous languages, traditional, cultural and spiritual activities) offer a decolonizing approach for climate adaptation and mitigation programs, as well as Indigenous health. Lastly, Indigenous reparative frameworks that not only encourage the principles, but redress the disruption and epistemic, cultural, and ontological discontinuity imposed by Settler-colonialism are critical in this regard. Social and climate justice movements of front-line communities represent grassroots efforts that reconcile these principles into social and climate justice movements, such as the Landback movement. Landback represents a key movement in elevating Indigenous communities in the struggle for liberation, which is rooted in climate justice [23].

In the context of climate justice, liberation for Indigenous communities as articulated by the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples offers pointed and thorough recognition of the human rights critical to Indigenous communities. In particular, article 25 offers important insights and considerations for the climate justice movement. Article 25 states, “Indigenous Peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard” [24].

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Rematriation as an ethos of climate adaptation and sovereignty for indigenous communities Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge(s) reflect the plurality and heterogeneity of ecosystem and place-based knowledges that, as a collective, have supported Indigenous Peoples in tracking environmental shifts and climatic changes, while inventorying changes in species composition and ecosystems across generations [25]. Indigenous Peoples have long pressed for recognition and respect of their knowledge systems as part of their struggles for self-determination. Researchers and international environmental organizations are increasingly engaging with Indigenous Knowledges in relation to adapting to climate change, often in extractive research practices that use Indigenous knowledge systems with minimal participation or decision making from the communities who hold that expertise [26]. In this article, we discuss critical reflections on how we recognize rematriation as a component of both the field of climate and environmental justice, as well as decolonizing and dismantling movement imperatives, such as the Landback movement. In addition, we also ground our understanding of rematriation in Indigenous principles that govern Indigenous science. Specifically, we call on spirituality, ethical relationship, mutualism, reciprocity, respect, restraint, harmony and interdependence of People and Place [27]. For Indigenous peoples, the land is an ancestor who carries our memories, our stories, and our traumas. Healing the land is inextricably linked with healing our people [22]. A case of rematriation and ancestral memory in Mni Sóta Maḳoče and Bdóte This manuscript was borne from an invitation for a keynote speaking engagement at the Climate Health 2023 meeting in Long Island, New York. At this talk, key considerations for climate justice within Indigenous communities were discussed, with a case of birthing justice and rematriation centered. In particular, the discussion revolved around the active rematriation of Indigenous territories, reclamation of relationship to place and a spiritual practice of reciprocity. In this case, the first author (KH), Dakota, Lakota and Anishinaabeg, highlighted the embattled experience as a parent to newborn a Dakota daughter and a hope to renew kinship to place, in this case, Bdóte, or “confluence of two rivers/bodies of water” in Dakota language. Of note, Bdóte is a term for confluence, however, the Bdóte that sits at the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers in Mni Sóta Maḳoče (Minnesota) is understood to be the genesis of Dakota Peoples, who were exiled from their traditional homelands as part of the U.S. vs. Dakota war of 1862, commonly referred to as the “Sioux Uprising”. Though interrogating the entirety of this period is beyond the scope of this manuscript, we want to elevate the practices of birthing justice, midwifery, and land-based healing as a covenant of climate justice and decolonizing praxis. In this case example, we reflect on the journey and act of returning to Bdóte for a placenta burial ceremony for Dakota families as an active practice of rematriation of kinship to place. Such acts are natural observations of natural law, a return of the sacred connection, spirit-world, and natural world, back to her life-giving source. In many respects, these practices are an embodiment of kincentric ecology, reciprocity, and engagement of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies [22]. Altogether, reclamation of ancestral Indigenous land-based practices, particularly those that are stewarded by matriarchal/matrilineal communities, and lead by Indigenous matriarchs and Indigenous women is a process of rematriation, a core principle of climate justice and determinant of planetary health. Along the trajectory of healing, restoration or adaptation where lands hold memory, conscientious and intentional reclamation of ancestral traditional and spiritual practices that honor our relationship to land and place, are inextricably linked to Indigenous conceptualizations of wellness - The land is healthy, when the people are healthy.

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Rematriation reflects the conscious and intentional movement of the Indigenous feminine to reclaim sovereign relationship to sacred lands, waters, and territories of Indigenous Peoples [28,29]. Taken further, any opportunity to organize Indigenous stewardship over territorial homelands, be it ceremonial, cultural, or restoration (i.e. mitigation), is a vital endeavor that exercises sovereignty of matriarchal and matrilineal societies, of which the many Indigenous communities represent. After all, water is our first medicine, and Indigenous women are recognized as water keepers, and many ceremonies invoke the process of maternity and birthing. Indigenous men and two-spirit relatives are also considered as carrying femininity, spiritually. Herein, we explore the process of birthing justice as rematriation, and rematriation and climate justice. “The act of returning the sacred to the mother” [28(p26)].

Mni Sóta Maḳoče is the land where clear waters reflect blue skies, which is representative of ecocentric nature of Indigenous languages, Dakótiapi (the Dakota language) being amongst them. Long before the “Land of 10,000 Lakes”, Dakota oral narratives have affirmed their connection to this place, its land and its water, as homelands. Within these lands, there is no more sacred a place than that of Bdóte, which is the place of first creation, a place of genesis that rests at the confluence of Mnísota Wakpá (Minnesota River) and Wakpá Tháŋka (Mississippi River), and it is where the first Dakota man and first Dakota woman emerged. It was here that Dakota people prospered from.

Over time, each of the four groups, or four fires, of the Dakota developed a relationship and responsibility of care to the land and their relatives based on where they were situated. “The Bdewakaƞtuƞwaƞ were the spiritual people who lived by the water, as did the Sisituƞwaƞ who were medicine people. The Waḣpekute were warriors who protected the medicine people. Waḣpetuƞwaƞ people were dwellers in the forest…” [30(p19)]. These relationships only strengthened with time through care and proximity, where the goal was to honor and nourish biodiversity to ultimately serve the collective goal of balance. This model of care proliferated and was employed through the many other village locations and sacred places within the region, such as Ȟemníčhaŋ (Barn Bluff), Wakháŋ Thípi (Spirit Cave), Oȟéyawahe (Pilot Knob), and Wíta Tháŋka (Pike Island). All of these places continue to be highly revered within the Twin Cities landscape, a relationship that has withstood colonialism, land dispossession and ethnocide. Though, it is at Bdóte that the creation story of Dakota Peoples, the intersection of our world and the spirit world, where medicines and plants used for Dakota women to give birth, live. This, by all accounts, is a life-giving place [31].

Justice is reclaiming our humanity by reclaiming our sacred earth - that earth is our homeland.

Gabrielle Tateyuskanskan [32(p119)].

Through the process of rematriation, guided by Indigenous relational worldviews and the reconciliation of historical and contemporary land and water injustices, the Waterback and Landback movements emerge as powerful forces shaping the future of climate justice. Rematriation, then, becomes a transformative path, allowing humanity to be rematriated into the care of Mother Earth and her life-giving waters [29]. Furthermore, the Rights of Nature movement recognizes the fundamental and inherent rights of natural or environmental bodies that correspond with Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies [33]. Of note, in the case of sacred and spiritual places for Indigenous communities like the Dakota Oyate, are critical ecosystems for millions of people, i.e., the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. Climate change in Indigenous communities is through the ‘dual narratives of marginalization and resilience’ [27]. Indigenous peoples are subjected to extraordinary burdens from the impacts of climate change on water and land security, and from the secondary impacts on beings that depend on water and land for maintaining life, cultural, and ceremonial practices [29].

Conclusion

“…everything starts and ends with the water and the land…everything is tied into it. Whether you look at our complex social hierarchies we've had prior to colonization, to our stories, our creation stories for placing geographical areas …that's what it means to be place-based peoples.” (Saul Brown, Reconciliation Negotiator, Heiltsuk Nation) [34(p33)].

In efforts to address climate change, we must first redress the injustice to Indigenous peoples, whom we as a scientific community recognize as both being the most vulnerable to the direct and indirect impacts of climate change and as having the unique potential to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In this pursuit we must confront the injustice of Settler-colonial histories and allocate the resources necessary to support Indigenous communities in reclaiming traditional lifeways, kinship, culture, language and spiritualities. It is necessary to heal wounds rooted in the stolen lands where ancestral knowledge still belongs and to develop reparative frameworks that intercede on behalf of climate justice on all fronts, especially in the face of environmental or structural racism. Such a journey calls for recognition of the determinants of planetary health, as we seek to decolonize lifeways that support climate adaptation and mitigation programs and adhere to natural law that inspires us to recognize places like Bdóte as kin, and the medicines that call this place home as worthy of being protected [1,3] (See Fig. 1 The Indigenous Holistic Worldview). Indigenous Peoples are healthy when the land is healthy; Indigenous Peoples ARE the land. Consider the implications of these governing principles. Returning a placenta to the place of genesis, recognizing the cyclical nature of life and life-givers, rematriation of territorial homelands and significance of place is an act of interdependence and kinship to land. However, as an exiled Dakota community, where do we begin to understand the importance of our original instructions, or ancestral lifeways, along a trajectory of climate change? How do we look to these ancestral practices to guide efforts to know our lands, and adapt to a changing climate? As we consider opportunities, we look to other Indigenous communities to help us nurture our path back to our territorial homelands, especially those that have undergone urbanization. Indigenous climate adaptation strategies conveyed from four First Nations communities include: (1) strengthening Indigenous governance and sovereignty, self-determination, (2) promoting knowledge sharing for adaptation practices within and among communities (kinship and communal practices), (3) promoting adaptive co-management among governance scales, and (4) developing learning platforms for climate impacts and adaptive strategies [34].

### Ontology

#### 1. IRRATIONALITY---violence extends beyond what’s profitable OR necessary for colonial conquest.

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In his work on the excessive brutality and violence perpetuated on Shamanic cultures in Columbia during the colonial period, Michael Taussig (1987) notes that the violence perpetrated by colonists against the Indigenous populations exceeded any necessity for colonial control of the area. Indeed, the degree of genocide was counterproductive to capitalist interests because it reduced the level of the Indigenous labor force needed for rubber production. He suggests that there was a complex interplay of the effects of intra-European colonization and the colonizing activities in Columbia.

#### 2. RENAMING---incessant cultural repression proves the ‘un-speakability’ of the colonial other---that’s Kouri.

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As we have seen, the colonial other represents a fundamental unspeakability in the symbolic and imaginary registers of the settler. This has profound consequences for the colonial other as the settler seizes on this as an opportunity to elide the actual materiality of that which can't be articulated in the master tongue. At the symbolic level, this is most clearly demonstrated by the colonist's insistence on renaming the Indigenous people of North America along with every aspect of geography and culture. The capacity of the colonial other to name themselves or to have any overt recognition at the level of the symbolic is absolutely denied. At an imaginary level this takes place through the production of terra nullius, literally, empty land.

#### 3. POPULIST OMNIPRESENCE---it requires a settler/indigenous binary grounded in the logic of elimination.

Morrell ’24 [Megan; May 2024; B.A. in Political Science from the University of Denver; Culture, Society, and Praxis, “Between Populism and Settler Colonialism: A US Case Study,” vol. 16]

Kevin Bruyneel and Patrick Wolfe write that settler colonialism ought to be thought of as a “structure, not an event.”3 Specifically, “the key distinction here is between an event of colonial invasion in the past and a cultural and power structure that persists and shapes social, economic, and political relations to and in the present.”4 In other words, settler colonial ideology has become a part of continuous socio-political structures in settler states, and thus cannot be fully conceptualized as merely a singular event of migration and settlement in the distant past. The US continues to be a settler state into the present. Moreover, Rita Dhamoon argues that “settler colonialism is not only a structure but also a process, an activity for assigning political meanings, and organizing material structures driven by forces of power.” 5 A process-oriented strategy for understanding settler colonialism “emphasizes that the dispossession of lands is temporal and ongoing, dynamic and continuous.”6 In this sense, settler colonial dynamics continue to unfold in settler colonial societies, and this is partly unavoidable as the settler society has been built on a set of claims to lands that originally belonged to Indigenous peoples.

Further, Wolfe theorizes about what he calls ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ components to the settler logic of elimination, which underlies and justifies colonization. In the negative register, “it strives for the dissolution of native societies… [and] positively, it erects a new colonial society on the expropriated land base… settler colonizers come to stay: invasion is a structure not an event.”7 In essence, settler “governing logic is one of elimination rather than incorporation of indigenous peoples.” 8 Removal or elimination of Native peoples is initially literal and corporeal, but also results in long-lasting psychological and social removal. Settler societies deliberately remember and forget the brutal elimination of Indigenous peoples and the conditions for the existence of the US settler state. Settler memory will be discussed further in the Dismissal section. Thus, the logic of elimination works to remove indigenous communities alongside the building of new settler communities rather than through settler assimilation.

In order to justify the elimination and brutality done to indigenous communities, a socio-political hierarchy must be erected to determine entitlements, and within such a hierarchy indigenous peoples are forced to occupy a degraded status. Settler colonialism utilizes interrelated systems of oppression, “including racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism… because settler colonizers are Eurocentric and assume that European values with respect to ethnic, and therefore moral, superiority are inevitable and natural.” 9 Also, the hegemonic component of settler colonialism “normalizes the continuous settler occupation, exploiting lands and resources to which indigenous peoples have genealogical relationships.” 10 Curiously, the settler is “at the same time exogenous and indigenising, [and] the settler is simultaneously subjecting indigenous people and exogenous ‘Others.’”11 In terms of indigenous oppression the settler “does so because of his exogeneity – ‘we are civilised, unlike indigenous peoples’” 12 Simultaneously, the settler subjects the ‘Other,’ “because of his putative indigeneity – ‘we belong here, unlike recently arrived aliens’”13 Traditions of occupancy entitlement are born through the “common sense” logic of settler colonialism, which prioritizes the settler in determining sovereignty, rights, and power.14

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Another key dimension of the subordinated status of indigenous humans and land rights during the colonial project was the concept of terra nullius- “the idea that settlers can justifiably take land because it belongs to no one – it is ‘empty’.”15 Essentially,“the first European explorers arriving in North America faced the immediate dilemma of competing rights to land between themselves and existing indigenous populations.” 16 Carol Pateman and Charles Mills describe how two senses of terra nullius were invoked by settlers in North America, the first claiming “that the lands were uncultivated wilderness, and thus were open to appropriation by virtue of… the right of husbandry, [and] that the inhabitants had no recognizable form of sovereign government.”17 However, the land wasn’t perceived by settlers to be literally empty and inhabited, like in the Australian case, but rather there was perceived to be an ideological emptiness.18 Much of settler logic derives from the ways in which Europeans and their descendants conceived of land and property rights in the context of imperial expansion. In response to competing land claims, “over many centuries, European thinkers and jurists attempted to establish an understanding of what constituted legal possession, legal ownership, and a legitimate and just taking of land."19 Much of the logical justification for the brutality of settlement originates in John Locke’s political philosophy that “land before individual cultivation was merely public waste… [and] American Indians… had not taken the step of improving the land by their labor… and only with European settlement had the necessary steps been taken to appropriate the land for… productive value for society.”20 Many Americans to this day inherit this narrative that European settlers earned the right to the land because European land use was argued to be more productive than Indigenous peoples’ land usage. Lockean political philosophy has to this day become normalized into settler colonial common sense. Following Locke, in 1758 political theorist Emer de Vattel wrote about in The Law of Nations “that cultivation and ownership of land was critical to the purportedly natural laws of progress, and the future of the human species.”21 The result of this concept was that societies which practiced impermanence and living with, rather than on, the land were understood to be part of nature (therefore savage), unable to make a claim to sovereignty and incapable of economic development… [and] appropriating and transforming land into property was therefore justified as it turned a wasteland into a productive farm.22 Thus, a logical justification for the brutality of settlement was established, coded as an appropriation of land for productive use. Many of these same themes will continue to be relevant in the next section on populism, which is another socio-political structure and process that is deeply relevant to US politics throughout history Populism Definitions Scholars of populism have engaged in extensive debates over the defining criteria for populism. But, for the purposes of this investigation, populism can be understood as a political logic, through which citizens can make sense of their socio-political surroundings, and relatedly their perceived entitlements and collective complaints. Within this logic exists smaller inner-logics or secondary claims that help construct a populist vision of politics and society. Cas Mudde argues that populism “considers society to be ultimately separated into two homogeneous and antagonistic groups, ‘the pure people’ versus ‘the corrupt elite’, and… that politics should be an expression of the volonté générale (general will) of the people.” 23 Essentially, Mudde claims that at its core populism engages in a fracturing of a political community into fundamentally oppositional groups, seen as competing for political representation. In a populist framework, only one side can prevail because shared power is seen as effectively compromised. In the case of radical-right populism, a third category of the disfavored or threatening ‘Other’ is formed, which often includes immigrants and racial and/or ethinic minorities.24 This arises from a definition of ‘the people’ as “culturally homogenous,”25 often embodying the nation’s hegemonic culture. The populist makes a claim to represent a majority or common people of a nation, and seeks to execute politics in their favor. This group represented by the populist is considered to be ‘the people’ of a nation. To address the difficulty of capturing the diversity in cases of populism across different political ideologies, Mudde categorizes populism as uniquely ‘thin-centered,’26 meaning that it depends upon a more substantive logic. 27 Populism alone “is not anything like a codified doctrine, but it is a set of distinct claims and has what one might call an inner logic.”28 Nor is populism merely a rhetorical tool that can fit any politician. Populism must include a combination of criteria, and not every politician is a populist. The construction of ‘the people’ is also uniquely moralistic in populism. Mudde writes that populism is “moralistic rather than programmatic,”29 or focuses on inclusion and exclusion (re: “the people”) rather than political substance. Jan-Werner Müller concurs, writing that “the claim to exclusive representation is not an empirical one; it is always distinctly moral… [and] the populist logic also implies that whoever does not support populist parties might not be a proper part of the people- always defined as righteous and morally pure.”30 Specifically, “populism requires a pars pro toto argument and a claim to exclusive representation, understood in a moral, as opposed to empirical sense.”31 Ultimately, populists “may not win 100 percent of the vote, but they lay claim to 100 percent of the support of good, hardworking folks who have been exploited by the establishment.”32 This characterization of populism as a specifically moralistic political framework is not to suggest that populist ideology is based solely on whims and illogical emotions of a group. Such a claim would simplify the complexity of populism. Rather, while populist ideology is rooted in moralism and emotion, that does not mean it is inherently illegitimate or unconvincing. As Müller notes, “it is not just patronizing to explain the entire [populist] phenomenon as an inarticulate political expression… it is also not really an explanation.”33 Moreover, the idea of belonging to ‘the people’ of a nation is more consequential than merely a claim to political identity. To populists, “opponents are not just people with different priorities and values, they are evil!”34 A necessary component of constructing ‘the people’ of a nation as morally righteous and pure is the creation of a foil, or opposite, which instantiates opposite characteristics within ‘the other.’ Conse-quently, political “compromise [becomes] impossible, as it ‘corrupts’ the purity”35 and ‘the people’ and ‘the other’ become fundamentally incompatible and existentially threatening to each other. As Müller puts it, populists position “the pure, innocent, always hardworking people against a corrupt elite who do not really work (other than to further their self-interest) and… also against the very bottom of society (those who are framed as not really working and living like parasites off the work of others).”36 Relatedly, “‘the people’ are also often characterized as “the ‘common people’...the excluded, the downtrodden, and the forgotten).” 37 Thus, in constructing ‘the people’ of a nation, the perceived in-group becomes a “macrosubject,”38 and is understood by the populist leader as a homogenous and morally pure entity, which they assume the sole representative claim. A political holism develops, which is “the notion that the polity should no longer be split and the idea that it’s possible for the people to be one and- all of them- to have one true representative.”39 The context in which populist politics emerges is also a contentious subject for scholars. Minimally, populism argues from within a national politics that is dissatisfying and argued to be too remote from the bona fide political stakeholders. Populist politics claims to be “a potential corrective for a politics that has somehow become too distant from ‘the people.’”40 Some populism scholars come to agree with the populist’s recognition of the shortcomings of the state, but may not support populist attempts to alleviate the issues. For example, Richard Hofstadter wrote in his famous text The Age of Reform that historically, “populism was the first modern political movement of practical importance in the United States to insist that the federal government has some responsibility for the common weal.”41 Populist ideology attempts to challenge this existing establishment, which is often characterized as technocratic and ignorant to the real lives of citizens. According to populist critiques, there is a “long tradition [within liberalism] of a more ‘elitist’ conception of democracy [controlled by] … increasingly distant and technocratic political and economic elites.”42 Populists often argue that “liberal democracies are increasingly dominated by highly educated and liberal elites whose backgrounds and outlook differ fundamentally from those of the average citizen, a development that has been exacer bated by the rise of a new ‘governance elite’, connected through informal and formal networks that cut across elected national governments.” 43 Journalist Thomas Frank coined this view of liberal democracies to be the “elitist theory of democracy” in which the politically disenfranchised are disenfranchised for a reason.44 It is a conception of the state as a system that works to maintain “consensus quietly, harmoniously, and without too much interference from subaltern groups.”45

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Baked into the structure of the US government is a fear of majoritarian rule and an attempt to obstruct populist fervor. The very revolutionary origins of the US, wherein ordinary people fought for a democratic state against British colonialism demonstrates a populist zeal at the very core of US politics. Institutional checks and balances, the system of election for senators by state legislatures, and the Electoral College, for instance, were strategies written into the constitution itself to contain the potential majoritarian power of populist mobs. There is a foundational tension in US political life between competing liberal and republican governing structures and populist energies that are present from the origins of the nation. Cyclically over the decades, populist mobilization has had moments of great salience alongside periods of waning support, but it never fully disappears from US socio-political life.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

In order to conceptualize the theoretical intersections of populism and settler colonialism, I have identified five major areas in which they are similar. These five intertwined logics are named categorization, subordination, dismissal, authorization, and defiance. By categorization, I mean the ways in which populist and settler colonial logics work to separate citizens into distinct groups. One group that results from this initial categorization is a subordinated group, which is denied entitlements to resources such as political rights and land. Another category that emerges is a dismissed group, which is often subordinated, but often in a veiled manner. The dismissed occupy an implicit and subterranean position compared to the other categories. In contrast, those who are authorized are positioned at the center of the logic. Populist and settler politics work to advocate for and serve the authorized group, sowing seeds of entitlement, which are reaped as socio-political privileges and advantages. Defiance is the final intertwined logic, which denotes the central principle of resistance existing in both settler colonial and populist politics. Both populism and settler colonialism as logics are born from defiance and conflict. The following subsections build upon each other to form a non-exhaustive theoretical framework, which will at the very end be demonstrated in a theoretical diagram, which depicts the logics’ dynamic relationships to each other.

Categorization

Categorization is a definitional stage that is employed in both populist and settler colonial logics to differentiate groups of people and thereby allocate power and privilege. For the populist, ‘the people’ is the group that is constructed in opposition to the ‘elite’ or ‘other.’ Identification with ‘the people’ becomes a core political claim of social and political belonging. Essentially, three main groups or categories are established by populists, each of which assigns socio-political entitlement. 1) ‘The people’ are seen as the primary political stakeholders in the nation and entitled to full representation by the government. (Often ‘the people’ are implicitly or explicitly defined as a subset of the populace; for instance, white American citizens.) Belonging to 2) ‘the elite’ or 3) ‘Other’ both occurs along existing social cleavages and identifies those who are undeserving of political power. Elite identities have tended to include people with high levels of education and specialized skills, career politicians, technocrats, bureaucrats, financiers, and sometimes the wealthy in general. Groups designated ‘Other’ have tended to include already marginalized peoples that do not gain the sympathies of ‘the people,’ and are often a target of populist scapegoating. The ‘Other’ also is argued to have received undeserving benefits from ‘the elite,’ which sows resentment in ‘the people.’

It is not a coincidence that the tripartite populist categorization in the US has repeated other cleavages of social entitlement--namely, ascriptive identities based on race and gender. Take for instance the slogan ‘Make America Great Again,’ which is a type of refrain used by many populists (specified for their own nation) including the former president Donald Trump. The ‘greatness’ that is alluded to is always nostalgic; as in the 1950s post-war period of economic vitality that mostly benefited whites, and in tandem with harsh racialized and gendered marginalization. The slogan is nostalgic of a time before the 1960s and 1970s Civil Rights Movements and Second-Wave Feminism, which criticized socio-political structures of power and oppression. Trump himself thinks fondly of the post-war era, claiming that in that time, meaning “[they]were not pushed around, [they] were respected by everybody.” 46 Right-wing populism in modern times is often a reaction by people with unmet sociopolitical entitlements. In the US, white working class people’s entitlement to economic and social dominance is not viewed as being met, sowing discontent with the political establishment.

Similarly, in settler colonial contexts, categories of race, gender, and nationality work to determine social, political, and economic entitlements to resources such as land and citizenship. A tripartite categorization occurs here as well, grouping people into indigenous peoples, settlers, and some ‘Other.’ Indigenous peoples consist of nations and communities native to the politically salient lands. Settlers are peoples from some exogenous lands predominantly Northwestern Europe, who settle in new lands (e.g. North America) and often self-identify with the racial category of whiteness. Settlers tend to consider themselves white and “civilized,” and derive land and socio-political entitlements from whiteness and often maleness. Relative to the settler-native binary, the ‘Other’ consists of non-indigenous peoples designated as non-white and denied the privileges of Whiteness. African peoples that were kidnapped and brutally enslaved in the Transatlantic Slave Trade to labor in the United States alongside non-white migrants without the protection of whiteness make up this ‘Other’ category. Again, the settler is both “exogenous and indigenizing” 47 --he comes from elsewhere but considers himself to belong in the “new” lands.48

A series of dualisms categorize indigenous people (amongst others) in opposition to European settlers in “couplings such as self-other, citizen-alien, sovereign subject(s)-dominated object(s), and civilized savage”49 Essentially, within settler colonial logic, “one can be defined as what the other is not.” 50 Thus, a triangular system of relationships is formed, where “a settler collective appropriates the indigenous right to welcome people to the country, [and] also simultaneously retains the right to unwelcome exogenous ‘Others.’”51 Settler colonialism thereby produces “hierarchies of Otherness (e.g. among gendered people of colour, among Indigenous people, and between people of colour and Indigenous peoples across the borders of the nation-state).” 52 Communities relegated to Otherness also importantly include Black and African Americans who were brutally forced to migrate to the Americas and structures of anti-black racism. The logic of settler migration is largely, as Veracini puts it, “dedicated to enable settlers and neutralize migrants.

Populist and settler colonial logics did not form in a vacuum, but rather, were informed by the dominant and co-occurring social systems of the time. Indeed, the populist and settler colonial categories delineated above were formed using the already existing and co-constitutive social cleavages such as white supremacy, patriarchy, ableism, heterosexism, and more. Notions of what kinds of people are political agents--deserving of land, entitled to political representation, categorized as citizens, etc.--were informed by oppressive social structures wherein white, straight men were granted the most social, political, and economic entitlements. The formation of racialized hierarchy in the form of caste is vital here. Journalist and historian Isabel Wilkerson’s book Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents is a useful articulation of the kind of categorizing system(s) that were established in the early years of the United States. She writes that “a human hierarchy had evolved on the contested soil of what would become the United States, a concept of birthright, the temptation of entitled expansion that would set in motion the world’s first democracy, and with it, a ranking of human value and usage.”54

Specifically, if settlers “were to convert [North American] wilderness and civilize it to their liking, they decided they would need to conquer, enslave, or remove the people already on it and transport those they deemed lesser beings to tame and work the land to extract the wealth that lay in the rich soil and shorelines.”55 In order to justify this project, a system of categorizing people would need to be erected to decide entitlement to land and political citizenship. From this “emerged a ladder of humanity, global in nature, as the upper-rung people would descend from Europe… [and] everyone else would rank in descending order on the basis of their proximity to those deemed most superior.” 56 Thus, the US “developed a caste system, based upon what people looked like, an internalized ranking, unspoken, unnamed, unacknowledged… And though it may move in and out of consciousness, though it may flare and reassert itself in times of upheaval and recede in times of relative calm, it is an ever-present through-line in the country’s operation.”57

Rather than mere prejudice and hate for a different race, nationality, ethnicity, or religion, caste operates in an organizing fashion to construct what historian George Fredrickson phrases as “difference and power.” 58 Racism and racialized caste “originates from a mindset that regards ‘them’ as different from ‘us’ in ways that are permanent and unbridgeable…[and] provides a motive or rationale for using our power advantage to treat the ethnoracial Other in ways that we would regard as cruel or unjust if applied to members of our own group.”59 Essentially, racialized caste forms a system of categories that determine entitlement and power in various forms, and work to justify uses of power over a group due to an argued permanent deficiency.

#### 4. TRUMP---his extractivist impulses are part-and-parcel with an overarching colonial instinct.

Rickert ’25 [Levi; March 16; journalist and author; Native News Online, “Trump’s Territorial Fantasies Echo America’s Colonial Past,” https://nativenewsonline.net/opinion/trump-s-territorial-fantasies-echo-america-s-colonial-past]

When Donald Trump casually floated the idea of purchasing Greenland in 2019, many dismissed it as another outlandish moment in his long history of headline-grabbing statements. But as more recent reports emerge of his administration’s alleged discussions about acquiring Greenland, Canada, Panama, and even Gaza, a troubling pattern comes into focus—one that mirrors the very colonial impulses that led to the near destruction of tribal nations.

America has always had an insatiable hunger for land. From the moment European settlers arrived on the shores of what is now the United States, expansion was prioritized over the rights of Indigenous peoples who had stewarded the land for millennia. The doctrine of Manifest Destiny—the belief that white Americans were divinely ordained to expand its territory across the continent—was used to justify the forced removal and massacres of Native people, as well as the outright theft of Native lands.

Trump’s ambitions may seem modern, but they are simply a continuation of this colonial mindset dressed up in 21st-century rhetoric.

At first glance, Trump’s apparent desire to acquire foreign territories might seem like an outdated throwback to the era of imperial conquests. But it is crucial to recognize that these land grabs—whether through purchase, annexation, or military control—are never just about territory. They are about power, control, and exploitation.

When European colonizers came to the Americas, they did not simply want land; they wanted the resources that came with it. They sought gold, fertile soil, waterways, and, most tragically, the free labor that Native and enslaved African peoples were forced to provide. The American government, through policies like the Indian Removal Act and the Dawes Act, systematically dispossessed Native Americans of their lands, pushing them onto ever-shrinking reservations while extracting wealth from the lands where they once lived..

Trump’s desires for Greenland, Canada, Panama, and Gaza follow a similar blueprint. Greenland is rich in natural resources, from rare earth minerals to oil reserves. Canada, with its vast land and abundant water sources, would provide strategic benefits. Panama, already under U.S. influence due to its critical canal, represents economic leverage. Gaza, a region steeped in geopolitical conflict, presents yet another opportunity for the U.S. to exert its influence under the guise of stability. The pattern is clear—land is not just land, but a means to extract wealth and power, with little regard for the people who already live there.

For Native Americans, the idea of powerful nations carving up land without consent is nothing new. Treaties were signed under duress, then repeatedly broken when they no longer suited the interests of the U.S. government. Many tribal nations, sovereign and self-sustaining, were systematically dismantled, their people forced into poverty while their lands were exploited for American gain.

Consider the Louisiana Purchase, where Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the United States without consulting the Indigenous nations already living there. Or the annexation of Hawaii, where the U.S. government overthrew a sovereign Native monarchy to secure a strategic naval base. Each of these events was justified under the premise of economic benefit or national security—just as Trump’s desires for Greenland and beyond are framed today.

The notion that a powerful nation can simply claim or buy another people’s land without consent is precisely what Native Americans have fought against for centuries. It is the same entitlement that led to the forced marches of the Trail of Tears, the violent enforcement of reservation boundaries, and the systemic suppression of Indigenous sovereignty. It is colonialism, plain and simple.

If we ignore the implications of Trump’s territorial ambitions, we risk normalizing a mindset that sees land and people as mere commodities to be acquired and controlled. This is particularly dangerous in an era where Indigenous nations are still fighting for their rights, whether it be protecting sacred sites from oil pipelines or pushing for the return of stolen lands.

For Indigenous communities, the battle against colonialism never ended; it simply evolved. Today, it takes the form of legal fights over treaty rights, environmental activism against extractive industries, and efforts to reclaim traditional governance structures. But when President Trump openly muses about acquiring foreign lands, it sends a chilling reminder that these colonial impulses are still alive.

Rather than expanding its reach through imperial ambitions, the United States should reckon with the damage it has already done. Tribal nations continue to fight for recognition, land restoration, and self-governance.

Trump’s vision of simply taking or buying land ignores the fundamental truth that land is not just a commodity—it is a home, a heritage, and a legacy. Native Americans understand this better than anyone. After centuries of broken promises and stolen lands, the last thing the world needs is another U.S. leader reviving the old ghosts of colonialism.

### Framework

Counter-interpretation---evaluate the 1AC’s settler colonial knowledge production before weighing the plan’s consequences

#### 2. EPISTEMICIDE---bracketing out critical epistemic and ontological interrogation is a violent form of colonial silencing.

Morales ’25 [Pablo and Suzanne Harris; April 7; UKRI Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Media and Communications at LSE; Fellow at LSE in the Department of Media and Communications; Global Policy, “Epistemic Reflexivity: A Tool for De-Centering Pedagogical Practices,” https://www.globalpolicyjournal.com/blog/07/04/2025/epistemic-reflexivity-tool-de-centring-pedagogical-practices]

For decades, scholars have been involved in heated discussions about the complex dynamics behind the genesis of knowledge(s), from what is defined as ‘useful knowledge’ (Mokyr 2002) and ‘tacit knowledge’ (Polanyi [1958] 2002) to how and what has become known as ‘dominant’, ‘Western’ and ‘legitimate knowledge’ (Akena 2012). This is often reflected in Marx’s dominant ideology thesis that the world has been constructed as the result of power struggles throughout history, whereby the oppressed have been constrained (or at best persuaded) to adopt a singular view of the world as imposed by those in positions of power (Freire 1972; Said 1978; 1993; Bhabha 1994; Spivak 2010).

In recent years, efforts to “decolonise” academia have been proposed to remedy this issue (1). Generally understood as a process of de-construction of extant knowledge systems based on colonial legacy and as such replicating hierarchies that go against the spirit of equity and inclusion, the realisation of such efforts has proved more challenging than practical, thus undermining the whole enterprise. As (Willems (2023, 17) asserts, “discussions on ‘decolonising’ knowledge production have often foregrounded the importance of centring ‘marginal’ perspectives, which is crucial but insufficient, as it risks leaving the cannon untouched”.

This critique follows a long line of scholars who have called for a less superficial approach which does “much more than diversify their canons to get rid of their modern/colonial inheritances” (Maldonado-Torres et al. 2018, 79) or “merely offering a minor expansion of the canon and stopping there” (Moosavi 2023, 145). Instead, others call for the existing canon to be provincialized (Chakrabarty 2000; Go 2017) or subjected to a ‘decolonial gaze’ to call our attention to the limitations of Western-centric knowledges (Alatas and Sinha 2017). We argue that epistemic reflexivity can help scholars overcome this conundrum.

Epistemic reflexivity has been used in various ways. From a methodological tool within the research process to question social scientific claims (Bourdieu 1989; 1996) to a pedagogical approach used for teaching in ‘diverse’ classrooms (Feucht et al. 2017; L’Estrange et al. 2023), epistemic reflexivity has made it “a sin to not be reflexive” (Maton 2003, 54).

In pedagogical terms epistemic reflexivity helps us acknowledge that “teaching is not just about the ‘doing’ of teaching, it is also about the ‘why’” (Loughran and Menter 2019, 216). By centring on the ‘why’ of teaching, we begin to interrogate the pedagogies and epistemic bases they are anchored to. Mignolo and Walsh (2018, 108) claim that answering “the question ‘what does it mean to decolonise?’ cannot be an abstract universal. We need to examine other W questions: Who is doing it, where, why, and how?”. They are essential to evaluate and validate knowledge, as well as influencing course design, feedback, and grading practices, as well as student learning.

In this chapter, we align with Bhambra’s (2014; 2016; 2021) efforts to critique and redefine Western-centrism. Bhambra argues that non-Western voices, knowledges, and experiences are intimately bound to Western voices, knowledges and experiences; therefore, any critical reflection of the canon requires “critiquing the scholarship that critiques scholarship that is Western-centric” (Moosavi 2023, 142). Moosavi (2023, 145) points out that “decolonial reflexivity” may have “(a) sustained exclusion while claiming to be inclusive; (b) maintained the status quo while claiming to be radical; and (c) reinscribed Western-centrism while claiming to decolonise”. We believe epistemic reflexivity needs to go beyond critical self-reflection and engage with a process of accepting the ‘incompleteness’ of all knowledges.

Educational spaces can be transformational but also damaging if pedagogy is not taken seriously. Teachers must consider how students experience education, and foster an environment that allows students to reflect on, and question the status quo. Based on Freire’s (1972) idea that teaching should not follow a banking model whereby information is deposited onto students as if they were empty vessels, we propose that engaging in reflective dialogues can be a powerful tool. Both teachers and students ought to reflect on the complexities of knowledge production and our individual roles in this process. Who we are, what we know, and how we know are all aspects that inform and give more completeness to our understanding of knowledge. As such, we propose four steps to engage in epistemic reflexivity. First, to step back, zoom out, look at where we stand and reflect on knowledge production. Second, to recognise and acknowledge our positionality. Third, to acknowledge others and where they stand, to situate and de-centre our own knowledge system. Fourth, once we acknowledge our limitations, we can engage and incorporate with other epistemologies.

Reflect on knowledge production

Before starting to design a course or lesson plan, we advise reflecting on the motivations for such endeavour, as well as reviewing and learning from the experiences of others. Experiences that integrate new epistemologies, values, and philosophies. Engaging with past practices is an exercise of placing ourselves in dialogue with knowledges produced through the ages, those that only reproduce existing beliefs and those that expand our outlook. The sets of ideas around which some sort of consensus is formed by their perceived truthfulness are organised in a canon. It is widely assumed that there is a canon and that it constitutes the backbone of science. Reflecting on the context of knowledge production should be a prerequisite for critically engaging with the canon and its presumed universality.

Reflecting on knowledge production allows us to understand the context that allowed certain ideas to become part of the framework that defines our view of the world. Historically, knowledge production has often been defined and interpreted through a lens that has been conceived and constructed in one specific part of the world. Having such a lens is very useful, but at the same time its claimed universality leads to the invisibilisation of other systems of knowledge. Dussel (1993), Grosfoguel (2013), Santos (2013; 2020) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni, (2018) refer to the cause of these cognitive injustices as epistemicide, i.e., the rejection (through silencing and devaluing) of other systems of knowledge based on the perceived superiority of the euro-centric knowledge system (2). Epistemicide negates the spirit of science and the pursuit of knowledge, as it destroys the construction of knowledge that does “not fit the dominant epistemological canon” (Santos 2013, 238). Thus, reflecting on the conditions of knowledge production is imperative for the advancement of knowledge.

Allowing students to reflect on knowledge production helps us move to a dialogic process of creation, to become what Itchuaqiyaq and Matheson (2021, 9) define as “co-designers of knowledge”. Therefore, a critical review of the established canon is not a dismissal of it, but rather its inclusion for the sake of confronting it to a wider landscape of ideas.

Acknowledge your positionality

This next tool has received some critique. According to Andrew Holmes (2020, 1) ‘positionality’ is threefold. It addresses “ontological assumptions (an individual’s beliefs about the nature of social reality and what is knowable about the world), epistemological assumptions (an individual’s beliefs about the nature of knowledge) and assumptions about human nature and agency (individual’s assumptions about the way we interact with our environment and relate to it)”. Thus, the act of acknowledging one’s positionality is the action of sharing these various social and cultural qualities, and privileges that shape our research and teaching practices. These intersecting qualities of our identities play an important role in shaping our understanding of the world and consequently, the way we engage with it. As Acevedo et al (2015, 1) explained:

For us the concept of positionality is important in understanding the role of experience in the learning process. Positionality acknowledges complex differentials of power and privilege while simultaneously identifying the value of multiple ways of knowing and being that arise from our multiple identities. The goal of revealing individual and relative positionality is to de-center dominant ways of thinking and expose multiple ways of thinking as diverse assets for self-knowing and collective knowing.

Disclosing one’s positionality forces us to move from the passive state of being perceived to the active recognition of our own vantage point to minimise the possibility of misunderstanding, thus making learning an informed process and a dialogic experience. Additionally, disclosing positionality challenges positions of power that have historically been embedded into the ways in which we have created our own beliefs about how knowledge is produced and who does the producing. According to Alcoff (1991, 7), “the speaker’s location is epistemically salient”, which makes the issue of “speaking for others” particularly problematic from an epistemic point of view. “Speaking for others” implies a position of power, it places the speaker/observer at the centre, in a position of dominance over those who are presented as “voiceless” or unable to speak for themselves. Disclosing one’s positionality aids to contextualise one’s standpoint and the relation/dynamics between us and the content of our utterances. Even for educators reflecting on and disclosing one’s positionality can have several benefits as outlined by Massoud (2022, S66):

Reflecting on one’s positionality is also a form of knowledge production. It can help scholars to find their inner wisdom, and it can build community among researchers and between researchers and their research subjects, particularly among scholars who identify as members of under-represented or minoritised groups.

Despite its importance, it can become a challenge. While it helps contextualise, there is the risk of wrongly being perceived as a self-granting authority based on certain demographic characteristics. Therefore, we believe it needs to be organically integrated to avoid becoming a spectacle or a virtue-signalling contest of who is seen as being more privileged or oppressed.

Situate and de-centre

From the standpoint of a European tradition, empiricism and rationalism constitute some of the mechanisms whereby knowledge is constructed. Observation, experimentation, recognition of patterns, validation or rejection of hypotheses, abstraction, and the formulation of theories are the basis of the scientific method that –according to this tradition- has allowed humanity to understand the world, including themselves. However, the pursuit of universal knowledge often works to the detriment of its own validity, arguably more so in the social sciences. It relentlessly imposes itself onto the observed, creating hierarchies and castigating deviations. Therefore, the tension between universalism and contextualism represents the impossibility of knowledge that is “true” and unique.

The pursuit of universalism constrains knowledge to mould itself to become acceptable for validation and recognition. Only then, research can “travel”. In so doing, what is sacrificed are the nuances that allow us to better understand specific realities. Knowledge production thus appears as a dilemmatic process of zooming in and zooming out. However, zooming in and out only becomes meaningful with a comparative perspective: moving across. The known becomes the centre of comparison with the unknown. The challenge is then to adopt an outlook based on genuine curiosity rather than prescriptive judgement. Many of the theories we use have been developed by adopting a European-centric outlook as the yardstick against which everything else is to be described. Robinson (1980, 202) argues that “Western social thought is not merely ethnocentric, but epistemocentric”. In his view, it is essential to question both the universality of Western universalism and the assumed normativity of knowledge itself, as knowledge frameworks are often applied universally without critical examination.

The hierarchisation of systems of knowledge is not inevitable and can be prevented by actively engaging in an exercise of contextualising and de-centring hegemonic models. Numerous efforts have contributed to de-centre and contextualise hegemonic Eurocentric systems of knowledge, from Chakrabarty’s (2000) call to provincialise Europe, to Cheruiyot and Ferrel-Conill’s (2021) proposal to de-contextualise majority World countries. The most basic tool is the co-creation of knowledge by zooming in, out and across different realities through case studies. The goal is to situate a case, situate where knowledge is being created and where this knowledge is applicable to. In all instances, we need to be mindful of the concepts we use by situating them as products of a particular cultural tradition, and avoiding unnecessary generalisations. Decentring does not mean to discard the Western tradition, but to incorporate it within the plethora of different knowledge systems that exist in the world. De-centring means to move aside and acknowledge the contributions of other equally valuable knowledge systems that also deserve our attention in the classroom.

### Link---Topic

#### 2. Reforming the administrative state extends a violent history of settler colonialism.

Sabin ’24 [Jerald; June 12; Assistant Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration at Carleton University; Canadian Public Administration, “Settler Colonialism and the Administrative State: The Transfer of the Government of the Northwest Territories to Yellowknife in 1967,” vol. 67]

Effective and efficient bureaucracy enabled Canada's territorial expansion into Northwestern Canada and the political development of the Western provinces and Northern territories. The acquisition, organization, and settlement of what are today Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut was directed and managed by anonymous federal public servants in Ottawa and following the established norms and practices of the Canadian administrative state. The dismantling and displacement of Indigenous societies that accompanied this colonial project was undertaken and often led by administrative actors located thousands of kilometers away from the frontier they were transforming. As such, the reordering of Northwestern Canada into a settler colony relied less on military force or state violence, and much more on the ordinary and routine administrative work of memo writing, committee meetings, and legislative drafting. This article considers one example of settler colonial development facilitated by federal public servants: the transfer of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) from Ottawa to Yellowknife in September 1967.

This transfer led to significant administrative changes both in the North and within the federal government. From 1905 to 1967, the capital of the Northwest Territories was Ottawa. The territory's legislative council was housed within the federal bureaucracy, and public servants in the territory were employed by and reported to the federal government. By the 1960s, a shifting domestic and international political environment made it increasingly untenable for the federal government to continue governing the NWT from Ottawa (Dickerson, 1992; Zaslow, 1988). These included tensions within and between the federal public service and territorial council over the structure of Northern governance, a settler autonomy movement within the territory, movements for postcolonial political development internationally, and a desire by federal political elites to improve the economic and living conditions of Indigenous peoples. Following the recommendations of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories (Carrothers Commission) in August 1966—which was struck by the Pearson government in April 1965 to consider the political development of the NWT—the federal government announced the transfer of the GNWT to the territory and the selection of Yellowknife as its capital.

While the transfer is often recognized as a significant moment in the political development of the NWT, its most immediate changes were administrative in nature. Most significant democratic reforms did not occur until years later, including the creation of a wholly-elected legislative assembly, the development of an elected executive, and the granting of responsible government (Abele, 1987; Dickerson, 1992). By contrast, the dominant considerations of those executing the transfer were capital planning, human resources, records management, and transportation, among other administrative questions. Examining these changes offers insight into the decision-making and administrative processes that facilitated Canada's settler colonial development of Northwestern Canada during the 1960s, the role of federal administrators in subnational political development, and the turbulent years that followed in which Indigenous, settler, and federal actors struggled over the NWT's political future.

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY, SETTLER COLONIALISM, AND THE ARCHIVE

This article relies on the tools of administrative history and settler colonial theory to analyze the structures, processes, and actors that enabled the transfer of the GNWT. Raadschelders (1998) offers a succinct definition of the common elements of administrative history, which “can be constructed from the basic concepts of public administration: structure (particularly organization), functioning (particularly processes) and functionaries” (7). By focusing on how institutions are structured, what they do, and who inhabits them, administrative history offers a dynamic view into where policy decisions are made, how they are implemented, and by whom.

Settler colonial theory provides a useful explanatory lens for these dynamics (Barker, 2021; Veracini, 2010). While colonialism is the subordination of people and lands by foreign or exogenous powers, settler colonialism is premised on displacing and replacing Indigenous societies with new ones (Veracini and Slyomovics, 2022). Settler colonial theorists consider Canada, the United States, and Australia as quintessential examples of settler colonies where non-Indigenous peoples carried out “invasions that never ended” (Barker, 2021: 7). Wolfe (1999), who coined the term settler colonialism, argues that these states operate on a “logic of elimination,” which can include state-directed genocide, cultural genocide, and the dismantling of Indigenous systems of governance, law, and production. In Canada, this included replacing Indigenous social, political, and economic institutions with those rooted in Western European traditions (Barker, 2021; Mackey, 2016). Self-governing Indigenous peoples were removed from the land and settled in communities; their traditional cultural, political, and economic practices were supressed; and new Western systems were imposed upon their lands.

This process unfolded unevenly across space and time and did not reach Northern Canada in earnest until after the Second World War. Detailed portraits of these processes in the Mackenzie Valley can be found in Helm (2000), Abel (1993), and Kulchyski (2005). Yellowknife sits on the traditional territories of the Yellowknives Dene and Tłı̨chǫ people. It was settled by prospectors in the mid-1930s, but did not grow substantially until postwar technological advancements, transportation investments, and economic conditions made larger non-Indigenous settlements viable (Zaslow, 1988). When it was selected as the new capital, it had grown into a small mining town of about 3,750 people (Canada, 1966). Transforming Yellowknife into a government centre not only changed conditions locally, but extended settler patterns of political, economic, and social development to the whole territory. These patterns centred non-Indigenous practices while ignoring or replacing Indigenous ones and reflected the strongly held beliefs of federal officials and Northern settlers that, given time and support, Indigenous peoples would assimilate.

The connection between bureaucracy and the dispossession and marginalization of Indigenous peoples is well-documented (Hodgetts, 1956; Nadasdy, 2003; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), 1996). The role of federal public servants in abetting the attempted cultural genocide of Indigenous peoples through such policies as the creation of the reserve system, enforced starvation, and residential schools—to name only a few of the many policies designed for the task—has been the subject of public inquiries, reports, scholarship, and processes of reconciliation for decades (Daschuk, 2013; Canada, 2015; RCAP, 1996). Considerable scholarly energy has also focused on the earliest periods of the Northwest's settler colonial development, including Ottawa's role in the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories (Morton, 1939), the administration of the Dominion Lands Act (Martin, 1937), the granting of responsible government to the old Northwest Territories (Thomas, 1956), and the creation of Yukon, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. In all these instances, however, the federal public service was not the object of study; insights into its structure, processes, and actors were incidental to these studies' primary objectives.

Despite this interest, scholars have left largely unexplored the impact of subsequent processes of settler colonial displacement and replacement on the federal bureaucracy. For example, there are no administrative histories—descriptive or critical—about the Department of the Interior, which had administrative responsibility for prairie settlement and development from 1873 to 1936 (Spry and McCardle, 1993), nor about its eventual successor, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, which oversaw federal Indigenous and Northern policy from 1966 to 2017. These departments and their successors were the core colonial machinery of the federal government and yet we have only scratched the surface of the vast empirical record that remains on their internal workings, processes, and decisions.

At the same time, studies centering Indigenous narratives of colonial dispossession, resistance, and resurgence have made important contributions to Canadian public administration and adjacent fields by contextualizing the re-emergence of Indigenous government as a jurisdictional form within Canadian federalism (Irlbacher-Fox, 2009; Nadasdy, 2017). Research focusing on modern treaties and their effect on the structure of Northern Canadian governance, such as the creation of Nunavut, has added an Indigenous lens to theories of federalism and the challenge of decolonizing settler states through institutional reform (Henderson, 2007; Hicks and White, 2015; Loukacheva, 2007).

Interrogating the inner workings of the federal public service is additive to this literature by revealing both the detailed processes underpinning settler colonial expansion, as well as how anodyne administrators found those processes given their colonial harms. Historic processes of settler colonial development were not unidirectional (from the metropole to the periphery), but bidirectional: policies facilitating territorial expansion and political development in Northwestern Canada remade those lands in a settler image, but they also fundamentally altered the structure and work of the federal administration too.

Archival research and Indigenous voices

This study examines a narrow segment of Northern administrative history from April 1963 to April 1968. The selection of this period explains both the choice of archival documents for analysis, as well as the marked absence of Indigenous voices from those records and as central actors in the transfer. Much of this analysis relies on newly released archival documents from the Stuart Hodgson Fond at the NWT Archives in Yellowknife. Hodgson served as Deputy Commissioner from 1965-1967 and the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories from 1967-1979. In the 1960s, the Commissioner served as the territory's chief administrator as well as the primary liaison between the Territorial Council and officials within the DNANR. Most of the records analyzed from this fond were produced in 1966-1967, or the months immediately preceding and following the transfer. This is the first study to use these documents in an analysis of settler political and administrative development in the Northwest Territories. Additional documents include the votes and proceedings of the Territorial Council, the private papers of John H. Parker (who served as a commissioner with the Carrothers Commission and as Deputy Commissioner of the NWT at the time of the transfer), and federal government documents from Library and Archives Canada, including the Lester B. Pearson Fond.

One significant limitation in using these records is that the voices of Indigenous peoples are almost entirely absent. Government archives reflect the purposes and needs of their creators rather than any objective or neutral representation of the past. Reid and Paisley (2017) argue that colonial and imperial archives do not passively reflect the past but are “actively constitutive” of it (2). By deciding what to preserve and exclude, the archives of settler colonial governments create an official narrative of the past that reinforces their own legitimacy. Indigenous-centred accounts of the period under study, such as acts of resistance and the political discourses of Indigenous leaders and peoples, are only preserved in passing within the records of the GNWT and through the perspective of non-Indigenous actors.

There are several explanations for this absence. Indigenous leaders and communities were structurally excluded from settler political institutions before the late 1960s. Before Indigenous members joined the Council in 1965-1966, settler councillors in the Mackenzie understood their role as representing the interests of both their settler and Indigenous constituents (NWT, 1966: 164). Broader engagement among the Commissioner, Territorial Council, and Indigenous leaders was severely constrained by officials within DNANR, who preferred to mediate that interaction through newly formed Indian Advisory Councils (NWT, 1966: 162-163). There were also no Indigenous political organizations created in the North until 1969, which limited the forms of participation and advocacy undertaken by Indigenous peoples in resistance to the settler state (Dickerson, 1992).1

When Indigenous peoples were invited to directly participate in commissions or inquiries about the future of the territory, their perspectives were deemed incomprehensible or unhelpful by settler officials. For example, the 1959 Nelson Commission—which examined the unfulfilled provisions of Treaties 8 and 11 that cover parts of the NWT—described the views of Indigenous peoples as “often far from clear and were usually given with obvious reluctance, and in a number of cases without what appeared to be a clear understanding of what they implied” (5). In reflecting on his experience in the Eastern Arctic as Chairman of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories, A.W.R. Carrothers (1966) was gentler in his characterization of Inuit participation during the hearings:

<<TEXT CONDENSED, NONE OMITTED>>

In the first place I assumed a greater knowledge in the audience, and particularly in the delegates, to whom we were speaking on a more intimate level, of matters of government. This, I hasten to say, reflected my ignorance, not theirs. But we learned abruptly that the average Eskimo's understanding of government reflected directly with his own experience with government personnel, and bore no relationship to theoretical models or the British North America Act (5-6). The perspectives of Indigenous peoples were not intelligible to settler officials and were therefore dismissed or quietly set-aside in considering the developmental trajectory of the NWT. At the same time, there are glimpses within the records of Indigenous resistance to, and participation in, settler government. For example, during the November 1964 session of the Territorial Council at Frobisher Bay (now Iqaluit), councillors discussed an Inuit-led protest for the extension of the territorial franchise to the Eastern Arctic (NWT, 1964: 83-84). When constituencies were created in 1966, Inuit stood as candidates. This demonstrates both political organizing by local communities and an understanding of the importance of settler state institutions to the wellbeing of Inuit. Simonie Michael, an Inuk from Frobisher Bay, won in one of three new Eastern Arctic ridings. In addition to Michael, the only other prominent example in the record of Indigenous political perspectives before the transfer are statements in Council debates by Abraham Okpik, who was appointed to Council in October 1965. The transfer was one of several important catalysts spurring the political organizing of Indigenous peoples and leading to the political transformation of the territory, its eventual division into two, and the ongoing re-emergence of third-order Indigenous governments in Canada. Governance is now shared through a complex set of institutions that mediate the shared and overlapping jurisdiction of the Indigenous and settler peoples who call the North home. Between 1963 and 1968, however, this form of politics had yet to emerge, and the direction of Northern political development was firmly in the hands of federal officials and Northern settlers. It was only in the years after the transfer that Indigenous proposals for alternative forms of government were taken seriously by settler political actors, such as in the Dene Declaration (Dene Nation, 1975), and Indigenous peoples were able to pursue self-determination through what are now called modern treaties. THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF NORTHERN ADMINISTRATION IN THE 1960S The 1960s saw a series of shifts in the Northern policy environment that led to significant changes both in the federal government's policy direction and the administration supporting that policy. It became increasingly untenable for the federal government to govern the North on a strictly colonial basis for several reasons, including growing tensions between the embedded GNWT and its small leadership within the DNANR, the advocacy of Northern settlers for greater political and administrative autonomy, a changing international environment that emphasized postcolonial political development over colonial forms of administration, and a growing recognition among Ottawa's political class of the poor and discriminatory treatment of Indigenous peoples by the Canadian state. These shifts occurred at a time when social liberalism and welfare state policies were ascendant in Ottawa and the federal government was willing to use its spending power to ensure, and sometimes provide, similar levels of service to all Canadians no matter where they lived. The first shock came from within the federal public service itself and was rooted in both structural factors and interpersonal conflict. Dickerson (1992) argues that by 1965 there was a “growing sense of alienation and autonomy on the part of the GNWT” (67). Within the DNANR, the Commissioners of Yukon and the NWT reported to the Deputy Minister and held a rank equivalent to Assistant Deputy Minister. This was a departure with past practice, whereby the Commissioner of the NWT also held the rank of Deputy Minister. There was also an Assistant Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs, who was equal in rank to the Commissioners, and held considerable sway over the policy direction and resources of the Northern Administration Branch. Within the branch, there were six divisions responsible for administration, education, engineering, industry, resources, the territorial councils, and welfare (Dickerson, 1992: 66). At the same time, there were about a dozen other departments and agencies with policy responsibility for Northern Canada and/or with public servants resident in the territories.2 In 1966, the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Development was Arthur Laing, the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories was Ben Sivertz, the Deputy Minister was Ernest Côté, and John Gordon was Assistant Deputy Minister, Northern Affairs Branch. As the GNWT's budget and scope of responsibilities grew, Sivertz and the Territorial Council's relationship with departmental officials became increasingly strained. In a speech recalling this period, John H. Parker (1996) noted that: Sivertz had a different alignment with the Council than had been the case previously. When the Commissioner had also been the Deputy Minister of the northern department, his ties and allegiance were naturally federally oriented, whereas Mr. Sivertz commenced to think like a Territorial person (50). In Figure 1, the structural source of this tension is represented. The Deputy Minister had direct oversight of policy and administration in the NWT through the Assistant Deputy Minister, Northern Administration Branch. The NWT Commissioner was to report the activities of the Northern Administration Branch to the Territorial Council, who in turn could pass non-budgetary ordinances but to whom the Northern Administration Branch was not responsible. These structural tensions were exacerbated by interpersonal conflict between Commissioner Sivertz and Deputy Minister Côté. The public and archival record reveals that they did not care for each other. Indeed, in letters to Prime Minister Pearson and to members of the Territorial Council, Sivertz writes about how Côté “sidelined,” “undermined,” and unfairly compensated him in comparison to the Commissioner of Yukon. A second, closely related shift, came from Northern settlers demanding greater autonomy. A major driver of tension was the addition in 1951 of elected members to the territorial council. Over the next decade, their influence and alliances with appointed members grew, creating another power base within the department that held its own democratic legitimacy. Through electoral politics, media, and political organizing, settlers sought greater political and administrative autonomy for the territories (Sabin, 2014; Zaslow, 1988). As the North's population and economy grew, the rationales provided by federal officials for continued colonial administration eroded as Northern settlers demonstrated their political acumen in lobbying for change. This led to a series of efforts by territorial councillors to both demand greater political autonomy and to statutorily prepare for its eventuality. These included motions for the transfer of the GNWT to the territory in 1962, for a commission of inquiry into the political development of the NWT (NWT, 1964), the extension of the territorial franchise to the Eastern Arctic (NWT, 1965), and the creation of a territorial public service commission (NWT, 1965). In addition, advocacy by local newspapers and representations by the member of parliament for the Northwest Territories added additional weight to settler demands for action. The third shift was the global phenomenon of postcolonial political development. As European powers relinquished their empires, newly independent nations in Africa, Latin America, and Asia began charting their own course. Throughout the early 1960s, Canada's system for governing the North was compared to repressive colonial governments, particularly in Africa. In 1964, for example, Progressive Conservative MP Jack Bigg's admonished Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson for his promotion of postcolonial development in Southern Africa: “It is all very well for the Prime Minister to stand up in the hall of Westminster and talk of equal representation and rights for Rhodesia. What about equal rights for the Yukon and Northwest Territories, Mr. Chairman?” (Canada, 1964: 5844). Yukon MP Erik Nielsen frequently referred to Rhodesia during this period, as did members of Yukon's territorial council (Sabin, 2014). For opposition MPs at least, Canada could not be a global leader on postcolonial development when it continued to govern its own internal Northern colonies from Ottawa. Canadian territories were never added to the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories started in 1946, probably because they were contained within the continental borders of Canada. Other North American territories were added to this list, such as Puerto Rico, as well as Canada's Arctic neighbour, Greenland. In fact, the 1950 Danish Royal Commission on Greenland was an important driver of policy innovation within DNANR in considering alternative governance structures for the territories (Loukacheva, 2007). Commissioner Sivertz referred to the Danish report in an appearance before the House of Commons' Standing Committee on Northern Affairs and National Resources in January 1967 as inspiration for the Carrothers Commission: “It was suggested to the commission [by DNANR officials] that the kind of thing that had been done by Denmark in examining Greenland and its problems in 1948 was the pattern that could be used with profit in Canada” (Canada, 1967: 904). A final shock was the influence of the American civil rights movement on political elites in Ottawa. The movement encouraged Canadians to reflect on their own treatment of Indigenous peoples, leading the federal government to consider reforms in its Indian policy, but also the fundamental rights of Canadians generally. In his same appearance before the Standing Committee on Northern Affairs and National Resources, Sivertz explained his thinking about the link between Northern political and economic development and Indigenous peoples: I am one of those strong believers that, as the Americans often remind us in connection with their Negro problems, separate but equal is not equal. If you have the business of Indians in Canada managed by a separate agency from the agency that manages the affairs of other people who live as their neighbours, then you are saying, in effect, these people are so different and their problems are so different that they are not really part of the human race. They have to be handled by a different agency with different principles. This, I think, is all wrong (Canada, 1967: 907). Reforms in the governance of the territories and the rights of Indigenous peoples were being considered in tandem within the newly formed Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND), which was created in September 1966. These conversations within the federal public service led to both the infamous 1969 White Paper—which proposed the removal of all statutory and constitutional bases of Indigenous rights and status—and related statements on political development in Northern Canada (Canada, 1969). These changes in the policy environment spurred the federal government to consider reforms to the governance of Northern Canada. An early proposal was the division of the NWT into two territories, one centred on the Mackenzie River (where most of the territory's settler population lived) and one in the Eastern Arctic. This proposal was abandoned after Pearson defeated Diefenbaker in 1963 (Dickerson, 1992; Zaslow, 1988). Instead, and as was common at mid-century, the Pearson government turned to a commission of inquiry to investigate and provide options for reforming the governance of Northern Canada. THE PROCESS OF TRANSFERRING SETTLER GOVERNMENT TO THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES Carrothers Commission The first public recommendation for an inquiry came from the Council of the Northwest Territories, which passed a unanimous motion in November 1964 calling for a commission of inquiry “charged with recommending plans for the future of the Northwest Territories covering all aspects thereof, including the political, economic, educational and industrial aspects, the structure of a Territorial Government, the method and interrelationship of the Federal Government activities, etc.” (NWT, 1964: 111). The federal government—of which the Council was a part—declined to create a full Royal Commission, arguing that such a commission would have had to be much more formal and rigid in structure and would take too long to report. Instead, Cabinet endorsed a smaller advisory commission led by individuals who were not associated with either the territorial or federal government and who would be able to conduct their work with greater speed and flexibility. On May 11, 1965, Minister Laing announced the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government of the Northwest Territories to the House of Commons. In his speech, he cited the Council's 1964 motion as one catalyst for this decision. A.W.R. Carrothers, the dean of law at the University of Western Ontario, was appointed chair. Two other members were also appointed: Jean Beetz, law professor at the University of Montreal and future justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and John Parker, the mayor of Yellowknife and future Northwest Territories Commissioner. The Carrothers Commission, as it was called after its chair, was tasked with gathering the views of residents of the NWT, considering the nature of the federal government's role in territorial public administration, considering the appropriate form of government given the territory's population and “ability to pay a significant share of the cost involved,” the present legislative framework, previous proposals for government reform, and other recommendations made to the commission (Canada, 1966: 2). The commission had a July 1, 1966 deadline to complete its report—an ambitious task given the difficulties of Northern travel and the emphasis placed on the commission to gather the views of all Northerners and not just those of settlers. The Commissioners visited 51 communities, held 59 public hearings, and met with over 3,000 people. While many Indigenous peoples participated in the hearings, their testimony was largely unintelligible to the commissioners. Indigenous peoples focused on governance issues that were immediate to their own lives, such as the actions of community managers. Indigenous peoples spoke primarily through translators and their positions were received and then later dismissed. As a result, Abel (1993) argues that the “Carrothers Commission was clearly a white man's commission appointed to investigate the white man's grievances” (244). Whatever its recommendations, the Carrothers Commission's outcomes would reflect the perspectives and needs of settler society and place the North on a developmental trajectory similar in character to the rest of Canada. The Report of the Advisory Commission on the Development of Government in the Northwest Territories was presented to Minister Laing on August 30, 1966. Its main recommendations were to maintain the NWT as a single jurisdiction; increase the size of the new legislative assembly to eighteen—fourteen elected and four appointed; work towards the implementation of full responsible government; place the capital at Yellowknife; and locate the departments of economic development, finance, education, welfare, public works, justice, lands and resources, and local government in the territory. Laing did not set a firm timeline for responding to the report but did commit the government to acting expeditiously. Responding to Carrothers The archival record is silent about the immediate actions taken by the newly formed DIAND. The report itself was not tabled in the House of Commons until October, although this would not have precluded the department from beginning its deliberations. The record is clear that by late November, Assistant Deputy Minister John Gordon had studied the Commission's recommendations and authored a five-page memo on possible government responses that could be confirmed by Cabinet and publicly announced by early 1967 (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). This included moving the administration of the NWT to the territory and selecting Yellowknife as its capital. This was not a decision that DIAND could take alone. It required consultation and consent from the many other departments and agencies with interests in the North. On December 13, 1966, Deputy Minister Côté shared a more detailed three-phase plan with the Minister for his consideration, including recommending a “submission for cabinet to ask approval for the designation of Yellowknife” as capital (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). Côté also recommended moving the GNWT to Yellowknife, noting that “Probably it would be…realistic to think that we might achieve this by Christmas, 1967” (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). The final outstanding element was the selection of a new Commissioner to replace the outgoing Sivertz. Côté asked the Minister for permission to establish a task force of senior public servants to work on the transition full-time. One additional meeting was held on December 29, 1966 with representatives from over a dozen departments and agencies to canvass opinions about naming Yellowknife as the capital and to understand any challenges the move to Yellowknife might present the government. Those in attendance unanimously endorsed Yellowknife (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). The selection of the capital's location was much anticipated by Northerners. There were three candidates: Yellowknife, Fort Smith, and Hay River, all of which were majority non-Indigenous (Canada, 1966). Each had their benefits and drawbacks in terms of location, geography, transportation links, and local industry. Whichever community was selected, it would immediately benefit from the influx of federal government spending on real property and public works, as well as an influx of new residents. Since 1920, when oil was discovered at Norman Wells, Fort Smith on the Alberta border had served as the administrative centre of the territory. Various government departments, churches, and educational institutions had been established there. Hay River, located on the southern shore of Great Slave Lake, had a strong independent business sector and was the transportation hub of the territory. It was also built on a flood plain and suffered from a poor town site. Yellowknife sat at the centre of three mines and had a relatively large independent private sector. It was located on the north shore of Great Slave Lake and, of the choices, was the closest to the geographic centre of the NWT in the minds of federal officials. A new town site located on a relatively flat and dry plane was ideal for further development by government. Ultimately, Yellowknife was recommended by the Commission for the capital. The Commissioner and the Territorial Council were not involved in these conversations but kept at arm's length. The response to Carrothers was organized and determined by Deputy Minister Ernest Côté and Assistant Deputy Minister John Gordon, who advised Minister Laing of their recommendations. This walled-off decision-making by the Deputy and those in the Northern Affairs Branch engendered further impatience and hostility towards DIAND from territorial councillors and Commissioner Sivertz. The Commissioner traditionally sent a “Tuesday Letter” to territorial councillors to keep them informed about administrative decisions and other work undertaken by the department. On December 13, 1966, in his final Tuesday Letter before retiring, Sivertz shared his opinion of the Department and its progress in addressing the recommendations of the Carrothers Report with councillors. In calling out the Deputy Minister, he warned that territorial councillors “should be on their guard against the tactics that have to be expected from those opposed to northern development, i.e. ‘divide and conquer' and ‘delay unto death” and that they are facing a “Departmental attitude that is generally inimical to freeing the Government of the Northwest Territories to function on its own” (Hodgson N-2010-005 39-9). This letter was unfortunately timed, as Côté had sent his memo to Laing outlining his plan to name Yellowknife the capital and move all GNWT administration to the North by the end of 1967 on the same day Sivertz penned his Tuesday Letter. Sivertz's letter did not arrive in Yellowknife until after Christmas 1966. It was promptly leaked to the News of the North, a newspaper published in Yellowknife. At the time, the Edmonton Journal maintained a correspondent in the NWT, who then wrote a story about the leaked letter on January 6, 1967 (Hodgson N-2010-005 39-9). The story was quickly picked up by the Ottawa Citizen, The Globe and Mail, the Toronto Daily Star, and the Canadian Press, who sent a journalist to interview Laing while he was still in Vancouver on holiday. On January 10, 1967, Prime Minister Pearson made a statement in the House of Commons that Sivertz would not be punished for his comments and, in response to concerns about perceived delays, that Pearson would discuss the government's response to Carrothers with Laing as soon as the Minister returned to Ottawa (Hodgson N-2010-005 39-9). In a letter marked “URGENT” and delivered by hand to the Prime Minister's Office on Friday, January 13, Laing laid out his strategy for addressing the political “damage” caused by Sivertz's letter (Pearson R7581-86-1-E). He recommended to Pearson that the government make its announcement about the selection of Yellowknife as the NWT's new capital as soon as possible. Since this would require Cabinet approval, Laing also asked for an expedited process. He would deliver the necessary documents to the Privy Council Office on Monday, January 16, for discussion at Cabinet on Tuesday, January 17. In presenting the choice of Yellowknife to his cabinet colleagues, Laing noted that “he was not convinced that Yellowknife would necessarily be the best seat of Government over the long term but there was little choice but to support the Carrothers recommendation at this stage” and that while “Fort Smith and indeed Hay River both had certain advantages over Yellowknife in physical terms…neither could be regarded as a representative centre of the Northwest Territories” (Canada, 1967: 6). Cabinet approved the plan. In a hand-written note on Laing's letter to Pearson it reads: “To be done January 18/67 at 8:00 PM at Yellowknife” (Pearson R7581-86-1-E). At that announcement, Laing said: The map of the north that most of you have on your walls indicates that Yellowknife, in respect of a good representation of Territorial conditions (being on the tree line on the edge of the Canadian Shield) and in respect to transportation routes, and in respect of its existing development, and in respect of population factors, and in respect of absolute geographical location, is the best choice to be made (Pearson R7581-86-1-E). It would be another two months before a new Commissioner was named. Laing chose Deputy Commissioner, Stuart Hodgson, for the role. Hodgson had been fulfilling the role of Commissioner since Sivertz's departure and had been working on the transition Task Force as early as February 6, 1967 (Hodgson N-2017-008 7-8). Planning the Relocation Côté's December 1966 plan for transferring the GNWT to Yellowknife had three phases. Phase I was to move the Commissioner to Yellowknife and to undertake all the administrative changes necessary to support his work in the North. For example, this included “negotiation with the town of Yellowknife for land, services, etc.,” “tender call for office space and housing,” and the “development and publication of essential personnel policy and regulations” (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). A final step in the first phase was also the transfer of “operational control over liquor, game, municipal affairs, taxation and licensing, physical fitness, centennial affairs, territorial construction…, corrections programs and land title office” (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). The second phase was the transfer of functions to the GNWT for which no legislative changes were required. This was a medium-term goal (and to the extent that Sivertz knew about it, may have fueled his concern) to both determine which function could be transferred and in which order. For scholars of Northern political development, this will not be a surprise. The federal government was (and remains) concerned about the administrative capacity of territorial governments to undertake the administration of all policy areas normally under provincial control (Dacks, 1990). In retrospect, some delay was to be expected. The final phase was to make additional changes that required legislative amendments. This included mostly democratic reforms, including expanding the territorial council and creating and executive committee—an important step towards establishing responsible government in the territory (Hodgson N-2010-005 37-5). The Task Force met almost daily from February 1967 until the move to Yellowknife on September 18, 1967. They made plans for the acquisition of office space and staff housing, logistics for transferring staff and files to Yellowknife, as well as engaging in recruitment for the new government. The cost of moving the GNWT to Yellowknife was $2,548,072. Capital costs, including staff housing, office space, upgrades to Yellowknife's municipal infrastructure, and furnishings came to $1,774,535. Operations and maintenance costs related mostly to staff salaries and transportation came to $773,537 (Hodgson N-2010-005 1-5). Moving to the North was logistically challenging for many reasons, including distance and travel conditions. There was a road to Yellowknife that opened in 1963, but it required crossing the Mackenzie River by barge or ice bridge. Yellowknife was a mining and frontier town with limited free buildings and, certainly, limited office space. Hodgson needed to be creative with the available spaces for offices, which ended up including part of an elementary school, a bowling alley, a curling rink, and one staff house. In addition, Hodgson set about constructing offices, including 8,000 square feet of office space attached to the Y.K. Super-Market (Hodgson N-2010-005 1-5). The move to Yellowknife remains an iconic story in the Northwest Territories. It was documented in a film, titled Moving North, that showcased both the rapidity of the transfer and the administrative challenges it created (NWT, 1967). Territorial personnel who did not drive to the territory boarded a DC-7 airplane along with their families and pets, including a skunk. Important government records and supplies were loaded onto a second aircraft, which was scheduled to arrive at the same time as the personnel to ensure a continuity of administration. Jake Ootes (2020), the GNWT's communications director, in reflecting on the speed with which this move unfolded and Hodgson's leadership said: “none of the Ottawa mandarins would be this practical. They'd do a three-year feasibility study, with no concern about the amount of money required, ensure no errors would be made, do two dry runs and then, after five years of planning, move a few employees north, being careful not to deplete the Ottawa headquarters of personnel” (14-15). The Government arrived in Yellowknife to the sound of bagpipes and speeches by local settler politicians (NWT, 1967). The transfer was not without its challenges, but the rapidity with which all parties involved—Cabinet, DIAND, the Commissioner's Office, and staff—moved is remarkable given the technological and transportation challenges of the time. In the months following the transfer, Task Force II was established in January 1968 to address future devolution to the GNWT. Work on devolving additional powers to the GNWT would take decades, but the administrative processes by which these decisions were made—study, deliberation, decision—marked the government's approach over the following decades. THE TRANSFER'S LEGACY

<<PARAGRAPH BREAKS RESUME>>

The GNWT was transferred to Yellowknife following a series of administrative studies and through the careful planning and deliberation of public servants. Its transfer had profound effects on the governance of Northern Canada, not least of which was the arrival of a resident settler colonial government in the heart of the Dene Nation's homeland, called “Denendeh” or “The Land of the Dene” (Helm, 2000). The transfer had an important effect on public administration in Ottawa too. As with the creation of Alberta and Saskatchewan, it was not the transfer of political institutions or power to the Northwest that changed the structure and operation of the federal public service. Instead, it was the relinquishing of jurisdictional and administrative power to another level of government that had the most profound impact. Political power is impotent without strong administrative foundations. The transfer of both the political and administrative components of the GNWT was the key to its long-term sustainability and entrenchment.

The story of the GNWT's transfer to Yellowknife is important for several reasons. First, it is the story of how settler government came to be in the NWT. Prior to 1967, the territories were governed from Ottawa. On the one hand, the transfer was a clear victory for democratic practice rooted in the liberal constitutional traditions of Canadian government. On the other hand, it entrenched a settler form of government in the territory that Indigenous peoples' have been resisting ever since. This transfer solidified the place of settler forms of governance in the territory and prevented, at least for a time, Indigenous ones from emerging. When Indigenous peoples were able to effectively resist the settler state and carve out room for their own governance systems, they needed to contend with both a colonial government in Ottawa and a hostile government in Yellowknife. When Indigenous peoples formed a majority of elected members in the Legislative Assembly after 1979, the political hostility of the GNWT to Indigenous self-determination was tempered, but its hold on territorial governance remained.

## God

### Christianity Wrong

#### Christianity is wrong.

Bill Flavell 18. “Eight reasons Christianity is false” Atheist Alliance International. 07-23-18. https://www.atheistalliance.org/thinking-out-loud/eight-reasons-christianity-is-false/

However, it is easier to prove something is false—all you need is one piece of contradictory evidence. So, what about Christianity? Is there evidence that contradicts, or casts grave doubt on Christianity? I think **there is rather a lot.**

To keep this article brief, I will describe the falsifying evidence without giving all the sources and details but, actually, most of it is so well-known, that even Christians should be aware that this evidence exists.

There is clear evidence that **prayer does not work** despite the Bible promising prayers will be answered.

There is **clear evidence that humans invent gods**. Humans have invented so many gods that the default assumption should be that a god is a supernatural entity invented by humans. Christianity would need solid evidence that the Jewish god is an exception to this rule but there is no such evidence.

There is clear evidence that religions and gods are **propagated through culture** by infecting children, and no evidence that they are propagated by gods.

There is clear evidence that **Christianity has evolved** as human understanding of the world has changed whilst a real, God-given religion, **should never need to change.**

There is clear evidence that humans on this planet **have unequal access to Christianity** so, if Christianity were true, billions would be condemned to hell for no fault of their own. This **contradicts the Christian notion that God is omnibenevolent.**

There is clear evidence that the Bible, supposedly inspired by God, is liberally sprinkled with the **type of errors** we would expect from its Iron Age authors but would not expect from the creator of the universe.

**Christian theology is incoherent to the point of absurdity.** God killing his son so he can forgive our future sin is like me breaking my son’s legs so I can forgive my neighbor in case she ever parks her car on my drive. It is **quite ridiculous.**

#### Default to pragmatism---we do not need perfect knowledge to act, but mutual understanding of the world allows us to transform social conditions.

Kenneth J. Gergen, 2015. Senior Research Professor in the Department of Psychology at Swarthmore College. “From Mirroring to World-Making: Research as Future Forming.” *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior* 45(3): 287-310. Emory Libraries. Gender Modified.

Whatever exists makes no necessary requirements on representation. One of the most contentious sticking points in the ongoing debates concerns the extent to which our accounts of the world can be driven or determined by events in the world. On the one side is the empiricist tradition, holding that descriptions of the world are “data driven,” and can be corrected and improved through observation. On the other are numerous scholars from across the social sciences holding that without something akin to a theoretical (or linguistic) forestructure, there are no meaningful observations. In effect, theory determines what count as data. Putting side the extremities of these positions (e.g. naïve empiricism vs. linguistic reductionism), there is one way of phrasing the issue about which most social scientists would agree. That is, whatever we take to be the world does not demand or require any particular form of representation (e.g. utterances, markings, movements, signals, or graphics). At its most banal, this is simply to point out that there are many different ways to describe or otherwise represent whatever is before us. With Saussure (1916) it is to point to the culturally situated character of the relationships between signifier and signified. With Quineau (1981) it is to acknowledge the multiple ways one might describe what we might otherwise call “the same situation.” More interestingly it is to propose (with Kant) that it is not only space and time that cannot be derived from experience, but indeed, that experience alone would not demand such common words as “desk” and “chair”. A second conciliatory assumption follows the first.

What stands as objective truth can be established within a research tradition. A significant tension between traditionalists and their critics concerns the presumption that scientific research enables us to make progress toward objective truth. Traditionalists draw support from the manifest achievements of the physical sciences, while critics assail the traditional concepts “progress”, “objectivity”, and “truth”. However, by recognizing the useful outcomes of the physical science research, combined with a relinquishing of the strong claims to foundations, a viable middle ground has been achieved. With the mutual understanding that the relationship between world and word is negotiable, there is broad accord that useful agreements can be reached on the character of what exists. Without philosophic justification, daily life effortlessly proceeds if we agree to index this as “an apple” and that as “an orange”. More formally, Berger and Luckmann (1967) would say that the social order depends importantly on sedimented understandings. With Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of the habitus, it is to recognize the common-sense structures of everyday life – including concepts, practices, and artifacts.

Most importantly, while the naming of the real cannot be justified through the act of reference, it is this very sedimentation of social understandings that permits the communities of science to achieve what we ordinarily view as progress. With Kuhn (1962), it is to say that once there is a shared paradigm (metaphysical, ontological, and practical), the sciences become productive. Only then can we split atoms, place a man [person] on the moon, or eliminate smallpox. By the same token, it is possible for sociologists to make predictions about population shifts, economists to predict the effects of government policy on economic growth, or psychologists to predict the likelihood of criminal recidivism – all subject to falsification. This argument applies as well to the more interpretively based social sciences. While there may be no ultimate truth testing in hermeneutically informed inquiry, there can be relatively high levels of agreement within circumscribed enclaves about the character of subjective life. By the same token, within circumscribed traditions of understanding, it is possible to test hypotheses, or to write objective history, falsifiable ethnography, and accurate accounts of inter-group hostility.

With broad agreement in these two assumptions, the contentious atmosphere of recent decades has begun to subside. As Wertz (2011) has put it, there is an emerging a quite robust spirit of pluralism. We need not lose ourselves in the internecine combat over foundations, nor do we make claims to transcendent or God’s eye truth. Rather, we can accept all forms of research – from laboratory experimentation to single case interpretation – in our work. It is indeed this spirit of pluralism that has fueled the enormous expansion in qualitative research practices. Denzin and Lincoln’s pivotal volume, The handbook of qualitative research was first published in 1994. Yet, by casting aside the authority of foundations, the range of research methods burgeoned, such that by 2011 the work had gone through four new editions. As a result of these developments, few researchers now ask about the capacity of research to yield socially uninflected truth. Rather, reflection moves from issues of philosophic grounding to social utility. Because all research practices can be legitimated in their own terms, the question then becomes one of outcomes. What does the research ultimately contribute to the world more generally? And this question is accompanied by a critical concern with politics and ideology. For whom are the outcomes useful, and in what way; who is benefited, who may be harmed; and who is absent from the discussion? We have, then, a pragmatism with a social conscience.